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HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

THIRD SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

46° VICTORIÆ, 1883.

VOL. CCLXXVII.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM

THE TENTH DAY OF MARCH 1883,

TO

THE TENTH DAY OF APRIL 1883.

Second Volume of the Session.

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SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—POLICY OF HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT—RESOLUTION—

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To leave out from the first word "the" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "very grave complication that must attend intervention in the affairs of the native populations on the Western Frontier of the Transvaal, this House is of opinion that the action of British authorities in those regions should be strictly confined within the limits of absolutely unavoidable obligations,"—(*Mr. Cartwright*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. W. E. Forster:*)—After further short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *Friday*, at Two of the clock.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

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[12.45.]

LORDS, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14.

Their Lordships met this day for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

[2.15.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

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Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Chaplin*.)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 63, Noes 250; Majority 187.

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After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Monday* next.

Army (Auxiliary Forces)—The Militia—Motion for an Address—
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Return, showing the loss in numbers occasioned to Militia battalions trained at the brigade depôts under the new system compared with those Militia battalions detached from depôts, and, in consequence, permitted to train as heretofore,"—(*The Earl of Galloway*) .. 527
After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

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PARLIAMENT—COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (SPECIAL REPORT)—

Nomination of Members to serve on the Standing Committees of Law and Trade 567

Leave to Committee to make a Special Report.

Special Report *brought up*, and read :—Report to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE—MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE—Question, Mr. J. R. Yorke; Answer, Mr. Herbert Gladstone; Observations, Mr. J. R. Yorke, Mr. Speaker 568

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY — INTERFERENCE WITH LADIES ATTENDING PUBLIC MEETINGS—Question, Mr. Marum; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 571

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—STOPPAGE OF SALE OF NEWSPAPERS ON SUNDAY IN LONDONDERRY—Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 572

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

ROYAL MARINES—RESOLUTION—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the Military and Naval value of the Corps of Royal Marines deserves to be adequately represented on the Board of Admiralty, so that the just claims of the Corps may be recognised, and defects in its administration remedied; and that it be referred to a Select Committee of this House to inquire into and report upon the best mode of effecting the above objects,"—(*Mr. Hopwood*,)—instead thereof 574

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 60, Noes 39; Majority 21.—(Div. List, No. 36.)

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

NAVAL RESERVES AND COASTGUARD—Observations, Mr. Gourley, Sir John Hay, Mr. Williamson; Reply, Sir Thomas Brassey 591

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to*, SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—NAVY ESTIMATES, 1883-4—Departmental Statement of the Secretary to the Admiralty—

(In the Committee.)

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That 57,250 men and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, including 12,400 Royal Marines" 599

After long debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2.) £2,633,300, Wages, &c. to Seamen and Marines.

CIVIL SERVICES (VOTE ON ACCOUNT).

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £3,606,800, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charge for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884" [Then the several Services are set forth.]

After debate, Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £2,000,000, be granted, &c.,"—(*Sir Walter B. Barttelot*:)—After further short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 38, Noes 59; Majority 21.—(Div. List, No. 37.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock; Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

Bills of Sale (Ireland) Act (1879) Amendment Bill [Bill 105]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Monk*) .. 651

Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

WAYS AND MEANS—

Considered in Committee 652

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, the sum of £6,240,100, be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock; Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

QUESTIONS.

—o—

THE PUBLIC OFFICES—EXPLOSIONS AT THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD AND AT "THE TIMES" OFFICE—Questions, Sir R. Assheton Cross, Mr. Puleston, Viscount Folkestone; Answers, Sir William Harcourt .. 652

Crown Lands Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Herbert Gladstone*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 122] 653

[1.30.]

LORDS, FRIDAY, MARCH 16.

EDUCATION—HIGHER BOARD SCHOOLS—MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE—

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working of the higher schools now being established by several school boards in England,"—(*The Lord Norton*) 654

After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—"REGINA v. MATTHEW SMYTH"—Questions, The Earl of Milltown, Lord Harlech; Answers, Lord Carlingford:—Short debate thereon 670

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE LATE PROFESSOR PALMER—MOTION FOR PAPERS—

Moved, "That there be laid before this House papers and correspondence respecting Professor Palmer's Expedition,"—(*The Lord Wentworth*) 672

After short debate, on Question? *resolved* in the *negative.*

Payment of Wages in Public-houses Prohibition Bill (No. 21)
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3ª,"—(*The Earl Stanhope*) .. 684
After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 3ª accordingly.

Representative Peers (Scotland) Election Procedure Bill—Question, The Earl of Galloway; Answer, The Lord Chancellor 685

Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill—
Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be read 2ª on *Monday* next; and Standing Order No. XXXV. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with,—(*The Earl Granville.*)

[7.30.]

COMMONS, FRIDAY, MARCH 16.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Manchester Ship Canal Bill (*by Order*)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time" 685
After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed*.

QUESTIONS.

The Western Pacific—The Orders in Council—Question, Mr. Arthur Pease; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 691
State of Ireland—Destitution in Loughrea—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 692
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Friendly Societies Act, 1875—The Chief Registrar's Return—Question, Mr. Acland; Answer, Mr. Herbert Gladstone 698
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Parliament—Business of the House—Questions, Baron De Ferrières, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 700
The Public Offices—The Explosion at the Local Government Board—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone .. 701

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE—

Resolved, That whenever the House shall meet at Two of the Clock, the Sittings of the House shall be held subject to the Resolutions of the House of the 30th day of April 1869,—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—REPORT—Resolutions [March 15] *reported* 702
Resolutions *agreed to.*

Army (Annual) Bill—*Ordered* (*The Marquess of Hartington, The Judge Advocate General, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 123] .. 702

WAYS AND MEANS—
Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill
Resolution [March 15] *reported*, and *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney*); *presented*, and read the first time .. 703

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—POLICY OF HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT—RESOLUTION—[Adjourned Debate.] [Second Night]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [13th March]:—Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—Debate *resumed* .. 703

After long debate, it being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *this day*.

The House suspended its Sitting at Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

[House counted out.] [9.5.]

LORDS, MONDAY, MARCH 19.

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS—

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92. and 93. be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—POLICY OF HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT—TREATY OF 1879 BETWEEN GERMANY AND AUSTRIA—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS—

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Copy of the Treaty formed between Germany and Austria in 1879,—(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*) .. 756

After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Bill (No. 17)—
House in Committee (according to Order) 770
Bill *reported*; to be read 3ª *To-morrow.*

Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill—
Read 2ª (according to order); Committee *negatived*: Then Standing Order No. XXXV. *considered* (according to order), and *dispensed with*; Bill read 3ª, and *passed.*

[6.0.]

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Leave given to the Chairmen's Panel to make a Report 775
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QUESTIONS.

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Bankruptcy Bill [Bill 4]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Chamberlain*) .. 816

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, while anxious to remedy the proved defects in the existing Law and practice in Bankruptcy, is not prepared to entrust the powers proposed in the Bill to any department of the Government,"—(*Mr. Stanhope*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Tomlinson*:)—After further short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 45, Noes 89; Majority 44.—(Div. List, No. 38.)

Original Question again proposed 908

After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*:—Bill read a second time.

Further Proceedings after the Second Reading *deferred* till *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

Ballot Act Continuance and Amendment Bill [Bill 5]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke*) 912

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*:)—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 41, Noes 76; Majority 35.—(Div. List, No. 39.)

Original Question again proposed 917

After short debate, Debate *adjourned* till *Thursday* 29th March.

Parliamentary Elections (Closing of Public-houses) Bill—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Carbutt*) .. 917

After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Callan*:)—Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 17, Noes 55; Majority 38.—(Div. List, No. 40.)

Original Question again proposed 919

After short debate, *Moved*, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Whitley*:)—Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 19, Noes 43; Majority 24.—(Div. List, No. 41.)

Original Question again proposed:—*Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Colonel Alexander*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow*.

Bankruptcy (No. 2) Bill [Bill 82]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir John Lubbock*) 922

Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

Maintenance of Children Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hopwood, Mr. Thomasson, Mr. Summers*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 124] 923

Registration of Voters (Ireland) (No. 3) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Dawson, Mr. Leamy, Mr. Kenny*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 125] 923

[2.45.]

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COMMONS, TUESDAY, MARCH 20.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS—

Ordered, That Standing Orders 129 and 39 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Thursday the 29th instant,—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

QUESTIONS.

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NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND)—SALARIES OF TEACHERS—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 938
POST OFFICE (CONTRACTS)—THE IRISH MAIL SERVICE—Question, Mr. Carington; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 939

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METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—THE REBUILDING OF ANGLER'S GARDENS, ISLINGTON—Question, Mr. W. M. Torrens; Answer, Sir James M'Garel-Hogg 939

LAW AND POLICE—REPORTED ATTACK ON LADY FLORENCE DIXIE—Questions, Mr. O'Shea, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, Sir William Harcourt .. 939

IRELAND—MAINTENANCE OF HARMLESS LUNATICS AND IDIOTS—Question, Mr. Molloy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 940

NAVY—H.M.S. "VALOROUS"—Question, Mr. Tottenham; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 941

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE DEBATE ON THE TRANSVAAL—Question, Mr. H. H. Fowler; Answer, Mr. Gladstone .. 941

SCOTLAND—THE CROFTERS—THE ROYAL COMMISSION—UNAUTHORIZED PUBLICATION OF THE NAMES OF THE COMMISSIONERS—Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, The Lord Advocate 943

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—Questions, Lord George Hamilton, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 944

BALLOT ACT CONTINUANCE AND AMENDMENT BILL—Question, Mr. Onslow; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 944

MOTION.

PARLIAMENT—THE EASTER RECESS—SPAIN—EXPULSION OF CERTAIN CUBAN REFUGEES FROM GIBRALTAR—MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT—

Moved, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Thursday, the 29th of March,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 944

SCOTLAND—THE CROFTERS—DESTITUTION IN THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS—Observations, Dr. Cameron; Reply, Sir William Harcourt:—Short Debate thereon 949

Question put, and *agreed to*:—*Resolved*, That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Thursday the 29th of March.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Bankruptcy Bill [Bill 4]—

Order read for resuming Further Proceedings after Second Reading .. 962

Moved, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures,"—(*Mr. Chamberlain.*)

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the absence of any definite regulations for the transaction of public business by the Standing Committees, it is inexpedient to transfer to those bodies the jurisdiction hitherto exercised over Public Bills by Committees of the Whole House,"—(*Mr. Raikes*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Main Question again proposed 986

After short debate, Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill *committed* to the Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures.

Ordered, That the Committee do sit and proceed on Monday 9th April, at Twelve of the clock.

Sea and Coast Fisheries Fund (Ireland) Bill [Bill 116]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Trevelyan*) .. 987

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* 5th April.

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Bankruptcy (No. 2) Bill [Bill 82]—

Order for Committee read :—*Moved*, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Sir John Lubbock*) 988

After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 65, Noes 55; Majority 10.—(Div. List, No. 42.)

Bill *considered* in Committee; Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday* 29th March.

London Brokers' Relief Act (1870) Repeal Bill [Bill 19]—

Ordered, That the Order [16th February] that the London Brokers' Relief Act (1870) Repeal Bill be read a second time upon Wednesday 9th May be read, and discharged 989

Ordered, That the Bill be withdrawn:—Leave given to present another Bill instead thereof.

Brokers' (City of London) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Richard Martin, Mr. Magniac, Mr. Buxton*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 127] 989

[6.55.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, MARCH 29.

QUESTIONS.

POST OFFICE—COMMUNICATION FROM ADEN TO MADAGASCAR—Question, Sir Harry Verney; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 990

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—CASE OF JOHN HARTE— 990 Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 990

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—THE "ACHILLES" IN HYDE PARK—Question, Mr. Schreiber; Answer, Mr. Shaw Levevre 991

RUSSIA—CORONATION OF THE CZAR—Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 991

OFFICE OF LAND REGISTRY—REGISTRATION OF ESTATES—Question, Mr. Arthur Arnold; Answer, Mr. Herbert Gladstone 992

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—PARLIAMENTARY OATHS ACT (1866) AMENDMENT BILL—Questions, Mr. Newdegate; Answers, Sir William Harcourt 993

LAW AND POLICE—REPORTED ATTACK ON LADY FLORENCE DIXIE—Question, Mr. O'Shea; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 993

LAW AND POLICE—SEIZURE OF INFERNAL MACHINES AT LIVERPOOL—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Sir William Harcourt .. 994

SPAIN—EXPULSION OF CERTAIN CUBAN REFUGEES FROM GIBRALTAR—THE PAPERS—Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 994

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—BALLOT ACT CONTINUANCE AND AMENDMENT BILL—Question, Mr. Onslow; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 994

CHANNEL TUNNEL COMMITTEE—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 994

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

INLAND POSTAL TELEGRAMS—RESOLUTION—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the time has arrived when the minimum charge for Inland Postal Telegrams should be reduced to sixpence,"—(*Dr. Cameron,*)—instead thereof .. 995

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read—*continued.*

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 50, Noes 68; Majority 18.—(Div. List, No. 43.)

Words *added*:—Main Question, as amended, put.

Resolved, That the time has arrived when the minimum charge for Inland Postal Telegrams should be reduced to sixpence.

Resolved, That this House will immediately resolve itself into the Committee of Supply,—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*:)—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

COMMISSIONERS OF HER MAJESTY'S WOODS, &C.—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it is inexpedient that the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, should make any further purchase of land,"—(*Mr. Arthur Arnold,*)—instead thereof 1023

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—THE CENTRAL HALL—Observations, Mr. Schreiber, Mr. Cavendish Bentinck; Reply, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 1032

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £30,053, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Maintenance and Repair of Royal Palaces" 1037

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £28,985, be granted, &c.,"—(*Mr. Dillwyn*:)—After long debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 23, Noes 64; Majority 41.—(Div. List, No. 44.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,953, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Maintenance and Repair of Marlborough House" 1069

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £953, be granted, &c.,"—(*Mr. Rylands*:)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £93,322, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens" 1077

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £71,322, be granted, &c.,"—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler*:)—After debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 28, Noes 76; Majority 48.—(Div. List, No. 45.)

Original Question again proposed 1096

After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (UNREFORMED) [EXPENSES]—

Considered in Committee 1101

Moved, "That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the Expenses of any inquiries which may become payable under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to make provision respecting certain Municipal Corporations, and other Local Authorities not subject to the Municipal Corporation Act,"—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

After short debate, Resolution *agreed to;* to be reported *To-morrow.*

BANKRUPTCY [COMPENSATION FOR ABOLITION OF OFFICE]—

Considered in Committee 1102

Moved, "That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of compensation to persons whose office may be abolished, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to amend and consolidate the Law of Bankruptcy."

Resolution *agreed to;* to be reported *To-morrow.*

Payment of Wages in Public-houses Prohibition Bill [*Lords*]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Samuel Morley*) 1102

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Callan:*)—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question again proposed.

Original Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time:—Bill *committed* for *To-morrow.*

Liquor Traffic Veto (Scotland) Bill—*Considered* in Committee:—Resolution *agreed to*, and *reported:*—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. M'Lagan, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Waddy, Mr. James Stewart, Mr. Dick Peddie, Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. Ernest Noel*) 1104

[1.0.]

COMMONS, FRIDAY, MARCH 30.

QUESTIONS.

MADAGASCAR — ALLEGED TREATY CONCESSIONS — FRENCH PROTECTORATE ON THE NORTH-WEST COAST — Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1105

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION) — PURCHASE OF MULES—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Mr. Brand 1106

EGYPT—OUTBREAK OF CATTLE PLAGUE—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Sir Arthur Hayter 1106

SPAIN—EXPULSION OF CERTAIN CUBAN REFUGEES FROM GIBRALTAR—Questions, Mr. O'Kelly, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1107

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE—THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS—Questions, Mr. Gregory, Mr. M'Coan; Answers, The Attorney General .. 1108

INDIA (NATIVE STATES)—INNAGHUR—THE MASSACRE OF MAIYAS—Question, Mr. R. T. Reid; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross 1109

INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT—GRIEVANCES OF CLERKS—RIGHT OF PETITION—Questions, Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Speaker .. 1110

POST OFFICE (CONTRACTS) — THE IRISH MAIL SERVICE — Question, Mr. Tottenham; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer .. 1112

PARLIAMENT—CORRUPT PRACTICES AT ELECTIONS — THE SCHEDULED BOROUGHS—Question, Captain Aylmer; Answer, The Attorney General .. 1113

THE REGISTRAR GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT—THE CENSUS REPORTS—Question, Mr. Montague Guest; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1114

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF A GUARDIAN FOR THE CLONAKILTY UNION, COUNTY CORK—MR. HENRY HUNGERFORD, J.P.—Question, Mr. Parnell; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1114

ARTERIAL DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—EXTENSION OF THE POWERS OF THE ACT OF 1864 TO TENANT OCCUPIERS—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 1116

SOUTH AFRICA—THE BECHUANA CHIEFS—Question, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1116

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PARLIAMENT—PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS—THE BOROUGH OF SOUTHAMPTON—Questions, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Gorst; Answers, Lord Richard Grosvenor 1117

PARLIAMENT—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—THE GRAND COMMITTEES—ACCOMMODATION FOR REPORTERS—Question, Mr. Warton; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 1117

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM—RESOLUTION—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it would be desirable, so soon as the state of public business shall permit, to establish Uniformity of Franchise throughout the whole of the United Kingdom by a Franchise similar in principle to that established in the English boroughs,"—(*Mr. Arthur Arnold*,)—instead thereof .. 1118

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, [House counted out.] [7.45.]

COMMONS, MONDAY, APRIL 2.

QUESTIONS.

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND)—THE HERRING BRAND—Question, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answer, The Lord Advocate 1151

POST OFFICE (CONTRACTS) — THE IRISH MAIL SERVICE—Questions, Mr. Puleston, Mr. Gibson; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer .. 1152

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE LAW ADVISERS OF THE CROWN—Question, Mr. Gibson; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1153

CENTRAL ASIA—THE RUSSIAN ADVANCE—Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1153

INDIA—THE AMEER OF AFGHANISTAN—Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross 1154

FIJI—THE LAND QUESTION—Question, Sir Henry Holland; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1154

MADAGASCAR—CLAIMS OF FRANCE ON THE NORTH-WEST COAST—THE YELLOW BOOK — Question, Sir Harry Verney; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1154

CRIMINAL LAW—CASE OF THOMAS PERRYMAN—Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1155

BURNLEY BOROUGH IMPROVEMENT BILL — SECTION 135—Question, Mr. Marriott; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1156

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—THE GLENTIES GUARDIANS—Question, Mr. O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1156

POST OFFICE—SIXPENNY TELEGRAMS—ACTION OF THE GOVERNMENT—Question, Mr. Puleston; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer .. 1158

ARMY—CAVALRY OF THE LINE—Question, Mr. Puleston; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1158

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THE CIVIL SERVICE—THE PLAYFAIR SCHEME—Question, Mr. Puleston; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1159

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—SECTION 31—PRACTICE OF THE BOARD OF WORKS—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Courtney .. 1159

THE LAND COMMISSION AND THE BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND)—LOANS FOR LABOURERS' COTTAGES—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1160

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The Civil Service Commissioners—Excise and Customs Clerks—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1162

Egypt—Reforms—Lord Dufferin's Despatch—Questions, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Mr. Bourke; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 1164

The Irish Land Commission—The Sub-Commissioners—Mr. Peter Fitzpatrick—Questions, Mr. Tottenham, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1164

Law and Police—Protection of Public Buildings—Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, Sir William Harcourt.. 1166

Factories Acts—Salaries of Inspectors—Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1166

Madagascar—Reported Blockade by France—Question, Mr. Montagu Scott; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1167

The Irish Land Commission—Appeals—Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan.. 1168

South Africa—Zululand—Question, Mr. Dillwyn; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1168

Law and Police (Ireland)—Michael Egan—The Witness Maria Roche—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1169

Literature, Science, and Art—Purchase of the Ashburnham MSS.—The Irish MSS.—Question, Mr. Gibson; Answer, Mr. Gladstone .. 1170

The National Expenditure—Mr. Rylands' Motion—Question, Mr. Rylands; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1170

Parliament—Rules of Debate—Blocking—Questions, Mr. Monk, Captain Aylmer; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1171

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Public Health (Ireland)—Epidemics in Donegal—Question, Mr. O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1176

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

Court of Criminal Appeal Bill [Bill 9]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Attorney General*) 1181

Court of Criminal Appeal Bill—continued.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Sir Hardinge Giffard.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:" —After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 132, Noes 78; Majority 54.—(Div. List, No. 46.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure,"—(*Mr. Attorney General*) 1244

After further short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill *committed* to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure.

Ordered, That the Committee do sit and proceed on Thursday 12th April, at Twelve of the clock.

Municipal Corporations (Unreformed) Bill [Bill 6]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke*) 1248

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the Bill be referred to a Select Committee,"—(*Mr. Sidney Herbert,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question again proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—After further short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill *considered* in Committee.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* 30th April.

Army (Annual) Bill [Bill 123]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*The Judge Advocate General*) 1255

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday.*

BANKRUPTCY [COMPENSATION FOR ABOLITION OF OFFICE]—Resolution [March 29] *reported* 1260

Moved, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

After short debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Captain Aylmer:*)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 70, Noes 13; Majority 57.—(Div. List, No. 47.)

Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill [Bill 24]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [14th March] 1271

After short debate, [House counted out.] [2.15.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, APRIL 3.

LAW AND POLICE — INTERROGATION OF PRISONERS—Observations, Lord Denman; Reply, The Marquess of Salisbury 1272

Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill—

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and to be read 2ª on *Thursday* next,—(*The Earl Granville.*)

[4.30.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, APRIL 3.

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QUESTIONS.

Navy—Marine Pensioners—The Auxiliary Forces—Question, Mr. E. Collins; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1273
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Navy—The Transport Service—Question, General Sir George Balfour; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1282
Parliament—Business of the House— "Counts Out"—Question, Mr. Callan; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1282

Parliament—Committee of Selection (Special Report)—
Leave to Committee to make a Special Report 1283

MOTIONS.

Africa (River Congo)—Resolution—

Moved, "That, in the interests of civilisation and Commerce in South West Africa, this House is of opinion that no Treaty should be made by Her Majesty's Government that would sanction the annexation by any Power of territories on or adjacent to the Congo, or that would interfere with the freedom hitherto enjoyed by all civilising and Commercial agencies at work in those regions,"—(*Mr. Jacob Bright*) .. 1284

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "Government" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "affecting territories on or adjacent to the Congo that would compromise any engagement into which Her Majesty may heretofore have entered, or would not afford adequate securities to all the civilising and Commercial agencies at work in those regions,"—(*Mr. Wodehouse*,)—instead thereof.

AFRICA (RIVER CONGO)—continued.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Resolved, That, in the interests of civilisation and Commerce in South West Africa, this House is of opinion that no Treaty should be made by Her Majesty's Government affecting territories on or adjacent to the Congo that would compromise any engagement into which Her Majesty may heretofore have entered, or would not afford adequate securities to all the civilising and Commercial agencies at work in those regions,—(*Mr. Wodehouse.*)

OPIUM DUTIES (CHINA)—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS—

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that in all negotiations which take place between the Governments of Her Majesty and China, having reference to the Duties levied on Opium under the Treaty of Tientsin, the Government of Her Majesty will be pleased to intimate to the Government of China that in any revision of that Treaty, or in any other negotiations on the subject of Opium, the Government of China will be met as that of an independent State, having the full right to arrange its own Import Duties,"—(*Sir Joseph Pease*) .. 1333

Previous Question proposed, "That the Original Question be now put,"—(*Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice*:)—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 66, Noes 126; Majority 60.—(Div. List, No. 48.)

CHANNEL TUNNEL—THE JOINT COMMITTEE—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That a Committee of Five Members of this House be appointed to join with a Committee of the House of Lords, to inquire whether it is expedient that Parliamentary sanction should be given to a submarine communication between England and France; and to consider whether any or what conditions should be imposed by Parliament in the event of such communication being sanctioned,"—(*Mr. Chamberlain*) 1363

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "before entering upon the questions whether it is expedient that Parliamentary sanction should be given to the establishment of submarine communication between England and France, and upon what conditions (if any) such sanction should be granted, it is desirable that the House should be put in possession of the views of Her Majesty's Government on these subjects,"—(*Sir Stafford Northcote,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 106, Noes 74; Majority 32.—(Div. List, No. 49.)

Main Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 106, Noes 72; Majority 34.—(Div. List, No. 50.)

Moved, "That the Correspondence with reference to the proposed construction of a Channel Tunnel, presented to Parliament in 1882, be referred to the Committee,"——(*Mr. Chamberlain.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Moved, "That a Message be sent to The Lords to acquaint their Lordships, That this House hath appointed a Committee of Five Members to join with a Committee of The Lords, to inquire whether it is expedient that Parliamentary sanction should be given to a submarine communication between England and France; and to consider whether any or what conditions should be imposed by Parliament in the event of such communication being sanctioned,—And that the Clerk do carry the said Message," (*Mr. Chamberlain.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Universities (Scotland) Bill—*Ordered* (*The Lord Advocate, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 131] 1386

[1.15.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4.

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Universities Committee of Privy Council Bill [Bill 15]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Roundell*) .. 1386

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Sir John R. Mowbray.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*:—Bill *withdrawn.*

Vivisection Abolition Bill [Bill 46]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. R. T. Reid*) .. 1399

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Cartwright.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, it being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow.* [5.50.]

LORDS, THURSDAY, APRIL 5.

Channel Tunnel—The Joint Committee—

Message from the Commons 1449

Ordered, That the said Message be taken into consideration *To-morrow.*

The Irish Land Commission—Question, Lord Oranmore and Browne; Answer, Lord Carlingford 1449

Medical Act Amendment Bill (No. 16)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Lord Carlingford*) .. 1449

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* the 19*th instant.*

Island of Cyprus—The Currency Proclamation of 3rd May, 1882—Observations, Lord Stanley of Alderley; Reply, The Earl of Derby .. 1465

Army—Line Battalions—Training of Men as Mounted Infantry—Question, Observations, Viscount St. Vincent, Lord Chelmsford; Reply, The Earl of Morley 1467

Tithe Rentcharge Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Earl Stanhope*); read 1ª (No. 22) .. 1469

[6.45.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, APRIL 5.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Warrington Tramways Bill (*by Order*)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Rylands*) .. 1469

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Chamberlain.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 68, Noes 123; Majority 55.—(Div. List, No. 51.)

Words *added*:—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to*:—Second Reading *put off* for six months.

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QUESTIONS.

INDIA—THE INDIAN LEGISLATURE—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross 1476
EGYPT (CRIMINAL LAW)—PRISONERS—Question, Mr. Bourke; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1477
EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION)—DESPATCH OF THE EARL OF DUFFERIN—Question, Mr. Bourke; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1478
RUSSIA—CORONATION OF THE CZAR—EXPENSES OF THE SPECIAL EMBASSY—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 1479
EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—NEW EGYPTIAN LOAN—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1479
THE FISHERY BOARD, SCOTLAND — INQUIRY AS TO THE INJURIOUS EFFECTS OF TRAWLING—Question, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answer, The Lord Advocate 1480
DOMINION OF CANADA—REGULATIONS AS TO THE EMIGRATION OF PAUPER CHILDREN FROM ENGLAND—Question, Mr. Brown; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1481
PUBLIC OFFICES SITE ACT, 1882—THE NEW BUILDINGS FOR THE ADMIRALTY AND THE WAR OFFICE—Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 1481
ARMY—DESERTERS IN SOUTH AFRICA—Question, Mr. A. M'Arthur; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1482
ARMY—THE ROYAL ENGINEERS—Question, Mr. Greer; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1482
EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—NURSING SISTERS—Question, Mr. Greer; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1483
STATE OF IRELAND—AGRARIAN CRIME IN SLIGO—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1484
LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—TRIAL OF PATRICK CONNOLLY—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 1484
NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—THE BELLECK MALE NATIONAL SCHOOL—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1487
NAVY—NAVAL ENGINEERS—Question, Captain Price; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1487
ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—DOCKYARD EMPLOYES—Question, Captain Price; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1488
EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.) — Questions, Sir George Campbell, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1489
MADAGASCAR—TREATIES WITH FRANCE—THE YELLOW BOOK—Question, Sir Harry Verney; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1490
PUBLIC HEALTH—TYPHOID FEVER AT PLYMOUTH—Question, Sir Henry Peek; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1491
TRADE AND COMMERCE—CUSTOMS DUES IN CORK—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1491
INDIA (NATIVE STATES)—JUNAGHUR—THE MAIYAS—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross 1492
PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—SECTION 14 — SEARCHES—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1493
POOR LAW ELECTIONS (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Tottenham; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1494
ARMY ACT, 1881—MAINTENANCE OF SOLDIERS' WIVES—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1496
SPAIN—THE STEAMSHIPS "LEON XIII." AND "TANGIER"—THE PAPERS—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 1497
LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — THE PHŒNIX PARK MURDERS—Questions, Mr. Lalor, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan; Question, Mr. O'Kelly; [No answer] 1497

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—Question, Mr. O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1498
IRELAND—THE CONSTABULARY AND THE IRISH NATIONAL LEAGUE—Question, Mr. O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1499
SPEECH OF MR. CHAMBERLAIN AT BIRMINGHAM—Notice, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Question, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answer, Mr. Speaker .. 1499
FISHERIES (EAST COAST)—LOSS OF FISHING SMACKS—Question, Mr. Norwood; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1501
EGYPT—ARABI PASHA—Question, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1501
STAMP DUTIES—MARINE INSURANCE—Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1501
PARLIAMENT—COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE (TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN)—Question, Mr. Raikes; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1502
SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—POLICY OF HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT—Questions, Mr. Onslow, Lord George Hamilton, Lord John Manners; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1502
AFFAIRS OF SCOTLAND—PARLIAMENTARY MANAGEMENT—Question, Mr. Dalrymple; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1504
EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION)—DESPATCH OF THE EARL OF DUFFERIN—THE REFORMS—Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1504
LAW AND POLICE—SEIZURE OF EXPLOSIVES—LEGISLATION—Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Sclater-Booth; Answers, Sir William Harcourt 1505
IRELAND—DRAINAGE OF THE RIVER BARROW—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1506

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered* in Committee—Financial Statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers)—

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now charged on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-three, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four, on importation into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say): on £ s. d.
Tea . . . . the lb. 0 0 6 1507

After long debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*
Another Resolution (Property and Income Tax) moved, and *agreed to;* to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

Army Annual Bill [Bill 123]—
Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*The Judge Advocate General*) 1598
Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House will, upon this day six months, resolve itself into the said Committee,"—(*Mr. Sexton,*)—instead thereof.
Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*
Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*
Bill *considered* in Committee 1607
After some time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

Union Officers' Superannuation (Ireland) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Attorney General for Ireland*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 132] 1608

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Northumberland, &c.) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Jerningham, Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Burt, Mr. John Morley*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 133] 1609

Leaseholders (Facilities for Purchase of Fee Simple) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Mr. Reid, Mr. Passmore Edwards*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 134] 1609

[1.0.]

LORDS, FRIDAY, APRIL 6.

Contempts of Court Bill (No. 15)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Lord Chancellor*) .. 1609

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Friday* the *20th instant.*

The Government—Secretary of State for Scotland—Question, Observations, The Earl of Minto, The Earl of Fife; Reply, The Earl of Kimberley 1617

Protection of Women and Children—Question, The Bishop of Rochester; Answer, The Earl of Rosebery 1621

Channel Tunnel—The Joint Committee—Resolution—

Message of the House of Commons, of yesterday, *considered* (according to order) 1621

Moved, "That a Committee of five Lords be appointed to join with the Committee appointed by the House of Commons, as mentioned in the said Message, to inquire whether it is expedient that Parliamentary sanction should be given to a submarine communication between England and France; and to consider whether any or what conditions should be imposed by Parliament in the event of such communication being sanctioned,"—(*The Lord Sudeley.*)

After short debate, Motion *agreed to.*

Elementary Education Provisional Orders Confirmation (Cummersdale, &c.) Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord President*); read 1ª, and *referred* to the Examiners (No. 23) 1630

[6.15.]

COMMONS, FRIDAY, APRIL 6.

QUESTIONS.

Fisheries (East Coast)—Loss of Fishing Smacks—Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, Mr. J. Holms 1631

Navy—The Royal Yachts—The "Victoria and Albert"—Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1631

Vaccination Acts—Legislation—Question, Mr. Burt; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1632

The Straits Settlements—Opium Smuggling—Question, Mr. Alderman Cotton; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1632

China—The Chefoo Convention—Question, Mr. Alderman Cotton; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1633

Scotland—Destitution in the Highlands and Islands—Question, Mr. J. Grant; Answer, The Lord Advocate 1633

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Evictions (Ireland)—Co. Roscommon—Question, Mr. O'Kelly; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1634

Law and Justice—Police Inquiries into Indictable Offences—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1634

South Africa—The Transvaal—Native Hostilities—Use of Dynamite—Questions, Viscount Folkestone, Mr. O'Kelly; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1635

South Africa—The Transvaal—Agent for the Government—Question, Lord John Manners; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1636

Prevention of Crime (Ireland) Act, 1882—Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1636

South Africa—The Transvaal—Supplies of Ammunition—Questions, Mr. Cropper, Lord John Manners; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley .. 1636

Law and Justice—The Secretary of the Master of the Rolls—Question, Mr. H. H. Fowler; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1638

Heligoland—Erection of a Breakwater—Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1639

Colonial Defences—Report of the Royal Commission—Question, Mr. A. F. Egerton; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1639

Arabi Pasha — Conditions of Detention at Ceylon — Question, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1640

Law and Justice (Ireland)—Mr. Bolton, Crown Solicitor for Tipperary Co.—Questions, Mr. Tottenham, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1640

Scotland—Destitution in the Highlands and Islands—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, The Lord Advocate 1641

South Africa—The Transvaal—Dr. Jorissen—Questions, Mr. Gorst, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1641

Possession of Explosives—Legislation—Observations, Sir William Harcourt 1642

Parliament — Grand Committees — Reporting — Question, Lord Claud Hamilton; Answer, Mr. Speaker; Question, Mr. J. Cowen [No answer] 1642

Parliament—Committee of Selection (Special Report)—
Leave to Committee to make a Special Report 1643

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Supply—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

National Expenditure—Resolution—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, the present amount of the National Expenditure demands the earnest and immediate attention of Her Majesty's Government, with the view of effecting such reductions as may be consistent with the efficiency of the public service,"—(*Mr. Rylands,*)—instead thereof 1644

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, Question put, and *negatived.*
Words *added:*—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Army (Annual) Bill [Bill 123]—

Moved, "That the Bill, as amended, be now taken into Consideration,"—(*The Judge Advocate General*) 1715

After short debate, Question put and *agreed to:*—Bill, as amended, *considered.*

Moved, "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*The Judge Advocate General:*)—After short debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Onslow:*)—Question put, and *agreed to;*—Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* next.

Ballot Act Continuance and Amendment Bill [Bill 5]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [19th March], "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1723

After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Warton*:)—After further short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 41, Noes 74; Majority 33.—(Div. List, No. 53.)

Original Question again proposed 1731

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Onslow*:)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question again proposed:—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

New Forest Highways Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Cotes*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 135.]

Glebe Loans (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Errington, Mr. Corry, Viscount Lymington*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 136.]

[1.15.]

LORDS, MONDAY, APRIL 9.

CHANNEL TUNNEL—THE JOINT COMMITTEE—Message to the Commons .. 1733

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—THE BOERS AND THE NATIVE TRIBES—Question, Lord Brabourne; Answer, The Earl of Derby .. 1734

EAST INDIA—CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (NATIVE JURISDICTION OVER BRITISH SUBJECTS)—Observations, The Earl of Lytton: Reply, The Earl of Kimberley:—Long debate thereon 1735

Explosive Substances Bill—

Bill brought from the Commons 1802

Moved, "That Standing Order No. XLIX., that no motion for making or dispensing with a Standing Order be made without notice, be now read;" The same was read accordingly:

Then it was *moved*, "That Standing Order No. XXXV., that no two stages of a Bill be taken on one day, be now read:" The same was read accordingly:

Then it was *moved* to resolve, "That it is the opinion of this House that it is essentially necessary for the public safety that the Bill this day brought from the House of Commons, intituled 'An Act to amend the law relating to explosive substances,' should forthwith be proceeded in with all possible despatch, and that notwithstanding Standing Orders Nos. XLIX. and XXXV. the Lord Chancellor ought forthwith to put the question upon every stage of the said Bill in which this House shall think it necessary for the public safety to proceed therein,"—(*The Earl of Kimberley*.)

After short debate, on question, *agreed to*, and *resolved* accordingly:—Bill read 1ª; and to be *printed*. (No. 24.)

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Earl of Kimberley*:)—After short debate, on question, *resolved* in the *affirmative*:—Bill read 2ª accordingly.

Then it was *moved* that the Bill be now committed to a Committee of the Whole House; on question, *resolved* in the *negative*.

Then it was *moved* that the Bill be now read 3ª; on question, *resolved* in the *affirmative*:—Bill read 3ª accordingly.

Then it was *moved* that the Bill do pass; on question, *resolved* in the *affirmative*:—Bill *passed* accordingly, and a message sent to the Commons to acquaint them therewith. [11.30.]

COMMONS, MONDAY, APRIL 9.

Page

QUESTIONS.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—EXTRA ALLOWANCES TO PRISON WARDERS FOR EXTRA DUTIES—Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1812

ARTIZANS' AND LABOURERS' DWELLINGS ACTS—THE NEW SCHEMES OF THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, Sir James M'Garel-Hogg 1812

POST OFFICE (CONTRACTS)—THE IRISH MAIL SERVICE—Questions, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Mr. Fawcett 1813

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE SHERIFF CLERK OF FORFARSHIRE—Questions, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answers, The Lord Advocate .. 1814

GREENWICH HOSPITAL SCHOOL — Questions, Sir Massey Lopes, Mr. Puleston; Answers, Sir Thomas Brassey 1814

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE EXTRACTOR OF THE COURT OF SESSION —Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate .. 1815

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—DISTRIBUTION OF OUTDOOR RELIEF AT STOKESTOWN —Questions, Mr. O'Kelly; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1816

STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED DISTRESS AT LOUGH GLYNN—Question, Mr. O'Kelly; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1817

THE ROYAL YACHT CLUB—EXCLUSIVE RIGHT OF FLYING THE WHITE ENSIGN — Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Macfarlane; Answers, Sir Thomas Brassey 1818

POST OFFICE—POSTAL ORDERS TO THE COLONIES—Question, Mr. Monk; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1818

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE—DISINFECTION OF HIDES AND OFFAL OF ANIMALS SLAUGHTERED UNDER THE ACTS—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Dodson .. 1819

SCOTLAND—THE INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM, EDINBURGH—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 1819

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT—THE CLERKS AT DUBLIN—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1819

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND) PENSION FUND—THE ANNUAL STATEMENT—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Courtney .. 1820

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS (IRELAND)—THE RETURNS—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1820

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE ROTA OF JUDGES—Questions, Mr. O'Brien; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1821

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—COLONEL HEPENSTALL—Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1822

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS FOR THE SHILLELAGH UNION, CO. WICKLOW; AND BANTRY—ALLEGED INTIMIDATION—Questions, Mr. O'Brien; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1823

STATE OF IRELAND—THE DISTRESS IN DONEGAL—Questions, Mr. O'Brien; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan; Question, Mr. O'Donnell [No reply] .. 1824

EGYPT (FINANCE, &C.) –THE NEW EGYPTIAN LOANS—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1826

TURKEY (ASIATIC PROVINCES)—THE GOVERNORSHIP OF THE LEBANON—Question, Mr. Cartwright; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 1827

THE DANUBIAN CONFERENCE—Question, Mr. Cartwright; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1827

TREATY OF BERLIN—ARTICLE 61—REFORMS IN ARMENIA—Question, Mr. Bryce; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1827

SPAIN—EXPULSION OF CERTAIN CUBAN REFUGEES FROM GIBRALTAR—Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 1828

THE METROPOLITAN AND METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAYS—VENTILATION —Question, Mr. W. H. James; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain .. 1828

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PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—SEIZURE OF DOCUMENTS—CASE OF MATTHEW HARRIS—Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1828

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—RETURN OF VOLUNTARY AGREEMENTS MADE OUT OF AND LODGED IN COURT—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1831

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—THE RAILWAY PASSENGER DUTY—Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 1832

MADAGASCAR—SECURITY OF BRITISH RESIDENTS—Question, Mr. Cropper; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1832

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL—Question, Mr. Dalrymple; Answer, The Lord Advocate .. 1832

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—THE BELFAST MAGISTRATES AND TRADE DISPUTES—Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1833

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—SPAIN—EXPULSION OF CERTAIN CUBAN REFUGEES FROM GIBRALTAR—THE DEBATE—Observations, Sir R. Assheton Cross 1833

INDIA—MYSORE GOLD MINES—GRANTS OF LAND TO BRITISH OFFICIALS AND OTHERS—Questions, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Mr. J. K. Cross 1833

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE ACT, 1882—THE INCOME TAX—Question, Lord George Hamilton; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1835

COAL DUTIES (METROPOLIS)—Question, Mr. Charles Palmer; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1836

EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION)—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1837

PARLIAMENT—THE STANDING COMMITTEES—Questions, Mr. Sheil, Mr. Ritchie; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 1837

PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE—REFLECTIONS UPON A MEMBER—Observations, Mr. Warton, Mr. Caine 1838

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE TRANSVAAL DEBATE—Observations, Mr. Gladstone; Question, Lord John Manners; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1840

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE CRIMINAL CODE (INDICTABLE OFFENCES PROCEDURE) BILL—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1841

MOTIONS.

ORDERS OF THE DAY—

Ordered, That the Orders of the Day be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Law relating to Explosive Substances,—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Explosive Substances Bill—

Moved, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law relating to Explosive Substances,"—(*Sir William Harcourt*) 1841

After short debate, Motion *agreed to:*—Bill *ordered* (*Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Solicitor General*); *presented,* and read the first time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir William Harcourt:*)—Motion *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Sir William Harcourt:*)—Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee 1854

After short time spent therein, Bill *reported,* without Amendment.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Sir William Harcourt:*)—Motion *agreed to:*—Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

WAYS AND MEANS—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE—REDEMPTION OF THE NATIONAL DEBT—RESOLUTION—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is inexpedient that the accounts of the Court of Chancery should be complicated through the employment of its funds in the operations of the Finance Minister upon the Public Debt, or that its fixed investments should be converted into Terminable Annuities, wholly alien to the objects, the convenience, or the advantage of the Funds in Chancery,"—(*Mr. J. G. Hubbard,*)—instead thereof .. 1865

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now charged on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-three, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four, on importation into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say): on

£ s. d.
Tea . . . . the lb. 0 0 6 1869

After long debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*
Other Resolutions *moved*, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

MOTIONS.

—o—

Glebe Loan (Ireland) Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Herbert Gladstone*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 138] 1936

TURNPIKE ACTS CONTINUANCE ACT, 1882—

Select Committee *appointed*, to inquire into the Fifth and Sixth Schedules of "The Annual Turnpike Acts Continuance Act, 1882:"—List of the Committee .. 1936

Canal Boats Act (1877) Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Burt, Mr. Samuel Morley, Mr. John Corbett, Mr. Pell, Mr. Broadhurst*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 139] 1937

CANALS—

Select Committee *nominated*:—List of the Committee 1937

[1.15.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, APRIL 10.

REPRESENTATIVE PEERS (SCOTLAND) BILLS—

Petition presented (*The Earl of Galloway*) 1938
Petition read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Representative Peers (Scotland) Bill (No. 5)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Lord Chancellor*) .. 1939
After debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^a accordingly.

Representative Peers (Scotland) Bill—continued.

Moved, "That the Bill be committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Friday the 4th of May next,"—(*The Lord Chancellor*:)—After short debate, Motion *agreed to*.

Representative Peers (Scotland) Election Procedure Bill—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Earl of Galloway*) .. 1961

After short debate, on Question? their Lordships *divided*; Contents 20, Not-Contents 31; Majority 11.

Resolved in the *Negative*.

Division List, Contents and Not-Contents 1963

PARLIAMENT—SCOTCH BUSINESS—Question, The Earl of Minto; Answer, The Earl of Kimberley 1964

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord President*); read 1ª; and *referred* to the Examiners (No. 27) .. 1964

Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord President*); read 1ª; and *referred* to the Examiners (No. 28) .. 1965

[7.0.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, APRIL 10.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

GOVERNMENT ANNUITIES AND ASSURANCE ACT, 1882—THE TABLES—Question, Viscount Lymington; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1965

POST OFFICE (CONTRACTS)—THE IRISH MAIL SERVICE—Questions, Mr. Tottenham; Answers, Mr. Fawcett 1966

POST OFFICE (CONTRACTS)—THE IRISH AND SCOTCH MAIL SERVICES—Question, Mr. Tottenham; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1967

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE BRIGHTON VOLUNTEER REVIEW—Question, Mr. Marriott; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1968

NAVY—THE CLYDE COURT MARTIAL—Question, Mr. R. T. Reid; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1968

EXPLOSIVES ACT, 1875—STORAGE OF GUNPOWDER IN IRELAND—Questions, Colonel King-Harman; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1969

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—INTIMIDATION—Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1969

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—MILITIA REGULATIONS—Question, Sir Joseph Bailey; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1971

ARTIZANS' AND LABOURERS' DWELLINGS ACTS—Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1971

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—Question, Mr. Onslow; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1971

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Questions, Sir R. Assheton Cross, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1972

INDIA—RUMOURED RETIREMENT OF THE VICEROY—Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1973

MOTIONS.

—o—

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—COUNTS OUT—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That if it shall appear, on notice being taken, during any Debate, that forty Members are not present, the question under discussion shall be treated as a dropped order, and the House will proceed to the consideration of the next Order of the Day or Motion on the Paper,"—(*Sir Hussey Vivian*) 1973

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—COUNTS OUT—RESOLUTION—*continued.*

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is inexpedient to institute any rule or practice whereby discussion of Motions in order, and before the House can be evaded by the withdrawal from the House of Members favourable to some Motion later in the Orders of the same day,"—(*Sir Joseph M'Kenna,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn:*—Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

DISTRESS (IRELAND)—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That the chronic distress prevailing in certain congested parts of Ireland can be most safely and efficaciously relieved by a judicious and economic system of migration and optional emigration, together with a consolidation of the holdings from which tenants are removed; that, in the present condition of Ireland, such a scheme can be successfully carried out only by a Government Commission, with certain statutory powers, including those of purchase and sale; and, in the opinion of this House, this is a subject which demands the serious attention of Her Majesty's Government, with a view to early legislation,"—(*Mr. O'Connor Power*) .. 1984

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "migration and optional,"—(*Viscount Lymington.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 33, Noes 99; Majority 66.—(Div. List, No. 54.)

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Patents for Inventions (No. 3) Bill [Bill 99]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Mr. Anderson*) 2052

Motion *agreed to:*—Bill *considered* in Committee.

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Anderson:*)—Motion *agreed to:*—Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Tuesday* 8th May.

WAYS AND MEANS—

Resolutions [April 9] *reported,* and *agreed to* 2053

Ordered, That it be an *Instruction* to the Gentlemen appointed to prepare and bring in a Bill upon the Resolution reported from the Committee of the whole House upon Ways and Means on the 6th day of this instant April, and then agreed to by the House, that they do make provision therein, pursuant to the said Resolutions.

COMMONS—

Select Committee *appointed:*—List of the Committee 2053

[1.45.]

LORDS.

TOOK THE OATH FOR THE FIRST TIME.

MONDAY, MARCH 12.

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

SAT FIRST.

TUESDAY, MARCH 13.

The Lord Greville, after the death of his father.

THURSDAY, APRIL 5.

The Lord Egerton, after the death of his father.
The Lord Vaux of Harrowden, after the death of his grandfather.

COMMONS.

NEW WRIT ISSUED.

MONDAY, APRIL 2.

For *Southampton*, *v.* Charles Parker Butt, esquire, one of the Justices of Her Majesty's High Court of Justice.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

MONDAY, MARCH 12.

Borough of Chipping Wycombe—Lieutenant Colonel Gerard Smith.

MONDAY, MARCH 19.

Mid Division of the County of Chester—The hon. Alan de Tatton Egerton.

THURSDAY, MARCH 29.

Tipperary—Thomas Mayne, esquire.

MONDAY, APRIL 9.

Southampton—Alfred Giles, esquire.

HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE

FOURTH SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SECOND PARLIAMENT* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*,
APPOINTED TO MEET 29 APRIL, 1880, IN THE FORTY-THIRD
YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

SECOND VOLUME OF SESSION 1883.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Saturday, 10th March, 1883.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1882-3)—Class III.—LAW AND JUSTICE; Class V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES; Class VII.—MISCELLANEOUS; REVENUE DEPARTMENTS. *Resolutions* [March 9] *reported.*

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee*—£2,233,958 9*s.* 8*d.*, Consolidated Fund.

PUBLIC BILL — *Withdrawn* — Seed Advances (Scotland) (No. 2) [108].

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SEEDS ADVANCES (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) BILL.—[BILL 108.]

(*Dr. Cameron, Mr. Cochran-Patrick, Mr. M'Laren, Mr. Mackintosh.*)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

DR. CAMERON: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move "That the Order for the Adjourned Debate on the Seed Advances (Scotland) Bill be discharged," and, with the indulgence of the House, I will briefly state my reasons for doing so. The object of the Bill is very urgent, and unless accomplished at once, cannot be accomplished at all. From the form which the opposition to it has assumed, it appears to me that any attempt to get the Bill passed before Easter is now practically hopeless. After Easter, it will be too late; and, in these circumstances, I have come to the conclusion that the most humane course is to withdraw the measure forthwith, rather than, by retaining it on the Order Book, to interfere with an earnest attempt being made to do, by means of private charity and by way of gift, what I was anxious to see accomplished by way of loan.

Motion *agreed to.*

Order *discharged;* Bill *withdrawn.*

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1882-3).

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

(1.) £45,032, Irish Land Commission.

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, he desired to call the attention of the Committee to the increasing amount of this Vote. Last year it was estimated by the Government at £92,000, and this year it was £137,000, showing an increase to the enormous extent of £45,000, or about 50 per cent. For the present year—1883-4—it was proposed to ask for £20,000 more, making the total amount £157,000, which, capitalized at 3½ per cent, meant something like £4,000,000 of money; and this sum, added to the £2,000,000 which was to be paid out of the Irish Church or Consolidated Funds for the arrears, represented a capital sum of £6,000,000 already voted by the country to back up the policy of Her Majesty's Government. Now, he fearlessly asserted that if the House had, two or three years ago, foreseen that they would be actually called upon to vote millions of money—enough to have bought up all the interests of the indigent peasantry in Ireland in their holdings—they would not have passed the Land Act. Well, they were paying these large sums, and the question for the House to consider was, what good they were doing with them. He maintained that the Land Commission Courts were not giving satisfaction in Ireland, either to the one side or the other. The people who got the most benefit out of them were those who were asking for more money; and he had very little doubt that there would be another Supplementary Estimate next year, seeing that the work of the Commission would be greatly in arrear. He said that both sides were dissatisfied. The landlords had every reason to be so; and if the same sort of thing were to go on long, he believed they would have as much dissatisfaction among the loyal population of Ireland as had existed for so long a period among the disloyal. The Land Commission Court was said to be a Court of Equity. He himself called it an Arbitration Court, and he was not aware of any other case in which the country had been called upon to pay anything towards the expenses of an Arbitration Court. The cost had always been paid under the arbitration itself. The only contribution by the tenants who were taking advantage of this Court appeared to be a sum of £6,000 out of the total of £137,000. This was the sole sum paid by the tenants, who were receiving millions under the Act, and who were, nevertheless, crying out for a new Land Bill. The country paid all the rest. He warned the Government that they were laying down a dangerous principle in making provision that the expenses of an Arbitration Act should be paid out of the monies of the State. One subject which he had specially risen to call the attention of the House to was the manner in which the Land Commissioners were discharging their duties. He was sure that, through the usual courtesy of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, he should receive some explanation. If he did not, he should consider it his duty to propose a reduction of the Vote for the amount allowed for the new Commissioners. The question he had to bring before the House was this, that the Land Commission Court was a most unfair and unjust tribunal in its present mode of proceeding. He was sorry to say that of any Court in Great Britain. There was no reason why the Commissioners should not be able to deal justly between landlord and tenant; but they appeared to have taken up one particular line, and they were necessarily one-sided and biased in their views. They had not to go far to see why it was that the Commissioners were at present acting in a way which must be, in the opinion of those who wished to weigh his words, unfair to one class in Ireland. When they were appointed, it was to reduce rents; they all knew that the Land Bill was brought in to bring about a reduction of rents. When it was found by the Government that the idea of Land Commissioners, as to reduction of rents, was being carried beyond all reason or justice, they did take an honest view by appointing Court valuers—men who had acquaintance with land, who understood how to value it, who knew the use of land, and what it was worth. But when these Court valuers went to work, it was found that they did not reduce the rents as far as the Commissioners had done before, and the consequence was that the Government said that if they did not give satisfaction they must be removed. They did not give satisfaction, and a great outcry was raised against them. But who was it they did not give satisfaction to? It was the tenants. And the sole cause of disaffection was that they did not cut down rents below what was fair and just; therefore they were removed, and there was a large sum in the Estimates for the services of these Court valuers, and then another large sum for the Assistant Commissioners, who replaced them when they were thrust on one side. In this way the Government had attempted to please everybody by blowing hot and cold. In appointing Sub-Commissioners, it was quite evident that the intention of the Government was to go back to the large reduction of rent which formerly took place, and not to renew the fair rents which the Court valuers were fixing. The result of all this was that the Sub-Commissioners saw they could only please Her Majesty's Government, and retain their posts, by acting unfairly and unjustly towards the landlords; and then they again began to reduce rents below their proper value. Since the time when the Government showed their hand so plainly the valuations had been made lower and lower, and the rents cut down. The Land Commission had altogether put on one side the word "appeal" which ran through the whole of the Act. The Act provided that those who were dissatisfied with any decision should have a right of appeal to the Commissioners themselves. But the Land Commissioners, knowing that the landlords would be dissatisfied, and would appeal, had made rules for the guidance of appeals which virtually set aside the provisions of the Land Act. The appeal cases of the Land Act had consequently become absolutely null and void; and it was deserving of the consideration of the House whether they ought to continue to vote money to a body of men who were distinctly putting aside, by rules of their own, that which ran through every clause of the Land Act—namely, the right of appeal. He would tell the Committee one or two facts connected with this matter. In the first place, the Land Commissioners had passed a rule that they would not give costs in any case where the landlord, being the appellant, did not get back the whole of the rent which had been reduced by the Sub-Commissioners. The consequence was, that if the Sub-Commissioners reduced the rent by 25 per cent, and the Chief Commissioners, on appeal, gave back 20 per cent of it, the landlord would still have to pay the costs of the appeal. It could not be supposed that this could have been done except with the intention of keeping the landlord out of the Court, and it was a monstrous injustice to him. He would mention a circumstance which took place the other day in Armagh. An appeal was brought before three of the Land Commissioners, Mr. Vernon being absent, and the decision given by the Court in the first case was so flagrantly unjust, that the barrister who was to conduct the appeals, consulted there and then in open Court with the attornies by whom he was employed, and asked if it was worth while to proceed further. It was decided at once not to go on with the rest, as it was found impossible to obtain justice. He thought that the House should put its foot down upon these sort of proceedings at the first opportunity, by refusing to vote further sums of money for such a body. Before, however, moving the reduction of the Vote, he would wait until some answer had been made by the Government; but unless he received satisfactory assurances from the Government, he should certainly move the reduction of the Vote.

COLONEL O'BEIRNE said, the hon. and gallant Member who had just sat down (Captain Aylmer) had pointed out the enormous increase this year in the cost of the Land Commission Court. He (Colonel O'Beirne) quite agreed with the hon. and gallant Member in protesting against that increase; and he further objected to the Vote, because it did not set forth any particulars—such, for instance, as how much the Government allowed to the Land Commissioners for travelling expenses per day, and whether all the sub-Commissioners received the same remuneration. Were they all placed on the same level as Professor Baldwin, who was a skilled agriculturist, and did they all get the same salary as that gentleman? The additional expense incurred by appointing Sub-Commissioners had been proposed with a view of expediting the working of the Land Act; but, nevertheless, the work had been scamped. It had been done in the most hurried and incomplete manner. He knew that was the case personally, because he had had cases decided under the old system, and under the new. The Sub-Commissioners hurried over the holdings, made a pretence of examining the land, and then cut down the rent; and the Chief Secretary for Ireland would tell them that all the satisfaction they could get from the Castle was the assertion that the very best men who could be appointed had been appointed. He (Colonel O'Beirne), however, knew from the way in which the Sub-Commissioners had done their work, that at least half of them were unfit for their position. Last year it was stated in "another place" by the Leader of the Opposition that the Land Bill was passed under false pretences. That was a sentiment which, he thought, the whole of the country now agreed with. He certainly thought that the extra Land Commissioners had been appointed under false pretences.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, he trusted that some explanation would be given by the Government with regard to this Vote. There were two different points of view from which the question ought to be regarded. In the first place, the Government should see how far the expense would be justifiable from the point of view of the Administration itself. As to the Land Act, he did not wish to re-open that subject. He had repeatedly said that it was an Act which confiscated a considerable portion of the property of Her Majesty's loyal subjects in Ireland, and handed it over, without compensation, to a class who, on the whole, were disaffected and disloyal. As a matter of statecraft, he thought nothing could be more mischievous than for any Executive Government to propose such a measure to Parliament. But Parliament, in its wisdom, on the assurances of Her Majesty's Government that this most unprincipled enactment would produce peace and contentment in Ireland, had most unfortunately participated with the Government in the perpetration of one of the greatest legislative crimes which could be traced in the annals of history. So much for the Land Act. They were told that this measure, which took away, without any compensation, a large portion of the property of the loyal inhabitants of the country, would be successful in restoring peace. It had already been seen, by the statements of Her Majesty's Ministers themselves, that the Act had signally failed to restore peace, and that it had proved a signal and notorious, and, he might add, a well-merited failure. Having spent the money of the country, and jeopardized their own reputation, by passing this measure, they now asked Parliament to put its hands still more deeply than it had already done into the National pocket in order to extend the expenses of the Act. In regard to the salaries, he was not prepared to deny that the labourer might, in many cases, be worthy of his hire, and that if they had Commissioners they ought to be paid. He was not going to say anything with regard to the individuality of the gentlemen who had been appointed Sub-Commissioners. He wished to avoid all personal references; but he thought it worth while to point out that a great deal too much of the energy expended in the criticism of the Act had been wasted on the gentlemen who were popularly known in Ireland as the "sub-confiscators," whereas the action of the "sub-confiscators" having been confirmed on appeal by the Chief Commissioners established under the Act, the blame ought to be laid on the shoulders of those who were really mainly responsible—the "chief confiscators." It had been said by his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) that a great injustice had been done in reducing all rents throughout the country, without any regard to whether they had been previously high or low. Now, it was notorious that the panacea of the Liberal Party a generation ago for remedying the grievances of Ireland—namely, the introduction of free land, which was to get rid of all the old encumbered owners, and to allow the land to become a marketable commodity and to pass freely like any other article of commerce—had resulted in introducing a class of owners who had inflicted great injury upon the cause of proprietary rights in the country by raising their rents to the point at which the investments became remunerative. The "chief" and "sub-confiscators," however, combined in simultaneously reducing indiscriminately, by an uniform standard, not only the rents of farms upon estates such as those, but likewise in reducing the rents of holdings upon which for centuries the rents had never been raised a single shilling. Both classes had been reduced, without distinction, about 25 per cent. This was the result of the proceedings of the Commissioners, and it ought to instigate Parliament to look more closely into any augmentation of the Expenditure of the country in machinery of this kind. His hon. and gallant Friend had referred to the disinclination exhibited on the part of the Chief Commissioners in giving facilities which the law contemplated with regard to the right of appeal. By the rules which they had laid down they studiously evaded the provisions of the ordinary law, and refused to grant facilities for overhauling their own proceedings. He granted that the Commissioners might have some reason for desiring that their conduct should not be reviewed by an impartial body learned in the law, because he thought that on the only occasion when, despite all efforts to prevent it, they were forced to allow an appeal, so that their proceedings might be overhauled, there had been a significant dissent from their conclusions by the highest tribunals of the land. The result of all these things was that the country had got into a worse state than it had ever been known to have been in in the course of its previous history. It was said that "the proof of the pudding was in the eating," and although that was generally a very unfair test to apply, he must remind the Committee that Her Majesty's Government had never denied that the only justification of their Irish policy, even from their own point of view, must be its success. In this case they found that rents which had always been considered fair had, to the intense astonishment of everybody, been arbitrarily reduced, and, before the ink which gave the award was dry, the fortunate tenant, who had succeeded in getting that present made to him by the gentlemen whose salaries the House were now asked to increase, sold that right to occupy the land for a rent considerably below its value for a very large premium. That had been done over and over again, and numerous instances of the kind must have been brought to the knowledge of Her Majesty's Government. In reality, Parliament was asked to spend this money, not for the purpose of benefiting the position of tenants for all time, but to put a premium into the pockets of the person who happened to have the good fortune to have hired the land for 12 months, and who, during that time, induced the Government to become his accessories in a scheme of spoliation. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, in discussing last night a question affecting Jamaica, said it was not a question of a Parliamentary subscription, and reminded them that the proposal for transferring various charges from the Colonial to the Imperial funds did not impose taxation upon themselves, but upon the people of the country generally. Now, who were asked to contribute these heavy bribes to the disloyal tenants of Ireland? It was, among others, the long-suffering English tenant farmer, who had had bad seasons and times of heavy depression to struggle against for a long series of years—the long-suffering British farmer, who had not even the promise of a Seed Bill, or anything whatever to be done for him, or even a word of commiseration in Her Majesty's gracious Speech for the sufferings he was undergoing. Yet that British farmer was now called upon to provide his share of this large sum to be spent in the way he had referred to. And what were the results even from the point of view of the confiscation of property in Ireland—the lowest standpoint he could take? The net results of the national expenditure under consideration were infinitessimal, even from the dishonest tenant's point of view, as the reductions of rent resulting from this large expenditure were comparatively trifling. He trusted that the House would set its face against any further contribution of the public money in that direction. The money already granted had been badly invested. The results had been disastrous, and he thought they would, if persevered in, be not only serious for the interests of the British taxpayer, but a discredit to the nation.

Mr. P. MARTIN said, he regretted the spirit shown in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. J. Lowther). The experience which he had acquired as Chief Secretary ought to have taught him that its tone and matter would arouse and spread the discontent and disaffection which at present unfortunately existed in Ireland. Those in that House who were willing to allow themselves to come to a calm and impartial judgment, could not, he believed, fail to perceive that the present state of that country was in great measure occasioned by blind and unreasoning opposition to all reform, and the course pursued by the right hon. Gentleman himself when in charge of the affairs of Ireland. Persistent refusal to even consider acknowledged grievances had given strength and force to that flame of agitation which had recently swept over that country. Indeed, even those of the landlord class who understood their real interest now knew how detrimental that policy had been. If a well-considered Land Bill, like that of the late Mr. Butt's, had been fairly considered, discussed, and carried on its merits, he thought they would have had Ireland at the present moment loyal, happy, and contented. But it was in consequence of rash and ill-considered statements such as those which had now been made to the House, and the belief that reason and argument would be of no avail, that a great number had sought to attain the object they sought by those unconstitutional and illegal practices which had done so much evil in Ireland. Having made these few remarks in reference to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, he desired to pass a few comments on the Vote at present before the House. He certainly considered that the principles laid down in the Land measure of 1881 were right and just. They were founded upon demands that were made by the whole of the tenantry in Ireland, and supported by a considerable number of the landlord class who understood the people and their own interests. But he must also say that many of the provisions of that Act, and the procedure devised to obtain the benefits it professed to confer, as well as the manner of its administration, necessitated and encouraged agitation and a war of classes. Observations had been made with respect to the appointment of Sub-Commissioners, and with some of those observations he entirely coincided. Although he attributed to Her Majesty's Government the best intentions, he thought there was but too much reason for the belief which was entertained that fitness and capability had been overlooked, and that very many of those appointments had been made on political grounds and considerations. Men had been selected, apparently, only for the reason that they had given a political support to the Party in power. The question of religion, he admitted, ought not to be allowed to weigh over-much in matters of this kind; but it was strange to find so few Catholics had been appointed. Not unnaturally did he and others feel distrust when they found that the claims of some Catholics whom he could name, of high position, who could not be said to have given any ground for suspicion that they would not act impartially, and hold the scales of justice evenly between all parties, men who had discharged the duties of Grand Jurors with satisfaction, had been wholly overlooked and ignored. He thought that this was a deplorable state of things, and one which ought to be remedied. He did not intend to enter into any lengthened statement as to the qualifications of the particular men on the Sub-Commission. On an Estimate of this character it would be unreasonable and unfair for the House to do so; but he would ask any fair-minded man to consider the general qualifications of many of the men who had been appointed Sub-Commissioners. He regretted to say that there had been an undue preponderance of the Body to which he had the honour to belong—namely, the Bar of Ireland. He certainly failed to see how a junior barrister could obtain any practical knowledge of the value of land, sitting in the Four Courts, and studying dusty volumes of legal lore. He admitted that at the head of each Sub-Commission, as at present worked, a barrister might be required, but he should be a man of eminence and high standing, in whom the public would have confidence. But on what grounds could a number of junior barristers, even though men of talent, be considered qualified to discharge the duties incident to the task of ascertaining fair rents? Those having a practical experience in the different qualities of soil, and the capabilities and mode of working different farms, could alone be expected to come to a just conclusion on this matter. A wide-spread opinion existed that very many of these appointments had been conferred upon individuals simply for political services, and for having gone down to a contested election to aid the Liberal candidate. For the sake of the tenantry in Ireland he thought the Government ought to have appointed upon that Sub-Commission men of practical judgment, experienced men who knew what the value of land was, and who could arrive at a fair conclusion upon the matter. He was not speaking unadvisedly on this matter. Any hon. Gentleman who took the trouble to look at the evidence given before the Lords' Committee, would see that what he was stating was fully borne out. Mr. Justice O'Hagan himself, when examined, gave a remarkable instance, which certainly proved that, so far from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther) being right in asserting that the members of the Sub-Commissions were appointed in the interest of the tenants, the tenants themselves had been the sufferers; for the learned Judge narrated that when he and Mr. Vernon sought to ascertain on what principle one of these gentlemen so appointed as Sub-Commissioner would proceed to fix a fair rent, this gentleman made them all smile; and Mr. Vernon was much amused, and said that if the land was to be valued in that manner, no tenant could possibly get a living out of it; and, as an example, it was stated that this gentleman had now become and was one of the ablest of those acting as Sub-Commissioners. How could the Government expect to find satisfaction amongst the Irish people, when appointments in connection with the administration of the Land Act were given to persons unqualified to discharge the duties required to be performed by them? If practical men had been appointed, and the barristerial element diminished, there would have been a better representation of the Catholic majority. He claimed no monopoly for Catholics; but it was believed — and he thought on good grounds—that there had been—though he believed Lord Spencer had acted with the best intentions—a practical exclusion of many well-qualified Catholics. The appointments of the Sub-Commissioners should be made because they were men qualified to do the work—men who understood the letting value of land, and able to arrive at a just decision respecting it. At present, there was the greatest uncertainty and want of uniformity in the decisions given. It was simply a drawing for prizes in a lottery. One portion of a gentleman's estate was valued on Monday, for instance, by two gentlemen, probably barristers; and, on the Saturday following, another portion of the estate was valued by two other gentlemen, who might, perchance, be practical valuators or land agents. Even assuming, as he was willing to do, that the gentlemen who went on Monday arrived at such conclusions as they, from their standpoint, considered just, it was little likely to be based on the same principles or to agree with that arrived at by those who valued on the Saturday. He hoped the Government would give some attention to this subject, and allow the Act to be amended; or, if they did not think that amendment was required for this purpose, that they would give such directions to the Commissioners in Dublin as would render its application in this respect more satisfactory to the people of Ireland. It was acknowledged in all parts of the House, and the matter he was glad to say had passed out of the region of Party feeling, that the Purchase Clauses, if they were properly worked, would be the portion of the Act from which the Irish tenantry would derive this most important advantage. Peasant proprietaryship was the kernel of the Act, and it was by that alone, as had been pointed out over and over again in that House, that any satisfactory solution of the Irish Land Question could be arrived at. But what did he find? There was a Gentleman at the head of the Commission who was regarded in Ireland as representing the Government view of this matter—Mr. Litton, the late Member for Tyrone. And Mr. Litton's views were given in no mistakable manner; they were thoroughly opposed to the extension of the Purchase Clauses, or, in point of fact, to what he called "the action of the Purchase Clauses being stimulated." That was Mr. Litton's opinion, and he fortified it by what they could well understand as coming from a Northern Member. Forsooth, in the judgment of Mr. Litton, although every other man of sense might think otherwise, if they gave peasant proprietorship to Ireland, they would lead to the separation of the two countries. That was the reason why he did not aid in the working of the Purchase Clauses, and Mr. Litton, as they all knew, being one of the most active Members of the Land Commission, and representing, as was believed, the views of the Government, it was but natural that they should find the result of Mr. Litton's opinions in the Report of the Land Commission which had been laid on the Table of the House — namely, that the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act had not merely been overlooked, but apparently impeded in their working. Under these circumstances, he thought the Committee would do well to look very carefully into the Estimates, and that they should receive a very satisfactory statement from the Government before they assented to the Vote.

Mr. BIGGAR said, in the few remarks he had to make on this subject, he should probably be found not to agree thoroughly either with those hon. Members who made wholesale charges against the Sub-Commissioners, or with those who held their administration of the Land Act to be perfect. With regard to the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther), he (Mr. Biggar) had read in the newspapers, from time to time, reports as to the amount of judicial rents fixed by the Sub-Commissioners, and his experience certainly did not coincide with the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. He found that in many cases the reductions were exceedingly small, while in others they were very large; and he was led to believe that the Sub-Commissioners, in the main, tried to value the land upon its merits. At the same time, he had been told in conversation with agriculturists, that a very sound judgment was not displayed by the Sub-Commissioners, who, he was informed, in some cases, drew a slight distinction between very indifferent land and that of a superior kind; and that information led him to the conclusion that although the Sub-Commissioners endeavoured to do their best in the main, they were not really competent, and that their business qualifications were not such as to entitle them to the full confidence of the people. There was another objection, which he thought had been properly raised, as to the action of the Sub-Commissioners generally—namely, that a very great discrepancy was believed to exist between the decisions on certain points by the Sub-Commissioners. He was told that, in similar cases, certain Sub-Commissioners fixed the rent at a sum which gave the tenants good value, but that other Commissioners made reductions that were not at all adequate. The point raised by the hon. and learned Member for Kilkenny (Mr. P. Martin), that amongst the Sub-Commissioners there was a very great divergence of opinion, became more important when it was considered with regard to some parts of Ireland. In the valuation of land, it was essential that the persons who valued it should be free from local prejudice; at the same time, it was desirable that they should know something of the system of agriculture and the nature of lands in particular districts, in order to arrive at a correct valuation. But the fact was, that in many cases gentlemen had to value lands in the South or West of Ireland who came from the Northern part; and although, perhaps, they had some knowledge of the value of land, conditions of climate, as well as mode of culture in that part, yet they were sent away to remote districts in the South, perhaps, where their judgment was of very little value. These were two difficulties which seemed to him very great. Again, there was a great fault in the drawing of the Act of 1881. When the Bill was introduced it contained a definition, if he remembered aright, as to the way in which fair rents were to be arrived at. This, however, in order to facilitate the passage of the Bill through the House, was eventually struck out. From all he had heard, however, notwithstanding the promise that instructions to the Sub-Commissioners should be given, either by the Government or the Chief Commissioners, to the Sub-Commissioners, there was nothing approaching to a principle upon which this re-valuation of land in Ireland was conducted. If the Bill had not been drawn too fast, and if it had contained the principles which were to guide the Sub-Commissioners, then, he said, the tenants and landlords would have had an opportunity of bringing their cases into Court, and, as a result, more substantial and regular justice would have accrued. Again, as far as he could see, the Chief Commissioners were very unwilling to change the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners, and, except in a very few cases, they seemed to discourage, as far as lay in their power, anything in the shape of an appeal or the re-hearing of a case. Whether that were right or wrong, it was not for him to say; but the fact was as he had stated, and it seemed to him that the old Government valuation, which was so very much discouraged during the passage of the Act, was much more regular and consistent than the valuation now being taken by the Sub-Commissioners. With regard to the attack which had been made by the hon. and learned Member for Kilkenny on the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire, he was bound to say that it was perfectly uncalled for. For his own part, having had experience of four Chief Secretaries for Ireland, he very much preferred the right hon. Gentleman to any of the other three.

MR. BRODRICK said, the speech of the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) had been conceived in a tone which seriously affected the criticisms made in all parts of the House in connection with the Land Commission, and he thought it contained one or two points which particularly deserved the attention of the Government. The hon. Gentleman had said there appeared to be no principle of re-valuation of land in Ireland on which the Sub-Commissioners were proceeding. Now, that was a point the Committee were bound to deal with before passing the Vote, because, if it were a fact that confidence was established neither amongst landlords nor tenants by the way in which the Land Act was being administered, then, he thought, they were right in considering whether the country was justified in spending £140.000 a-year on the administration of an Act which was not giving satisfaction. He submitted to the Committee that it was ridiculous to suppose that the Chief Commissioners in Dublin could really review the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners; he did not mean to say that occasionally, on a matter of principle, they could not do so, but that it was impossible in practice for any Commissioners sitting in Dublin to change those decisions. If that were admitted, they were brought face to face with this difficulty. The Government had introduced the Land Act, and carried it so far, in order to deal with existing rents; and the fact, by the admission of all classes, was that there had been no appreciable effect on the distress in the Western districts of Ireland. The Land Act was pronounced and admitted to be wholly inadequate to meet that distress, which had to be encountered by other means, including the ordinary method of Poor Law relief. It was equally admitted that the Purchase Clauses of the Act had been rendered inoperative, greatly in consequence, he believed, of the way in which it had been administered. The Government had, in fact, outbid themselves, by placing before the tenant so large an inducement to remain in his holding, that he was not inclined to sacrifice money, in order to purchase what, in a few years, another Act might give him a large slice of. When they looked at the remedies proposed for relieving the distressed districts in the West, and the remedy of purchase agreed to by all parties for making the various classes of the population contented, then, he said, it was wrong to vote large sums in order to sustain the administration of an Act which was giving so little satisfaction. And now, having placed the objection he had to this Vote on a general principle, he wished to point out the position in which they stood with regard to the predictions made by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, as to the satisfaction which would be given by the Act. He ventured to observe that every single prediction made from the Government Benches, as to the working of the Land Act, had been wholly falsified. Going back to the time of the passing of the Act, it had been stated by Lord Carlingford, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), and the Law Officers of the Crown as their opinion that rents would remain unchanged; whereas, the fact was that, in nine cases out of ten, or, perhaps, 99 cases out of 100, they had been reduced; and he might add that the prediction as to the whole of the Irish tenantry going into Court had not been entirely swept away. It was said, also, that the reductions made would not affect the large estates on which the rents had remained unaltered for a great number of years; but, in view of what had taken place, he thought it was incumbent on Ministers of the Crown to remember that if they were to continue to make statements of that character, they should in future support them by a reference to facts. The truth was that rents on the large estates had been very greatly reduced. He would take one instance of this which he had met with that morning, in looking through the Reports. The rents on the estate of Lord Gosford, in Armagh, were below even Griffith's valuation; 31 cases were, however, taken into Court; the original rents amounted to £760; the judicial rent was fixed at £560; the deduction being 25 per cent of the former. In another instance, the deductions made were over 25 per cent, and that in the case of some holdings the rent of which had not been changed for 25 years. He submitted these figures as a proof that the prediction as to the confidence to be established by the Act had been entirely swept away. Another statement made constantly was that there would be an increase in the selling value of land. He did not think anybody really believed there would be any such increase, although, it no doubt, suited the Government to suggest it at the time of the passage of the Bill through the House. But what were the facts? The selling value of land in Munster in 1876 was 21 years' purchase; the average in the Estates Court was now 14 years' purchase. But in 1876 the sales of land amounted to £1,100,000, whereas last year they amounted to only £100,000. These were facts that must be dealt with by the Government side by side with the agitation now, to a certain degree, existing in the country, when they came to consider whether confidence was being established in the country by means of the Land Act. Again, they were told that the Act had increased the competitive' value of land, notwithstanding which, he believed he might say that in many parts of the country there had been no such increase. In those districts, the security for the tenure of land was so small, that tenants could not be found to give nearly as much for it as they did four years ago. When these facts were taken together, he ventured to think they were entitled to hear something more from the Government Bench than they had yet heard. Whenever hon. Members brought forward complaints as to the action of the Sub-Commissioners, they were always met with the statement that of the 90,000 cases brought forward in the Land Court, 22,000 had been decided, and about 20,000 settled out of Court. The Government knew perfectly well that the cost of going into Court was absolutely ruining the poorer tenants; and they knew that on estates where the landlords were on good terms with the tenantry, the landlord often had to choose between impoverishing his tenants by going into Court and impoverishing himself, at the same time, by the enormous costs which had led so many landlords to the necessity of cutting down their establishments. They had been told that, when rents were fixed, they would be paid as regularly as the dividends at the Bank of England. But that was not the case. The present system was actually that described by the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar). The Sub-Commissioners drew no distinction between inferior and superior land. Some of them had not got the desire to go into the case sufficiently deep to be able to decide properly; indeed, most of them had gone most cursorily over the cases on which they were called upon to judge. No valuer of land could do his work efficiently in such weather as the present; and Griffith himself maintained that no land ought to be valued at any time except in late spring or early summer. He saw that, in the County Cork, one Sub-Commission had to settle within a week 115 cases; and he asked, how could any body of men do justice under such circumstances? Every time, however, that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland spoke on the subject, he mentioned with pleasure the enormous number of cases which had been settled in Court during such and such a time, a fact which was damning to the idea that the Sub-Commissioners could possibly do the justice which it was desired to see them do. These were important matters, which must meet with the attention of the Government, when they asked for such a large Vote of the present character. It could not be forgotten that the evidence of one section of those engaged had been severely shaken by the action of his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Since the right hon. Gentleman came into Office, a body of valuers had been appointed, and the speech in which the Chief Secretary for Ireland explained the reason of their appointment produced an exceedingly unfortunate impression upon the owners of land in Ireland. Those valuers, after a short time, were removed, and their places had been filled by men who were believed to be less efficient for the work they were required to perform, and no cause for their appointment was shown, except that to which he had previously alluded—namely, that the Sub-Commissioners were not getting on sufficiently fast. That was one thing that was unsatisfactory. As to the dissatisfaction of the tenants, he knew that, in some parts of the country, there had been dissatisfaction because the reductions had not been so large as in other parts. He believed he was right in saying that the hon. Member for Cavan belonged to a part of the country in which the reductions of rent had been as large as 40 per cent. That was a very satisfactory state of things for the tenants immediately concerned; but, of course, all the tenants in the neighbourhood who had not been equally well treated were dissatisfied. Still there was a system of hurrying on the Courts; and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether confidence could not be produced by enabling the Commissioners to use proper time and judgment over their business. He would remind the Committee that, during the last three years, the increase of expenditure for the Civil Service Administration of Ireland had been £450,000 per annum. We were at this time paying close upon £500,000 more than formerly, in order to produce a state of facts which was no more satisfactory than it was when the present Government came into power. We were face to face with as many problems of the Irish difficulty as we were three years ago, despite all the legislation, all the agitation, all the bad feeling which had been engendered; and he submitted that the necessity of the enormous and increasing expenditure now proposed should be made clear to the country by the Government, and it should be justified by language a little less general than they had hitherto listened to.

MR. O'SHEA said, he did not hesitate to say, despite what had been stated by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Brodrick), that there had been sales of tenant right where very large prices had been obtained. Rents were, no doubt, being reduced; but he hoped rents were being paid. ["No, no!"] He was sorry hon. Gentlemen opposite had thought it right to contradict him on that point; because he knew that in the counties Limerick and Clare and in Mayo rents were now well paid. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was now in a position to state what arrangements he had made for expediting the business of the Land Commission in County Clare. The right hon. Gentleman had acknowledged that the business of the Commission was in considerable arrear. Generally speaking, the tenants whose cases had been tried expressed no dissatisfaction; but enormous dissatisfaction had been created by the extreme delay in that county in the fixing of fair rents. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to tell them that day what arrangements had been made in the matter. There was another practical grievance in the County Clare—namely, that no man belonging to that county had been appointed on the Sub-Commissions.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN said, he wished to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant what had been the cost of the operations of the Land Court? The reductions that had been effected by the Land Commissioners had been something like £20,000 a-year; but what had been the expense? It had been calculated at something like £200,000 to the public, and £200,000 to the landlords and tenants. That was, undoubtedly, a good deal to pay. If his right hon. Friend could inform the Committee on the point, it would clear up considerable doubt. With respect to the number of cases going into the Land Courts, it should be remembered that the Land League devised what seemed to be a very practical suggestion in the way of remedy. They proposed to take a certain number of test cases, advise the tenants so far as they could influence them to abide by them, and then allow the result to rule in the different districts to which these conditions might apply. Government, however, refused to comply with that reasonable and practical proposal; and he (Mr. Cowen) thought that a good deal of the expense consequent upon the numerous applications under the Act had been occasioned by the action of the Government. Complaint had been made by an hon. Member on the Opposition Benches as to the decrease in the value of land in Ireland. It was quite true that there had been a decrease; but there had been a great decrease in the value of property all over the country in recent years. He (Mr. Cowen) had had painful experience of the fact in the North of England, where land could not be let at anything like the amount it realized a few years ago. He believed that, in Ireland, they were suffering exceptionally; but still, remembering that the value of all trading commodities had declined, he thought it was unfair to draw such a comparison as had been drawn.

Mr. WARTON said, the question put to the Government by the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen) was a very practical one—namely, what the cost had been of making the reductions of rent in the case of the Irish tenants? The hon. Gentleman had given the reductions of rent at £20,000 a-year, and the cost of obtaining the reductions £200,000 to the tenants, and £200,000 to the Government, to say nothing of the enormous cost to the landlords. He supposed the landlords were not worthy of consideration in the opinion of the hon. Member for Newcastle. If the system of insane legislation—for the recent legislation of the Government was insane, as well as dishonest—was to continue, it was very necessary that proper Estimates should be framed—that the Committee should have some idea conveyed to them of the cost of the rash proceedings of the Government. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Porter) would direct their united minds to the subject, and be able to give the Committee some practical figures regarding the cost of the working of the Land Act. It seemed to him (Mr. Warton) that all this enormous expenditure might have been avoided by the adoption of a very simple plan. Why did not the Government honestly bring forward a Bill, providing that all rents in Ireland should be reduced 25 per cent? Only a very short Bill would have been needed to do that, and it must necessarily have been as simple as it was short. Evidently such a reduction was what the Government aimed at, and what, indeed, some of the Sub-Commissioners had been making. The Land Courts were perfect farces; they were not Courts of Arbitration, and, in the proper sense, they were not Courts of Law. They were overshadowed by the influences of the Government, and were composed of a set of persons who knew that the retention of their posts depended upon the pleasure they gave the Government. The way they did give pleasure to the Government was by showing that the wretched measure had produced some results. The object of the Government was, by pampering and sopping agitation, and by introducing a measure which would inflict loss upon the loyal population of Ireland, to retain their hold upon the country, and to a certain extent they had succeeded. He had shown how the enormous expenditure the Committee were now called upon to meet might have been avoided. Let them see in what better and more profitable way the money might have been spent. He would not go into the general question of distress in Ireland, for they had heard all the details from hon. Gentlemen sitting below the Gangway. They were, however, told that the sum of £150,000 would be enough to relieve the distress now prevailing in Ireland; and, in the opinion of the Government themselves, a similar sum would be sufficient to promote emigration in Ireland for two years. Thus the Committee would see that the sum they were asked to vote for these unjust Courts would be enough to relieve distress, or to promote two years' emigration. It was amusing to him to see the constancy with which hon. Gentlemen opposite believed in a Ministry of political quacks, whose prescription was false, and whose remedy had made the disease worse than it was before.

Mr. T. A. DICKSON said, he did not propose to go into any details regarding the working of the Land Act, because they would have ample opportunity, next Wednesday, of discussing all matters connected with the administration of the Act, and amendments required in the Act. He only wished to say a word or two in reply to the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther). They had listened to the right hon. Gentlemen's usual denunciations of the Land Act, and had heard from him a repetition of the statement that the property of the landlords of Ireland was being confiscated and handed over to the tenants. Now, as an Irish Member, knowing something of the Land Question in the Province of Ulster, he would tell the right hon. Gentleman and the Committee that not one shilling of the value of the property of the landlord had been touched by the decisions of the Land Courts. By these tribunals the tenants had partially restored to them a portion of their property which had been confiscated steadily during the last 50 years. He would ask hon. Gentlemen who sat on the Ministerial side of the House—because a great many hon. Gentlemen opposite were not open to reason on this subject—to refer to some of the Blue Books in the Library, and they would find that three-fourths of the reductions made by the Land Commissioners were made upon advances put on the rents during the last 20 years. He entreated hon. Gentlemen to examine the facts, because it was only by going into particulars that they could really ascertain what was being done by the Land Courts in Ireland. The increases of rent made during the last 20 years were on the tenants' improvements, and had confiscated their value, and had destroyed, to a great extent, the tenant right. And yet hon. Gentlemen opposite wondered why there was a Land Question. These increased rents lay at the very root of the discontent prevalent in Ireland. Year after year, while the landlords' property was protected, the tenants' property was left without one particle of protection; and hence the state of affairs that had occurred in Ireland during the last three years. They had heard a great deal in the House, and in a portion of the English Press, about those who bought in the Encumbered Estates Court having the rents they purchased reduced; but he did not know of a single case. Let him give the Committee an instance. A gentleman bought in the Encumbered Estates Court a rental of £117 a-year in the County Antrim. He paid for that something like £2,200. What did the Commissioners find? Why, that the rental of the estate was now £425. He (Mr. T. A. Dickson) would ask the Committee to whom the difference between £117 and £425 belonged? Was not that extra rack rent put upon the tenant's improvements, and the value of his tenant right destroyed? Reference had been made during the debate to the question of peasant proprietary. He could only say that, at the present time, in Ulster, there was not the slightest anxiety in regard to purchasing. The question to them was the settlement of a fair rent, and until fair rents were determined by the Courts, it was perfectly useless to talk about the creation of a peasant proprietary; and Parliament need not expect in the meantime peace or rest in Ireland. He would refer, in conclusion, to a remark made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Surrey (Mr. Brodrick). The hon. Gentleman quoted the case of Lord Gosford's property in the county of Armagh. As he (Mr. Dickson) lived within a few miles of it, he understood something about it. The hon. Member said that the rents on Lord Gosford's property were fixed below or about the Government valuation. Now, what was the fact? The County Armagh was the last of the counties valued in Ireland. It was valued in 1865, and, according to the testimony of the valuation officers in Dublin, the valuation of Armagh was 20 or 25 per cent above that of the rest of Ireland. Armagh County was valued in prosperous times, when the linen industry was flourishing, when there was a hand-loom in every cottage, when flax-growing was a most profitable industry. All that, however, had passed away, and the Commissioners found that the people had solely to depend upon agriculture, with the result that the rack rents could no longer be paid. On Wednesday next, when the Land Law Amendment Bill would be introduced by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), he (Mr. Dickson) would prove to the House, from evidence given before a Select Committee, that Griffith's, or the Government valuation in the Province of Ulster included the tenant's improvements; and when rents were being fixed at Griffith's valuation, and when Griffith's valuation, according to the evidence given by Mr. Green, Mr. Vernon, and Mr. Richard Griffith, included the tenant's improvements, he could only say that instead of the fair rents fixed confiscating one shilling of the landlord's property, they really included a substantial portion of the tenant's improvements.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, so much had been said recently of very great moment that he was extremely anxious to answer one or two points, while the impression produced by those points was still fresh on the minds of the Committee. His hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen) had stated some figures in the shape of a question which, undoubtedly, made an impression on the Committee, and which, no doubt, would, if they went uncontradicted, make an impression on the country. The answer he was able to give would, he hoped, be gratifying to his hon. Friend. The hon. Member said that the reductions of rent made, up to the present, amounted to about £20,000 a year, and he wished to know at what cost to the country those reductions had been made. Now, as to the expense to the country, the Vote for this year was £137,000; but the Vote last year was certainly very much smaller. He supposed the two sums together would not very much exceed, if they exceeded at all, the sum of £200,000. Well, now, what had been done in the matter of reductions of rents? He would not argue upon the justice or injustice of the reductions, but simply inquire what the reductions amounted to. In fair rents fixed, up to that moment, the reductions amounted to quite £130,000 a-year. But the Committee must also take into consideration the agreements which had been arrived at out of Court, which were exactly as much the result of the operation of the Land Act as the fair rents fixed. Up to the present time the agreements out of Court had resulted in a reduction of rent to the extent of £80,000 a-year, so that the reductions in the yearly rental of Ireland was equivalent to the amount already spent in a capital sum upon the working of the Act. Whatever conclusion hon. Gentlemen might draw from these figures, it must certainly be very different from that which they would draw from the figures of his hon. Friend.

Colonel KING-HARMAN asked if the right hon. Gentleman had taken an account of the risings made in some of the rents, and what was the cost to the landlords?

Mr. TREVELYAN in reply, said, that he did not think that would make much difference; but the Land Commission had not supplied particulars on that point. The Commission not being a Public Department, it was impossible to get from them statistics in the same manner as from an ordinary Public Department of the State, and therefore the figures he gave were generally but fairly accurate. The Committee must likewise take into consideration the reductions that were made outside the Court; and he remembered, on a previous occasion, stating that there was reason to believe that the reductions made directly in consequence of the Land Act were scarcely greater than those made out of Court altogether. He drew this conclusion from a paper which had been prepared by a very distinguished and much employed land valuer in Ireland. He had valued about 1,250 holdings for the purpose of fixing the rent; and out of those 1,250 holdings, only a small number, somewhere about 100, had gone through the Court, and in all the other cases the rents were fixed by agreement, while it was almost certain that a very small proportion of those were agreements not under the Court.

Mr. BRODRICK asked if those agreements carried judicial rents?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, they did not carry a judicial rent of 15 years; but there was an understanding that that was the settlement upon which the landlord and tenant would work. At any rate, it would not be denied that the indirect effect of the Land Act had been a considerable reduction of rents. The hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) had gone upon figures which were far more alarming than even those of the hon. Member for Newcastle, because he took this large Estimate of £137,000, and, having capitalized it, said it represented £4,000,000. That was the most extraordinary way of dealing with Estimates in a business-like country that he had ever heard of, because it implied that the Land Commission would be perpetuated at the size at which it was at present required by the Land Act. Now, whatever view might be taken of the slowness or rapidity of the work of the Commission, it was certain that that work must have a term, and the time was coming, whether at the end of one, two, or three years, when the staff of the Land Commission would be considerably diminished; but the hon. and gallant Member's calculation proceeded on the supposition that the Land Commission would sit to all eternity. The hon. and gallant Member had stated that, in his opinion, the Commission was unfair and unjust in its present mode of proceeding. Upon that Estimate it was extremely natural, and quite Parliamentary, for hon. Members to criticize the proceedings of the Court; but he did not think it was necessary that on that Estimate the Commission should defend itself. He had got into the hottest water he had ever experienced in the House of Commons upon criticisms of the decisions of the Land Court, and he did not intend to put his fingers into that hot water again that day. The hon. and gallant Member had repeated the old story of the valuers. In calling it the old story, he did not mean that it was one which should not be referred to again and again in the House. What happened in regard to the valuers and the Sub-Commissioners was a matter which presented appearances of great gravity; but the Government thought its gravity was exaggerated on both sides. His defence on that occasion was extremely detailed, and even lengthy, and he did not propose to repeat it now; but the hon. and gallant Member had said it was evidently the intention of the Government that the rents should be reduced, and, therefore, they dismissed the valuers. In the first place, they did not dismiss all the valuers. Five of those gentlemen, who most commended themselves to the judgment of the Land Commissioners—whose advice the Government took in regard to those gentlemen—were appointed Sub-Commissioners; but whatever valuers they dismissed or retained, their action was not on account of their having reduced or raised rents. The right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gibson) had frequently urged him, last Session, to lay on the Table a copy of the Letter, dated August 28th, from the Land Commissioners to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the constitutional mode of procedure of the Sub-Commissioners. That was the Letter, in fact, in which the recommendation was made that these valuers should be appointed. [Mr. GIBSON: It was always refused.] The Letter was refused practically because the Land Commissioners were unwilling to give it; and it was only after considerable difficulty that he had been able to overcome their unwillingness. The Letter was now on the Table of the House, and he would quote the first paragraph—

> "May it please your Excellency, I am directed by the Land Commissioners to submit the following observations to your Excellency, with respect to the change in the constitutional mode of procedure of the Sub-Commissioners, with a view to increased efficiency and despatch."

The Government, as he had explained, were not unwilling to regard the feeling, whether it was right or wrong, that there was too much despatch in valuing the lands, and, therefore, they were glad to adopt a method by which the lands could be valued with more thoroughness and more leisure; and the Government, in changing the system from valuers to Sub-Commissioners, were quite satisfied that they had secured that object; because, instead of having but one pair of Sub-Commissioners who surveyed the land, and then hurried back to settle the decision with the legal Sub-Commissioner, they now had two pairs, who were always at work, and not under the same pressure—as only one pair were obliged to do the work with the greatest rapidity in their power, in order to get back and utilize the full time of the legal Commissioner. Now, with regard to the rapidity of the work, the Government had been thoroughly disappointed with the valuers; but their hopes, which, at any rate, with regard to some were not excessive, had been fairly satisfied with respect to the rapidity with which the work was done by the double Sub-Commissioners. Down to the 18th of August, the end of the time when the Commissioners, as originally constituted, sat, the greatest rate of progress was 76 judicial rents fixed per day. Then the Commissioners with the valuers sat, and there was one more Sub-Commission at work; but the whole effect produced by one more Sub-Commissioner, and the addition of these valuers, was that the average number of decisions rose from 76 per day to 77 per day; and, considering that there was a new Sub-Commission, it might be fairly said that the effect of attaching the valuers to the Sub-Commissioners was not to quicken this progress, but rather to retard it. From the middle of January to the end of February, the Sub-Commissioners had been working on the new system, and the result was that the same number of Sub-Commissioners as, with the valuers attached, produced 77 decisions a-day, were at present producing 100 decisions a-day. And it must be remembered that the time during which this system had been in operation was perceptibly shorter than the time during which the Sub-Commissioners and the valuers were at work; and rapidity of work told cumulatively as time went on, because it was in the earlier weeks and months that decisions came slowly, while it was in the later weeks and months that the cases began to quicken as decisions were more rapidly made. Therefore, as far as rapidity was concerned, the Government watched the proceedings of the newly-constituted Sub-Commissions with hope. With regard to this Estimate, he felt that, in some respects, the Irish Government were not as responsible as the Treasury, though he was willing to answer any questions on the subject. Reference had been made to the high salaries of the Assistant Commissioners, and it was said that while some of them were worth their salaries, others were not. He thought, however, that it would be a very dangerous principle to apportion the salaries of Judges according to an official estimate of their value. With respect to another question, the travelling expenses of the Sub-Commissioners were their actual railway expenses, with a guinea a-night for their subsistence allowance when staying at an inn or hotel. While he was hardly prepared to answer questions as to the pay of these officials—though he had no objection to answer such questions—he was fully prepared to reply to any criticisms upon their appointment. There had been a good deal of criticism by hon. Members on the *personnel* of these Sub-Commissioners. He could quite understand that an hon. Member might know some gentleman who would make a good Assistant Commissioner, and that when such gentleman was not appointed, while someone of whom he knew nothing was appointed, he should think that the Government had acted with a want of knowledge equal to his own absence of knowledge of the gentleman who had been appointed. But if the Government had erred in this matter, it was quite clear that they had not erred through a want of diligence. In this matter the personal knowledge which he possessed of Ireland had stood Earl Spencer in good stead; but it was not true that these appointments had been dictated by the Castle. It was difficult to define the Castle influence, but he could define it as an influence other than that by which these appointments were dictated. By far the most influential advisers of the Lord Lieutenant in this matter were the Land Commissioners themselves. He himself was present with the Lord Lieutenant during one of those lengthy sittings of many hours, which had been so common in recent months, at the Viceregal Lodge. At that sitting the Lord Lieutenant went through the list of men, and even considered those whom he thought very likely to commend themselves to his judgment. He went carefully through them with the Commissioners, heard everything that was to be said about them; and afterwards he sent a list of the names to the Commissioners, in order that they might make separate inquiries, in addition to the inquiries he made by letter of every possible authority who could be trusted to give an opinion. A letter from Earl Spencer describing the principle upon which he made these selections had been quoted, as far as he could gather, in a derogatory sense.

Mr. P. MARTIN: No; excuse me. I praised the frankness of the letter in the principles it contained, and said I believed a Member from the North of Ireland had said it was a foolish letter, because it threw light on the way in which these appointments were really, in fact, made.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he did not know the name or the views of the hon. Member who made that observation; but all he could say was that, so far from it being foolish, he thought it was a very well-judged step to publish that letter, when so important a tribunal was having two-fifths added to it numbers. It was a judicious step to publish a letter stating, in strong and clear terms, that no private influence was of any avail, and no regard was paid whatever to the religion of a candidate. No regard whatever being paid to the religion of the candidates, the consequence was that among those appointed were gentlemen of almost all persuasions. There were 30 members of the Church of Ireland; 35 Roman Catholics; 9 Presbyterians; 1 member of the Society of Friends; and 10 who were unwilling to state their religion, or whose religion was not notorious; and he was bound to say that, in spite of the criticisms passed to-day, he thought these appointments had been satisfactory in Ireland, so far as appointments made to carry out any Act which did not give satisfaction to the people could reasonably be supposed to be satisfactory. The hon. and learned Member for Kilkenny County (Mr. P. Martin) had objected that there were too many barristers on the Sub-Commissions; but he should remember that, by Section 43, the Sub-Commissions must have the prescribed qualifications, and one of those qualifications was that one of the number of each Sub-Commission must be a barrister. With the exception of the legal members of the Commissions, there had been every desire to appoint gentlemen who were thoroughly and practically acquainted with land. Then, with regard to the question of the tenure of office of the Sub-Commissioners, there ought to be no mistake upon that point. Twelve would hold office for seven years from the date of appointment; 35 who had been appointed most recently would hold office until December 31st; there were 39 gentlemen who were appointed nearly a year ago who would hold office until April 13th next; and under the latest rule made by the Land Commission, as to tenure of office, those 39 would be re-appointed by the Lord Lieutenant before the 13th of April, and would continue to hold office until December 31st. It was the intention of the Land Commissioners to recommend their re-appointment, and there was little doubt that that recommendation would be adopted. In that case, by the end of the present year all these short temporary appointments would expire together. What would then be done it was too soon to say; but the feeling of the Government was quite as strong as that of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. J. Lowther) could be against temporary appointments. He thought he had now replied to all the points upon which discussion had arisen. It was necessary and right that the Government should reply, and if he had omitted any matter he would gladly deal with it. On the question of how far the sufferings of Irish landlords, with whom he thought all ought to sympathize in the highest degree, were local or general, he must say, with his experience of English land, that he thought some of the defects ascribed to the Land Act were due to deeper causes than the dismissal of valuers. He would not enter into that branch of the subject, but would leave his right hon. Friend to answer any objections. With respect to the arrangements in the county of Clare, that was a matter to which the Land Commissioners had applied their full attention, and when they promised to look into a matter he had always found their promises fulfilled.

MR. GIBSON said, that, having regard to the magnitude of this Vote, and its obvious importance, and the practical nature of the debate now proceeding, he thought everyone, including the Members of the Government, no matter what their haste and urgency, must recognize that it was in the best interests of the country that this discussion should take place to-day, rather than at a quarter before 2 o'clock in the morning. This Vote amounted to £45,000, and anyone who looked at the Civil Service Supplementary Estimates would see that this was much the largest Supplementary Vote submitted to Parliament on the present occasion. On account of its size alone, bearing in mind that all Supplementary Estimates were to be regarded from a very critical point of view, this Vote challenged inquiry and criticism; but even the statement of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and statements made earlier in the debate, indicated that the expense of the Land Commission in Ireland, always high, had been advancing in size by leaps and bounds; and that the enormous figure upon this Supplementary Estimate fell short of the Estimate which would be discussed after Easter for the coming year. The country could not too clearly understand that the original Estimate for 1882-3 for the Land Commission amounted to £92,500; while the Estimate for the coming year reached the enormous sum of £157,381; in other words, the Estimate for the coming year, as contrasted with the Estimate of the past year, showed an increase of £64,829 to be paid by the Imperial taxpayers of the United Kingdom. That was a very startling state of facts, which should be discussed and explained in the face of day, and not hurried over in a scamped discussion at 2 in the morning. The original Estimate for 1882-3 was £92,552, and the Committee were now asked to vote a Supplementary Estimate amounting to an increase of 50 per cent; in other words, £45,032. He thought he was entitled to ask the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, who was obviously appalled by these figures, this question. This being the enormous subvention which the Imperial taxpayers had to pay for the Land Commission, what was the amount contributed by the Irish suitors, who gained all the advantage, towards the cost of this tremendous machine? Every tenant applying to the Court paid 1*s*., and that was all. For the payment of that 1*s*. on the originating notice, he was free of the Land Commission, and could get, almost for the asking, a reduction of rent varying from 20 to 30 per cent, and a lease certain for 15 years, renewable as long as he pleased. He would ask the Financial Secretary to the Treasury to put into a total sum these shillings; and until the result was given, he asserted that the amount did not exceed £7,000. So that, according to that estimate, the Imperial taxpayer had to pay for the past year £157,000, while the Irish suitors, who got all the benefits, contributed only £6,000 or £7,000. That calculation left out the figure brought into the discussion by the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen)—namely, the expenses of the suitors from their own pockets for counsel, and solicitors, and witnesses. That was a large and an unknown quantity; but, no doubt, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury could give the figures. He (Mr. Gibson) himself could not give them, as he had not the necessary information. Anyone who considered the number of these inquiries—assuming that only £2 or £3 was spent on each of them—would see that the total expenses on each side, for landlords and tenants, was great. So that now they were face to face with the inquiry—the cost of it, and what was produced by it. To the landlord, it meant grave, sometimes ruinous costs, to avoid which he was often induced to make a settlement. The tenant, on his side, must have great cost to meet, and he also was influenced by that in arriving at his settlement; and over and above these obvious costs to the parties, which were to be counted by vast sums, they had to consider the costs to the Imperial taxpayer. This suggested very serious inquiries. It was an unsound principle of judicature that the suitor alone should be called upon to keep up the Courts and administration of justice in the country. He did not suggest it—he had never done so, for he did not think it would commend itself to any Parliament worthy of the name; but he might say that the suitors who availed themselves of a great machinery like this should pay some fair part of the cost. If the effect of requiring the payment of some small fee was to induce suitors to reflect before they embarked in litigation, an advantageous result would have been achieved. He ventured to think that these fees of 1*s*. were fixed originally at that ridiculously low figure in order to entice suitors into Court at a time—at the outset in October, 1881—when it was thought very doubtful whether there would be any suitors at all. It was the only way possible of explaining why they had only put that one charge on that one transaction. He ventured to think it was almost the only tribunal calling itself a Court which charged nothing to the suitor for an appeal; and bearing in mind the steady way in which the Government and the Land Commission, as a question of policy and politics, had tried to discourage and penalize appeals, it was marvellous that they had never thought of the simple expedient of putting some small—not prohibitive—sum as a charge on lodging an appeal. That could not be said to be a proposition from a landlord point of view, because a large number of landlords had appealed. Instead of proceeding in that logical way as to appeals, the Land Commission, agreeing with and following the Government, had proceeded—as had been pointed out by the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had introduced the debate (Captain Aylmer)—by methods which would not stand the test of criticism, to discourage and penalize and undo appeals. He should like the Committee to consider—and it did not require any legal mind or technical training to do so—what were the methods by which the administrators of the Land Act had endeavoured to discountenance, discourage, and punish appeals? The system of costs had been stated already. The landlord might have had his rent largely reduced by the Sub-Commission—say 30 per cent. On an appeal he might have succeeded in raising the rent again, not to the original point at which it was before, but 25 per cent—that was to say, instead of having his rent reduced 30 per cent, as reduced by the Assistant Commissioners, he might have succeeded in reducing the reduction to 5 per cent—an immense change. The rule laid down by the Commissioners—to be applied broadly and as a rule—was that although he had succeeded in the substance of the appeal, and although he had so materially reversed the action of the Sub-Commissioners, because he had not got back the rent as it originally stood, he must pay his own costs. He (Mr. Gibson) said, with a reasonable knowledge of the transactions of most Courts in the United Kingdom, that there was not another Court purporting to administer any system of justice which had such a rule as that. What was the other method? It was to discourage appeals which came before them by wholesale affirmances. Every suitor, landlord or tenant, if he was dissatisfied, and if he felt aggrieved—knowing his own interests, and he was the person to judge of his own interests—had a right under the Act to demand a re-hearing, and have his case heard on appeal. A notorious case was that of the appeals in Armagh—in the absence of Mr. Vernon, he was bound in justice to that gentleman to say. In this case it appeared that in almost all the appeals which came before the Commissioners, whether it was an appeal against a large reduction, or an appeal against a small reduction, or appeals from decisions wholly divergent, although the same class of cases and the very same properties had been the subject of those decisions—no matter what the appeal was, in almost every case the appellant failed, and had to pay his own costs. Anyone who read the proceedings of the Appeal Court at Armagh would find this startling state of facts, that the leading counsel—counsel as eminent as any in Ireland—said, after consulting with their solicitors, that it was worthless and hopeless to go into the cases and explain the matters. Was that the way an appellate jurisdiction should be administered? If it was thought a wise policy that appeals should not be allowed, a neater and shorter operation than this would be to abolish appeals altogether; but let it be done in the face of day by Act of Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had referred to the abolition of the valuers. That abolition had caused a very substantial addition to the Supplementary Estimates. He (Mr. Gibson) asked—and they had a right to be told before the debate closed—what was the cost to the nation of the valuer system? He asked to be set against that, in plain figures, and not in vague generalities, the cost of the system that had superseded the valuers. He asserted that the comparison would show an increase of thousands of pounds, and he demanded that the contrast should be submitted to the judgment of the nation. He declined now to discuss—he had done it on previous occasions—the policy of the Government in dismissing the valuers. It was a thing which would for ever remain a matter of criticism against the administration of the right hon. Gentleman. He did not now discuss whether the valuer system was sound or unsound—whether it was good or bad—but what he said was this—that it was the system deliberately selected by the Land Commission, as the system they themselves considered soundest to administer the Act of Parliament entrusted to them, and that their opinion upon the vital and crucial point was overborne, for political reasons, by the action of the Executive Government. As he had said before, he cared not whether the system was sound or unsound—that was not his point. In this instance, a precedent of a most perilous significance had been set in the administration of an Act of Parliament, which should have been administered impartially and independently, and solely in regard to justice. As the right hon. Gentleman who had just preceded him had stated, he had repeatedly asked, during the discussions in the Autumn Session, for the letter of the 28th August; but he had never been able to get it. He had asked for it seven or eight times. The letter had now been produced, and what did it state? Why, it said that the appointment of the valuers was asked for, in the opinion of the Land Commission, because it would lend efficiency and despatch to the administration of the law. The Government now practically admitted that they put despatch before efficiency. They did not contravene or question the fact that the valuers' system had worked well. They admitted it in the House. The valuers were got rid of, not because they dissatisfied the Land Commission, but because they did not come up to the views of the Government with regard to despatch. The Government evidently put haste, scamped work, rapidity of action, before the administration of justice, and the administration of this great Act of Parliament. There was another letter written later than the one to which he had referred, one which he had not in his possession, but which he had no doubt would be produced before the debate closed. He had not had time to get it since the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. The Chief Secretary, on a previous occasion, had read a passage from it, and, having done that, he was compelled to lay it on the Table. Let them contrast the letter of October with the letter of August—the letter of October being the document to which he was now referring. They would find in that letter of October how strongly the Land Commission approved of the appointment of the valuers, and how reluctant they were to see the action of the Government discredit them. His hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) had called the Land Commission "Courts of Arbitration;" but he (Mr. Gibson) could not accept that description. No doubt, a great many papers of the highest authority made that statement; but the very essence of an Arbitration Court was either that the parties interested should have the selection of the arbitrators, or that they should concur in their appointment. Why, if the Government administered this Act from their own point of view, and if they had the sole appointment, they could not be surprised if one set of litigants were dissatisfied when they saw arbitrators appointed to give decisions in favour of the other. Now, did the new system work better than the old, or, as he was now entitled to ask on the Estimates, did the new one work more cheaply than the old? This, no doubt, was a topic dear to the mind of the hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary to the Treasury. He did not now discuss the *personnel* of the new appointments. He passed from them with this general criticism—that, so far as investigation had taken place and anything was to be found out about them—he said nothing about their private characters, for he was sure they were excellent sons and husbands—very worthy and excellent people—he had no doubt that these gentlemen had been extremely useful in many Liberal elections in the North of Ireland. He heard very recently, in "another place," a distinguished Nobleman connected with Her Majesty's Government—a Nobleman holding a high and dignified Office—say that the present administration of the Land Act showed that the reductions were not so high as they had been, and that the larger properties, which had already been referred to, they either did not touch at all, or they touched with a very delicate hand. That was an utterance of only a week old; and they were, therefore, bound to assume that the Cabinet had got some knowledge of the question. The Nobleman (Lord Carlingford) to whom he referred was connected with Ireland by family and property, and by past official service; and he had been speaking as the Representative of the Government, having full knowledge of the subject he was discussing. He (Mr. Gibson) asked anyone whether the reductions which were now made were less than they were when the Act first came into operation? They were told at the outset that the cases dealt with were bad ones. It was said that the first cases that came into Court were worse, and that every year the reductions would be smaller. But were the reductions smaller? Were they less now than they were during the first three months of the Act? He did not know any of the cases that had been referred to by some of his hon. Friends in the North of Ireland personally; but he knew this—that the Duke of Abercorn had estates which were as well managed as any to be found in the North of Ireland, and that his Grace was as popular a landlord as there was in that part of the country. Well, what happened on the property of the noble Duke? Why, a Court was held there quite recently by five Sub-Commissioners, four lay gentlemen, and one legal. One set of lay Sub-Commissioners went out on the property, and decided upon a reduction of 6 per cent; and the other two lay Sub-Commissioners went on the same property, examined tenancies of precisely the same character and in precisely the same condition, and decided upon reductions ranging from 20 to 30 per cent. It devolved upon the legal Sub-Commissioner, sitting on the same Sub-Commission, to say, in regard to the same properties, that 6 per cent was fair one day, and the next day to say that 20 or 30 per cent was a fair reduction. It was impossible not to feel that that situation indicated that the old properties, which had been managed under the kindest relations between landlord and tenant, and which had been referred to by his hon. Friend the Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson)—properties on which there had been no increase for years—were hit as hard as many of the properties of the harshest rack-renters in the country. Now that the valuers had been removed, and another system that certainly could not be said to proceed on any scientific principles had been established, it seemed that there was nothing to guide or regulate the tribunal, but that on inquiries instituted into cases almost precisely similar, and on the very same property, different decisions might be given. Well, had litigation lessened under the new system? Had this vastly increased expenditure that they were now asked to sanction—mainly due to the substitution by the Government of the new tribunal for that tribunal sanctioned by the Land Commission—lessened litigation? Was it not familiar to anyone with any knowledge of the subject that, as had been stated by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Kilkenny, the present system was a premium upon litigation? Did it not appear to everybody who understood the matter that this system encouraged people to embark in what was to them a lottery in which they might draw a very substantial prize? It was not easy to see, so long as the Land Act was administered in the way which had been indicated by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, how this litigation was to be checked. He did not himself see much prospect of diminishing the litigation under the present system, and especially with a people quick-witted and intelligent like the Irish. Such people they found were litigious. [*Laughter.*] Well, they were not to be blamed for it. All clever people were more or less litigious; but anyone who was acquainted with the subject knew that the Irish people were very fond of the law, and they could not blame them if they found that those who had not gone into the Court were only waiting their time and were going into Court every day in the week, and that the result of that state of things was that everything in Ireland connected with the land system was in a state of unrest and unsettlement. Where there had been judicial rents fixed comparative quietness was secured for 15 years; but, on other properties, where perhaps, the rents had been very low, and the relations between the landlords and the tenants had been so good that up to this the tenants had not gone into the Courts, the landlord could never tell on what day an agitation might not spring up or dissatisfaction might not arise, or something else might not occur to plunge his property into all the turmoil and confusion of litigation. If such a landlord wanted to sell his property, he could not do so for a fair price—say for the price at which he had bought it, and, maybe, he could not sell it at all, because purchasers would not care about taking over a property which might be thrown into the turmoil of litigation when they could get properties upon which the rent had been fixed. He could understand the Government trying to meet this question in some reasonable manner. He should like to see a fuller use made of the Purchase Clauses, and he only said that to protest against what was said about these clauses recently by a Member of the Government—who were bound by the statements they had made last year to revise the "Bright Clauses" of the Land Act. There could be no question about that. Having a tolerably good memory he could give the date. Lord Granville, on the 2nd of May, speaking as a Member of the Government, stated that the "Bright Clauses" required revision. Six days after, or on the 8th of May, in the same place—namely, the House of Lords—the same noble Lord stated that the Government were prepared with a measure dealing with the "Bright Clauses." He should be very glad if these facts were occasionally remembered by Her Majesty's Government, when, from time to time, utterances were made indicating a total forgetfulness of any such ideas ever having crossed their minds. There was one suggestion which he would not discuss now, though he mentioned it—for it might be worth much consideration—and that was that all present tenants who had not appealed to the Land Court might be taken, after a certain day, not to have any urgent desire to go into the Court, and that upon a given day it might be assumed that they were tenants for a judicial term at the rent that they at present paid. He thought himself it was a proposal—and it was one put forward by some very able men—which was well worthy of attention; but it was far too important a matter to go into now in detail. At present the position was this—Litigation was encouraged, the Land Act was administered as a political measure, and this Estimate showed them, as well as the Estimate for the coming year, that the expenses were enormously increasing. What was the round result of the whole of the administration of the Land Act up to this? Why, it was this. Extravagant hopes that no Parliament could satisfy had been stimulated; the tenants of Ireland found, under the administration of the Land Act, that they had been granted what their wildest hopes had hardly suggested to any of them they would ever obtain from Parliament, and, having found that, their hopes were naturally extremely excited in a way which it was very hard to realize and utterly impossible to satisfy. This was shown by the fact that although the Land Act had not been in operation two years, legislation was already proposed, suggesting, practically, to re-open and re-discuss at length some of the most important topics, which it had been believed were settled, at all events for a considerable time, by the Land Act of 1881. That was a result that could not be expected to lead to any very peaceful or rapid settling down of the country. He himself, since the Land Act was passed, had endeavoured, so far as he could, to consider the matter fairly and from a reasonable standpoint, and his proposition had never varied. It was this—the Land Act was now the law of the land, to be so regarded and so treated by everyone, even by those who opposed it in this House. But he said also—and he had never hesitated to say it—that the Land Act should never at any time be administered as a political measure. It should be administered fairly, impartially and judiciously; and if it was so administered—if it were administered in a way that indicated that politics would for ever be kept out of the matter—if it were administered on the broad and salient points he had indicated, it would be found that the Treasury would reap their reward, and that these expenses would not be increasing, as they had been, so rapidly and painfully. No doubt, before this debate closed, they would have the privilege of hearing the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, although he (Mr. Gibson) did not wonder at the hon. Gentleman's shrinking from the discussion. If, however, the hon. Member were tempted to speak, and probably he might be, he (Mr. Gibson) should be glad to ask him—if he cared to indulge once more in the *rôle* of a prophet—whether he thought they were at the maximum of expenditure? They sanctioned the Vote of £92,552 at first, now £132,000, and they were now asked for £157,381 for the coming year. The hon. Member, no doubt, had had a vigorous imagination; but, appreciating that fact, he should like to ask him whether he thought he was at the end of the figures, or whether he thought, if the Administration were spared to them, the expenditure by the Land Act might not reach £200,000 the year after next?

Mr. SEXTON said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Gibson) appeared to be most disturbed, because some hope had been excited in the breast of the Irish tenants. [Mr. Gibson: I did not say anything of the kind.] So long as the class of whom the right hon. and learned Gentleman was the ablest advocate—namely, the landlords—had the power of dealing with the Irish tenants as they pleased, the Irish tenant felt very little hope. It was a fact to all acquainted with the antecedents of Irish landlords that despair in the heart of the Irish tenant was a passion much more acceptable to them than hope. The right hon. and learned Gentleman was certainly in a painful position. He felt himself to be a politician in search of a principle. He wanted to know the principle that had governed the reductions made by the Land Courts. Well, probably, if the Sub-Commissioners were questioned, they would say that they had guided themselves by the circumstances of each particular case. But that was not the answer that suited the symmetrical mind of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The only principle acceptable to him was the principle which made the will of the landlords dominate over the life and fortune of the tenants, and which put into the hands of a small class of men in Ireland the right to say whether the people in that country should live at home, or be forced to go abroad. But the right hon. and learned Gentleman, as also the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, had concerned himself greatly with the question of the cost of the administration of the Land Act. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had entered into a comparison between the cost of the machine, and the amount of reduction it had effected. This was a question interesting enough from an official and administrative point of view; but to hon. Members who were not administrators, and not officials, and who regarded firstly and lastly the condition and prospects of the Irish tenant, this question of absolute cost and relative cost and reduction was one of comparatively little interest. There was very little indeed in the speech of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, which, from his (Mr. Sexton's) point of view, appeared to call for special comment; but he would venture to make upon it one observation. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the new system of Sub-Commissions, and invited them to congratulate the Government upon the increased speed which had been obtained by the appointment of pairs or teams of Sub-Commissioners instead of the old practice of sending out one Sub-Commissioner. Well, he (Mr. Sexton) had had an opportunity of hearing eminent opinions upon the subject; and his impression was, from what he could gather, that the Government were falling from one mistake into another, and were probably falling deeper and deeper into the mire. He had heard that so long as the Sub-Commission consisted of three or four Members, each gentleman felt himself concerned in the speed, efficiency, and reputation of the Sub-Commission; but now that the Sub-Commission consisted of two pairs of gentlemen there was no central sense of responsibility—now that each pair held itself free from the work of the other, the result was a very indifferent, slovenly, and torpid way of doing business. He confessed he found it hard to believe that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen sitting above the Gangway on that side of the House were serious in the speeches they had made that day. Listening to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincoln (Mr. J. Lowther), he could scarcely imagine that his denunciations were levelled against the reform of an agrarian system, which, as long as it was unreformed, produced a state of chronic disaffection, caused the eviction of thousands of families, kept up a forced system of emigration, and was not ashamed to supplement its inflated and exorbitant rents by the contributions sent to the people of Connemara by their relatives who had emigrated to another country. The right hon. Gentleman assailed the Commission, upon which three of the four Commissioners were landlords themselves. What reason was there why he should assail the system of valuation, when the first precedents had been set, either by members of the landlord class, or by persons who made their incomes by being agents to landlords? Was it possible for any landlord to assail a system of valuation arrived at upon such a basis? The right hon. Gentleman was an artist who only played one tune. "Confiscation" was the burden of his lay, and then, by way of pleasing variety, he went into the strain of "Communism." The hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer), who opened the debate, seemed horrified that the Government should have to pay for what he called a Court of Arbitration. But it was pointed out by the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) that these were not Courts of Arbitration. The essence of Courts of Arbitration was that the parties went into them of their own mutual free will; whereas, in this case, the landlords were mostly unwilling parties to the transaction. The English and Irish landlords between them were responsible for the miseries and sufferings of the Irish tenants, and for the condition into which Ireland had been brought; and if the bill was heavy and the estimate was large, both ought to be called upon to pay any amount and to incur any cost, no matter how heavy, which promised to bring Ireland out of a state of anarchy and convulsion into a condition of approaching peace. The hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone seemed to think that he was uttering something very sarcastic when he said that the Land Commission was created for the reduction of rents. In the name of common sense, what could it have been created for? Was the Land Act passed in order to keep rents as they were? If so, there was no necessity for passing it at all. Was it passed in order to increase them? Was there any grievance affirmed or true on the part of the Irish landlord that induced the Legislature to pass the Land Act of 1881? Not at all. If it had been necessary to raise the rents, the landlords of Ireland had long ago proved that they were well able to raise them themselves. Obviously, the work of the Land Court was the reduction of rents. He did not think that that was the most suitable moment for the consideration of this Supplementary Estimate. A fitter occasion to inquire into the proceedings of the Land Commission in regard to recent reductions of rents would be offered when those proceedings could be examined more usefully. But this he said frankly, that the reductions of rents had been, up to the present moment, grossly inadequate; and it was not until the judgment in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath," which left the letter of the law to the tenant, and took away the spirit of it—it was not until that judgment was overborne and wiped out by fresh legislation; and the tenant was made the proprietor of his own improvements as a matter of soil and as a thing of value, that the reductions of rent in Ireland could ever possibly be adequate to the occasion, or anything approaching it. Until the Healy Clause—associated with the name of his hon. Friend whom the Government in their zeal had thrown into one of their prisons—until that clause was carried out in the spirit as well as in the letter, the reductions of rent in Ireland, miserably small as he regarded them, and large as the landlords did, would prove utterly inadequate in affording—he would not say the settlement, nor even the temporary appeasement of the passion which had been thrown around the Irish Land Question. The mournful wail of hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway on that side of the House showed that they knew this as well as he did; and he contended that the past conduct of the landlords had rendered them directly and solely responsible for the decrease of the value of land in Ireland. They had had warnings enough. The approaching rumblings of the storm had been constantly in their ears; but they had listened to them with stupidity, or had been afflicted with deafness. They had allowed affairs to go from bad to worse, and they had persisted in asking for rack rents through years of seeming famine, and sometimes of actual famine. When the country became convulsed, a set of forces came into operation which destroyed for ever all confidence in land in Ireland. He believed that the art of buying and selling land in Ireland was a lost art, and that the knowledge of it would never be regained. An hon. Gentleman had spoken of 14 years' purchase. The more the landlords got embarrassed, the more they would endeavour to sell their estates in bulk, and they would find it impossible to sell it at all to individual buyers who were not their own tenants. He could, therefore, very well understand the desire of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) that the "Bright Clauses" should be more carefully developed, because the landlords were finding that those clauses were their only hope. When the tenants discovered that the landlords must sell to them or to nobody, the value of land would fall, and instead of 11 years' purchase being obtained, he foresaw a time coming, and coming rapidly, when seven years' purchase, and, perhaps, five years', would not be considered a very small price. Therefore, he advised the landlords to bestir themselves, if they hoped to get anything at all, except a ruinous price, for their estates. An entirely new state of things had come into existence in consequence of the insecurity which was now felt in regard to the value of land. Before he sat down he wished to impress upon the House that the Land Court, much as had been said in its favour by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, had proved itself thoroughly and lamentably inefficient for its work. It had now been three years in operation, and it had 17 sets of Courts, each consisting of five Commissioners. Now, what was the number of tenant farmers in Ireland who held leases of the farms they occupied? Out of a total number of 550,000 farms, he believed the total number of leases was about 100,000. Therefore, the number of unleased tenants, estimating them roughly, was about 450,000. And what was the total number of tenants who had made application to the Court, and of the tenants who had agreed with the landlords outside the Court? He would give the Government full credit for the figures they gave as to the number of tenants who had made settlements outside the Court, although he attributed that particular fact to the operation of a very different set of causes. The total number of tenants who, up to January, 1881, had made applications to the Court, or agreed with the landlords outside, was 116,000—that was to say, that, although the burden of unjust rents was felt, generally speaking, by the whole body of the Irish tenantry, only one-fourth of the Irish tenants had applied to the Court, or agreed to settle their claims. Why had the rest not gone into Court?

CAPTAIN AYLMER: Because they are satisfied.

MR. SEXTON said, he had certainly not seen any sense of general satisfaction, even in Ulster, where the tenant had power to sell his tenant right, and where he had security.

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, the fact that the tenants had not gone into the Court must be held to be a proof that they were satisfied.

MR. SEXTON said, he did not find that at the meetings recently held a less grave dissatisfaction with the Act had been exhibited. Of course, the hon. and gallant Gentleman near him might say that the tenants were satisfied; but the hon. and gallant Gentleman knew that they had in operation at the same time the most stringent Coercion Act they had ever known, since the time when Pitt brought about the Union. Under the Crimes Act—like the Act passed by the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster)—no man could utter a sentence without making himself liable to be instantly arrested, thrust into gaol, obliged to wear the prison dress, and pick oakum. Well, one-fourth of the tenants had gone into Court, or settled with their landlords. What were the other three-fourths of the tenants doing? Why did they not go into the Land Court? It was because the Land Court had affected the tenants of Ireland with distrust of its operations. In the second place, he wished to show that the Land Court was making no impression on the great mass of arrears before it. If he went back to the month of June last year, he found that up to the end of that month 88,000 applications and agreements had been dealt with in the Court, or outside, and 67,000 remained to be dealt with. Passing on to the end of the month of January last, covering a period of seven months, at the end of that month he found that there had been 116,000 applications and agreements, of which 55,000 had been dealt with either in the Court or outside, and 61,000 remained still to be dealt with. In other words, there were 66,000 cases to be dealt with at the end of June last, eight months ago, and there were still upwards of 60,000 to be dealt with at the end of January last. Then, what improvement had there been? What impression was the Court making upon the mass of the cases, and what was to be the fate of the tenants who had been kept dangling before the Court ever since October, 1881? He knew in the County of Sligo, of the cases of tenants who had made applications to the Land Court on the first day on which the Act came into operation, now nearly a year and a-half ago, and many of these tenants were still lingering in an agony of suspense. They were liable, until the Court chose to decide upon their cases, to pay the whole rent to their landlords, to be pressed by him for payment, and to be threatened with eviction for non-payment of the old un-reduced rent, notwithstanding that this old unreduced rent had been universally declared to be exorbitant and unjust. He asked the Committee to observe the moral position of the Government. They possessed all the machinery of the Land Court, and their 17 sets of Commissioners; and yet in seven months, down to the end of January last, they had been unable to make the slightest impression upon the arrears. There were two classes of tenants in arrear — those who had made their application on the first day on which the Court sat, and those who had made their application since. The first were in a better position than the second class, because the reduction, when given by the Land Court, would date back from the day on which the application was made; but those tenants who made their application on the day on which the Court sat were a very small proportion of the entire number. The great bulk of those who had brought their cases into the Land Court were those who had gone into the Court in the interval which had occurred since 1881; and they had been threatened, pressed, and some of them evicted for non-payment of the old rent. Their 17 teams of torpid Sub-Commissioners were unable to overtake the arrears. In point of fact, they endeavoured to apply the old maxim—"Live horse, and you will get grass;" they told the tenants virtually to hold on to their farms, to pay the rack-rents by which they were now oppressed, and in the course of time these 17 teams of active Sub-Commissioners would reach their cases. In point of fact, the machinery had broken down, and the Government were placed on the horns of a dilemma. Then, let them do one of two things. On the one hand, let them augment the number of Sub-Commissioners, and make them adequate to deal with the cases before the Court. He confessed that he was not at all concerned about the cost. It was very easy for the Financial Secretary to the Treasury to tell them that the poor rack-rented tenants, who had to dig from morning to night on 10 acres of poor soil, and pay a rack rent of £7 10*s.* could not, having lodged his rent two years ago, wait until it was lowered to £5; but it was time that the hon. Gentlemen who could philosophize upon the subject should feel the real gravity and the reality of the position. He said that one of the alternatives for the Government to adopt was to increase the number of Sub-Commissioners, which would enable them to get rid of this intolerable failure, and meet the requirements of the case. The other alternative was to pass a law, preventing a landlord from evicting a tenant, until the Land Court had decided on the tenant's case, provided that the tenant in the interim paid a fair rent for his holding. It was intolerable that Her Majesty's Government should refuse to provide adequate machinery for doing the work of the Land Court, and, at the same time, to permit the landlords to evict their tenants before the question was settled. It was useless to boast of the efficiency of the Land Court so long as it could be shown that for seven or eight months it had failed to make the least impression either on the original system of Court valuers, or on the second system of Court valuers, or on the present system of Sub-Commissioners. On neither system had the Government been able to make the slightest impression in regard to the arrears. Lastly, the Court was losing the little confidence it ever possessed in the minds of the Irish tenants. He saw the total agreements up to last June were 93,600, and there had only been during last year 11,543 cases decided. Out of a grand total of 115,000, the number of applications since last year was 11,000. That number was not very much larger in eight months than there used to be lodged in one month. It was perfectly clear, therefore, that not only had the machinery of the Court failed, but that the Court itself was failing to attract the confidence of the people. He invited the Government to consider the dilemma in which they were placed, and either to pass a law protecting the tenants from rack rents, or to enable the Court to deal with the applications by increasing the staff. This was a crucial point, and on the speed and courage with which the Government dealt with the question would depend the success of their Land Act.

Colonel KING-HARMAN said, that, after the long discussion which had taken place on this very important subject; he did not mean to stand long between the House and a division upon the Vote, as full opportunity would be given shortly to the House to discuss the entire bearings of the Land Act; and, as many improvements might be suggested in it, he would confine himself closely to the manner in which the money now asked for was being spent. The hon. Gentleman who spoke last (Mr. Sexton) referred to the anxiety felt by the tenants of Connaught during the delay which arose in the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners being given. He entirely agreed with the hon. Member that they were placed in a cruel position. It was cruel also to the landlords that there should be so long a delay in knowing their fate. But when the hon. Gentleman spoke of the tenants of Connaught digging from morning to night to pay a rack rent of £7 10*s*. per acre——

MR. SEXTON said, the hon. and gallant Member misunderstood him. He had not said £7 10*s*. per acre, but £7 10*s*. altogether.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he had known tenants who had been called upon to pay £5 per acre; but that was certainly not the case in Connaught. With regard to the Commission, he must remind the House that it was the English people who had placed it in the country; and it was no great matter to Ireland what the English people, who passed the law, had to pay for it. At the same time, he did object to the way in which the money had been spent, mainly on account of the manner in which the law had been carried out. He agreed with the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), in saying that it was the duty of the Government to see that the provisions of the Land Act were carried out with honesty, impartiality, and despatch. But the matter had not been even approached by them in a fair or honest manner. To begin with, three Commissioners were promised to the House, and the names of some of them were submitted and approved. The House was told that these Commissioners were to be assisted by three Sub-Commissioners; but their names were never mentioned, and, had they been, he thought the House would have strongly objected to them. But there was another point that deserved consideration—namely, that the Commissioners and Sub-Commissioners into whose hands the fortunes, he might almost say the lives, of a portion of the Irish people were committed, unlike any body of men exercising similar functions, were absolutely unsworn. The Lord Chancellor, on taking his seat on the Woolsack, had to take oath that he would do his duty; every officer of a Superior Court had to take oath to do his duty with justice and impartiality; but the Commissioners and Sub-Commissioners of the Land Court were unsworn and unfettered by any obligation whatever, except those which their consciences imposed upon them. He was not going to disparage any of those gentlemen. He knew a good deal about their judgments and decisions however, and had himself been the subject of many of them; and he would say this—that had their names been submitted to the House, and had they been sworn in the usual manner to carry out the law, their decisions would have commanded greater respect. Again, on the question of appeal, a very grave fault was noticeable in the present system, in the fact that the appeal was practically from one set of Commissioners to another. They had heard of an appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober; but the appeal here was from Commissioners determined to reduce rents in a given ratio to Commissioners determined to give no appeal at all. The Commissioners began by stating that they would not vary the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners where the reductions were small, forgetting that where the whole of the rents were small these decisions made a difference of thousands of pounds in the incomes of the landlords. But the question was, whether the rents had been reduced on rack-rented estates in a greater ratio than on those estates where there was no rack-renting. It was well known that the rack-renting landlord had his rents reduced in no larger proportion than the landlord who had been the friend of his tenants; and he said that the decisions of the Commissioners and Sub-Commissioners in respect of rents in Ireland had struck dismay and terror into the hearts of landlords, especially those who had done their best for their tenants. Moreover, he said that those decisions had commanded no respect amongst the tenantry of Ireland, for they were a shrewd and sagacious people; and when they saw one decision given one day, a different decision on another, and so on, some of which might be in their favour, and some of them to their disadvantage, they undoubtedly felt that, as the hon. and learned Member for Kilkenny (Mr. P. Martin) had pointed out, that the whole thing was a lottery, into which they rushed at a small cost to see what they could get. He did not blame them for that; most men would do the same thing. He maintained that if the law were carried out, honestly and without wavering, and upon a sound principle, the expense would not have been nearly so great, because one case fairly and properly settled, on judicial principles, would command for the decisions of the Commissioners support throughout the country which would render practicable the settlement of many cases out of Court. But, in the present state of affairs, this was made impossible; because, on one day, a certain reduction of rent would be made, and, on another, a decision would be given of an entirely different character. He maintained that, by the way in which the law had been administered, discredit had been thrown upon its administrators; that hopes had been raised which had been more or less dashed and minimized; that the country had been kept in a state of excitement and doubt, everything being in an unsettled condition; and that the result of all this was the bloated Supplementary Estimate now before the Committee, and the further large Estimate they would have to discuss after Easter. Having dealt with the question relating to the Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners, he would pass on to that of the other officers whose salaries and allowances they were asked to provide. They had heard much about the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act of 1881, and it appeared there was a portion of the office establishment of the Land Commission set apart to carry those clauses into effect. Shortly after the passing of the Act, he (Colonel King-Harman) had his suspicions as to the value of those clauses, and as to the intentions of the Government with regard to them; and he would mention the circumstance that, in Queen's County, he had an estate on which there was no residence, and which was so far removed from him that he thought it would be well if the tenantry on it could purchase their holdings. That property he had offered to the Commissioners to arrange for its sale to the tenants, and Mr. M. O'Brien went down on behalf of the Commissioners to see the tenants. Some of his own friends, who knew what was taking place, were also on the spot at the time; and he could state his belief that, by the visit of Mr. O'Brien, the tenantry were quite discouraged—that was to say, after his visit to the estate in question, there was, on the part of the tenantry, a greater disinclination to purchase their holdings than there was before. The same kind of thing occurred in the case of the tenants of his friend the O'Conor Don, who were willing to arrange with respect to some of their holdings; after a gentleman had gone down on behalf of the Commissioners, the bargains fell through, and the tenants refused to go on with the negotiations, although the proposed arrangements were fair, and favourable to the tenants. And now, having made a clear statement, mentioned names, and called the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the facts, he asked whether any explanation with regard to them would be given before the Committee passed the Vote which included and authorized the payment of the salary of the gentleman he had referred to. With regard to the valuators, he believed that these gentlemen had done good and wholesome work, and that their dismissal was both arbitrary and impolitic. It was not, however, his intention to pursue that part of the subject. He wished to know whether the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland could state to the Committee how many investigators had been appointed immediately after the passing of the Arrears Act, and how many of those gentlemen who were men of experience and ability now remained? He would also like to be informed how many much younger men had been put in their place? His own impression was that the latter had been taken out of offices in which they were doing first or second-class clerk's work, and put into the Commissioners' office, where the business of both tenants and landlords was greatly delayed, and an immense amount of bad feeling created in consequence. He had now made a deliberate and fair arraignment against the whole of the officials of the Land Commission. His contention was that the work of the Commissioners was not well done, and that there was delay in the settlement of business far exceeding what was necessary; that the same thing prevailed in the arrears department, and that no work, or bad work, had been done in the department for the arrangement of purchase. Having gone through the whole list of offices, he could say there was no one except that of servants to which exception might not fairly be taken; and, that being so, he held that the present increased charge was not justified by the way in which the Act was being carried out.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER) said, that no single department connected with the working of the Land Act of 1881, except that of office servants, had escaped the censure of the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just addressed the Committee (Colonel King-Harman), although that censure had been, in many cases, very indefinite in its form, one portion of it being especially open to that remark. He referred to Mr. M. O'Brien, the accusation against whom was that the hon. and gallant Gentleman having property in Queen's County on which there was no residence, and which he was willing to sell, Mr. M. O'Brien went down to see it in the discharge of his duty, and that after his visit the land was not sold.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I said, before Mr. M. O'Brien went down there was a greater inclination on the part of the tenants to purchase than there was after he went down.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER) said, he was at a loss to see how that could be made a charge against Mr. M. O'Brien; and he suggested that it would have been more fair, in the case of a public officer against whom it might be necessary to prefer an accusation of the kind, for the hon. and gallant Gentleman to have given some notice of the facts beforehand. For his own part, he (the Attorney General for Ireland) was not aware of the circumstances connected with that portion of the hon. and gallant Gentleman's property which had been referred to, and he was not ashamed to say he was entirely unacquainted with the facts, having no kind of notice of or information about the matter. But he would say that Mr. M. O'Brien, who had been in the public service for a long time, was a gentleman utterly incapable of coming to any decision in the slightest degree apart from what he considered to be right. Again, the hon. and gallant Gentleman referring to the Arrears Act, said that charges had been made in respect of the investigators who were appointed at the time the Act was passed. He was not aware that dismissals had occurred. If, however, after the original appointments were made, it was found that any of the investigators were inefficient for the discharge of the duties of the office, others would, no doubt, be appointed. But, as he had before stated, he was not aware that that had been the case. [Colonel KING-HARMAN: I say that it is so.] In that case it was not fair for the hon. and gallant Gentleman to bring forward the dismissal of officers on these Estimates without giving Notice of his intention to raise the question. One of the charges against the Land Commission was that which had been preferred in a speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther), who spoke in the earlier part of the debate—namely, that the Land Court had done all it could to discourage appeals, and that the reason for that was that its decisions were almost always reversed. He was acquainted with the appeals which had been taken from the Land Court; and he said, after considerable study of them, that having regard to the number of appeals that were withdrawn, the number of cases which had to be decided upon points not discussed before the Land Court, and having regard to the decisions that were affirmed, there remained but few cases involving points of law in which their decisions had been interfered with. Having regard to that fact, and the novelty of the Court, and of the law which they were called upon to administer, he regarded the result as very far from discreditable to the Commissioners. He agreed that the work of the Land Court was not to be measured by the amount of the reductions made in rents. But he could not agree with one of the observations of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) that the Land Court was established for the purpose of reducing rents. It was, of course, established in consequence of the state of affairs existing between landlords and tenants; but in no case coming before the Court was it for any other purpose than that of investigating and deciding upon the merits of each particular case—reducing rents where it was proper to do so, leaving them as they were where no reason for change existed, and in some cases increasing them. As regarded the amount of business actually done by the Land Court, he might inform the Committee that in the last year and a-half, up to the end of last month, the number of rent cases decided by the Court was 24,774; cases withdrawn, 3,362; cases heard and dismissed—that was to say, adjudicated upon, 4,812. Thus there were more than 28,000 cases actually decided in the Court of First Instance; and when one considered the enormous amount of work involved in their settlement—although he did not conceal the fact that, in some instances, there had been a certain amount of superficial investigation—the result, as he had before pointed out in respect of appeals, was not discreditable to the Court. Besides the cases in which the Court had decided fair rents, there were those which were withdrawn in consequence of agreements between landlord and tenant, and the cases settled out of Court and in which the agreements were brought into Court, so as to come within the provisions of the Act, and these raised the total number of cases up to the end of last month in which fair rents had been determined to 57,874. When to this was added the enormous number of cases which did not come into Court at all—namely, those settled by private agreement out of Court, he felt sure that at least 100,000 cases between landlord and tenant had been adjusted since the Act came into operation. Thus, out of a possible number of 400,000 which might be brought into Court, something like one-fourth had been actually arranged between the landlord and tenant within the space of a year and a-half since the Act began to operate; and, that being so, he must say that the Court must be regarded as having worked expeditiously and well, and it had certainly belied a great many of the predictions which were made at the time of the passing of the Act. They had heard much of unfulfilled predictions, and sentiments had been expressed in the course of the discussion by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and in other parts of the House, that it was the duty of the Government to instruct the Court as to the manner in which their duties were to be carried out. He could not agree that it was the business of the Government to see that influence was brought to bear on the Courts established by the Legislature with a view to controlling their operations. It was predicted at the time of the passing of the Act that it would take 10 years to get to the end of the 60,000 cases referred to by the hon. Member for Sligo, and that other cases would, in the meantime, crop up which would further tax the administration of the Act. He admitted that the reduction of cases during the period of three months named by the hon. Member for Sligo had not been very large; but in consequence of the recent appointment of additional Sub-Commissioners the working of the Act had been accelerated, a result which he was sure everyone had at heart. He would not deny that inconvenience might result from different valuators being engaged upon parts of the same estate, respecting the value of the land on which they might take different views; but he pointed out that it did not follow because, in one case, the rents were reduced by 6 per cent, and in another by 20 per cent, that the Sub-Commissioners were not impartial in their decisions. But, even assuming that there was inequality, by no machinery could absolute accuracy be obtained; and they could only expect from the Commissioners, as in the case of every other tribunal, that the best should be done under the circumstances. With regard to the appointments, some general allegations had been made; and although, as he had pointed out, there might be opportunities for discussing individual merit, this was not one of these occasions. He was, therefore, not disposed to go into that subject. But he would say this—that no man entrusted with public responsibility could have approached a question with greater anxiety and more sincere determination to do what was right than Earl Spencer had with reference to the appointment of the Sub-Commissioners; he had, moreover, brought to bear on the question his great skill and experience, and had, to his knowledge, been engaged early and late making personal inquiries as to the qualifications and fitness of the candidates for these appointments. He was aware that the other day a noble Lord had said that one gentleman had been appointed a Sub-Commissioner because he was one of his (the Attorney General for Ireland's) strenuous supporters in County Londonderry. The gentleman was mentioned by name. He (the Attorney General for Ireland) never saw the gentleman; he never heard of him until after his appointment, and he had no more to do with the Londonderry Election than hon. Gentlemen opposite had. Now, as to the prospects of reducing the arrears of business. The number of cases still undecided amounted to 60,000 odd. There were now 17 double sets of Sub-Commissioners at work investigating the cases, and the Government believed that not only would there be such an acceleration of business as the increasing experience of the Sub-Commissioners would enable them to produce, not only would there be an increased tendency to settle out of Court, on which he placed a great amount of reliance; but they would find that in a short time some of the Sub-Commissioners would be liberated from the districts in which they were now engaged, and thus be able to go to places which were at present undermanned. He knew one county which was now nearly worked out by the Land Commissioners, and that was not a county in which there was any disinclination on the part of the farmers to assert what rights they imagined they might have. As soon as the Commissioners had completed their work in that county, they would be transferred to some other, where the work was in arrear. It was impossible not to regret that the work did not proceed more rapidly, both from the landlord's and from the tenant's point of view. It was urgently necessary the work should go on as quickly as possible; but there were certain reasonable limits that must be assigned. He thought the Treasury, in the large increase they had made in the means at the disposal of the Commissioners, had contributed as much as could be expected of them. It must be remembered that there was not an unlimited supply of men from whom Sub-Commissioners could be selected. It was impossible to get beyond a certain number of persons, who were qualified, by any standard that could be assumed, for the work. The men appointed as Sub-Commissioners ought to have some experience and skill in the valuation of land; they ought to have some knowledge of the actual working of farms, and they ought to be men above suspicion of partiality. A great many of the gentlemen who had been well recommended had turned out to be persons who, for some reason or other, not connected with politics or religion, it was very undesirable to appoint. Not only might an acceleration of work be reasonably expected, but he believed in some districts the applications had almost ceased to be made. Those who delayed sending in their applications in the first instance had had reason to regret it. As a consequence of the temporary cessation of agitation, applications had come in rapidly for some time past. He believed, however, that applications would not in future be made in very large numbers. Into many of the general questions which had been introduced in the course of the debate it would be unreasonable at present to enter. The matters with which he had endeavoured to deal were matters connected with the administration and the finance of the Act. He had not gone into questions of general policy. He believed that, whatever opinion was entertained as to the policy of the Act, hon. Members in all quarters of the House felt that what was now wanted was a vigorous administration of it. That was what they all had at heart. He could not think that any section in the House would, at present, venture to talk of the repeal of the Land Act. Undoubtedly, many tenants were expressing dissatisfaction at the working of the Act; but there was no hon. Gentleman in the House, and no sane man out of it, who would say that the tenants of Ireland would be willing to give up any of the advantages they had secured by the Act. It was perfectly certain that neither landlords nor tenants had the slightest notion of departing from the principles of the Land Act; and, that being so, he hoped the Committee would see its way without further opposition to approve of the present Vote, which was to defray the expenses incurred in the administration of the Act.

MR. MACARTNEY said, he would not have ventured to intrude himself upon the Committee, but for some remarks made by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) in the course of his speech. The hon. Gentleman spoke of the number of the tenants who had entered the Court, and of the number of tenants who had abstained from taking that step; and he said that, after looking at the figures, it was right and proper to conclude that a large number of tenants had held aloof from the Land Court, because they had not confidence in the Court, and were not satisfied with the provisions of the Act. If there were no agitation going on in Ireland, if no agitation had been commenced, immediately after the Land Act passed, for the purpose of altering the provisions of the Act, of advancing the interests of the tenants in a larger degree, and of depriving the landlords still more of the property they possessed, it would have been surprising to him had not the tenants, to a man, gone into the Court. But when there was an agitation carried on by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on the Opposition side of the House, and by some of the professed supporters of the Government on the opposite Benches, with the object of altering some of the most important provisions of the Land Act, so recently passed, he did not think it was in the least surprising that tenants should abstain from entering the Court. They imagined that while such a squeezable Ministry like the present was in Office there was a chance of another Act being passed which would enable them to get more advantage, and get a far larger share of the property which did not belong to them. His hon. Colleague (Mr. T. A. Dickson) said that the property which was now being given to the tenants in Ireland was only their own, and had been unjustly held by the landlords. He was surprised that a Gentleman coming from the North of Ireland should make such a statement. Did the tenant right exist in the North of Ireland before the passing of the Act of 1881? Had not the tenant a right to sell his holding, and were not his improvements respected? Did not the price of his holding include the value of his improvements? At the present time a tenant not only got the benefit of the improvements he made before his rent was fixed, but he was also entitled to get the benefits of improvements made since his rent was fixed by his landlord. He had now, therefore, a double benefit, which did not exist before. If rents were fixed 90, 95, or 100 years ago, it seemed a most unjust thing that he should be able to claim in the Court a reduction of his rent in respect of the improvements he had made since the fixing of the rent. The rent was fixed before the improvements were made; the improvements were his property; but why should the landlords be deteriorated because the tenant had made improvements? It must be remembered that the tenant had the right to sell his holding, including the improvements he had made. It was also said that the tenants should not be satisfied until leases could be broken. A long discussion took place upon the question of leases when the Act was passed, and what was the result? Why, that where it could be proved that a landlord, either by unfairness or intimidation, or by threatening that it might be worse for the tenant if he did not take a lease, forced a tenant to take a lease, the Court might break it; and it was also provided that if the terms of a lease were unreasonable and improper, and if under it the rent was exorbitant, the lease might be broken. If all the leases had to be broken, no matter what their conditions were, would the tenants agree to the leases which were advantageous to them being broken for the benefit of the landlord? If a lease might be broken for the benefit of one man, it ought to be possible to break a lease for the benefit of another man. He had no intention to make any remarks concerning the Commissioners or Sub-Commissioners. If anything was wrong in the administration of the Act, it was because the Government were at fault in having appointed some men who were not qualified to carry out the Act. He must, however, make a remark upon another observation made by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). The hon. Gentleman said he knew an estate which could not be sold at a higher price than 11 years' purchase; but, turning round to the Conservative Benches, he told hon. Gentlemen sitting there that in future they must not expect so high a price—he, at the same time, hinting at seven, five, and even three years' purchase. The House had, at various seasons and at different times, passed Acts for the purpose of preventing the tenants being ill-treated by their landlords. If it was in accordance with the hon. Gentleman's (Mr. Sexton's) idea of justice and propriety that Irishmen, as much Irishmen as any of the hon. Gentlemen sitting below the Gangway—that Irishmen, whose families had existed in Ireland for hundreds of years, were to be told that they were to be persecuted and hunted out of the country, and then paid three years' purchase of their property, all he could say was that he should be sorry to share the hon. Member's opinion.

Mr. MOLLOY said, he would like to make an observation with regard to the statement of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. The hon. Gentleman accused the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) of having stated that he hoped that in a short time land, which was now sold for 11 years' purchase, would be sold for so small a sum as five or three years' purchase. Now, what the hon. Member for Sligo did say was this—that if the present system continued—that was to say, if there was any longer arrears of cases untried, and the incompetency of the Sub-Commissioners continued—such would be the state of the minds of the tenants in Ireland, that they would be probably unwilling to give more than this very small sum. He (Mr. Molloy) should be sorry that, in his absence, his hon. Friend should be supposed to advocate that land should be taken from the owners for such an absurdly small sum as three years' purchase. It was only necessary to draw attention to the fact to show how ridiculous the assumption of the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Macartney) was. Now, the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Porter), in the remarks he had just made to the Committee, reminded him very much of the late Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Charles W. Dilke). The late Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, when he was much pestered on the subject of Egypt, and kindred matters, and when he was questioned in a manner unpleasant to him, got in the habit of rattling out and throwing at the questioner a number of small details and facts which had no connection whatever with the Question on the Paper, but which so confused the interrogator that he was obliged to accept the answer. The speech of the Attorney General for Ireland, in dealing with the grave matters which had been raised in the course of the debate, was exactly of the same character. The right hon. and learned Gentleman touched upon a thousand and one little things in his speech, but he never came to the real point at issue. What the hon Gentleman the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had said was that within the last three months there had only been an increase of 11,000 applications to the Land Court; and that while eight months ago the arrears of cases amounted to 66,000, they stood to-day at 63,000. They might, therefore, say that during eight months only 14,000 cases had been settled by this gigantic Sub-Commission, composed of 34 members. It was ridiculous to suppose that tenants who had to wait 18 months before their fair rents were fixed should continue to have any confidence in the Land Courts. If the recommendation which was thrown out by hon. Members from Ireland at the time of the passing of the Land Act—namely, that a reduced rent, based on a just principle, should only be demanded from the date of application to the Court—had been adopted, much of the present uneasiness and dissatisfaction would have been removed. They had heard to-day that the tenants were not satisfied with the Land Act, and they had heard, in the clearest way, that the landlords were not satisfied either. Surely the Act was passed to satisfy someone. It was passed, he presumed, to please the tenant or else the landlord, and yet the representatives of both these classes were ever ready to tell the Government that neither party was satisfied. The position of the Government at the present time was this—they were perpetually apologizing and excusing themselves to the House, and the Attorney General for Ireland was constantly acting as counsel for the defence in the matter of this Land Act. Never once since the Act had been passed had the Government been able to agree with the landlord class in the House, or with the Representatives of the tenant class. If the Act pleased neither of the bodies it was intended to affect, what was the moral to be drawn? It was that they should so amend the Act that it would please someone. Reference had been made by the hon. and gallant Member for County Dublin (Colonel King-Harman) to the "Bright Clauses." It was an astonishing fact that though the "Bright Clauses" emanated from the Government Bench, they were the unworked clauses of the Act. The hon. and gallant Member had referred to a case in which the tenants were inclined to purchase; but that under the incentive of Mr. Murrough O'Brien they had declined to do so. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland seemed to think that the hon. and gallant Gentleman attacked Mr. Murrough O'Brien personally. What the hon. and gallant Gentleman evidently meant to convey was that something in the Offices charged with the administration of these clauses was of such a character, that, instead of promoting the operation of the "Bright Clauses," it actually retarded it. Now, the right hon. and learned Gentleman in his speech took up the question of a personal attack upon Mr. Murrough O'Brien. He did not deal with the fact that the "Bright Clauses"—the Purchase Clauses—were not working satisfactorily, nor did he give the Committee any information upon what had been previously stated by Earl Granville—namely, that the Government had in its possession a Bill for the amendment of the "Bright Clauses" of the Land Act. This statement of the noble Earl was alluded to by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the junior Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), and he (Mr. Molloy) invited some Member of the Government to say whether the statement made by Earl Granville, a Member of the Government, was true or not. He maintained that much of the well-being of the Irish tenantry was wrapped up in the successful operation of the "Bright Clauses" of the Land Act; and it was, therefore, very natural that the Representatives of the Irish people should display some anxiety as to whether the Government had actually prepared, or were preparing, a Bill for the amendment of the Purchase Clauses.

Mr. BLAKE said, the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Macartney) had just stated that he would not have taken part in this debate only for something the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had said. He (Mr. Blake) would do so from an opposite reason—for something he had not said. He was disappointed that in dealing with the question before the House he did not allude to a very important part of the function of the Commissioners, which they appeared to have failed nearly altogether to carry out, and that was to give as much effect in their power to that portion of the Land Bill, and a subsequent Bill which was passed, providing for the erection of labourers' cottages and the allotment of half-an-acre of ground to each, both to be held at a fair rent, as the law now stood, on a judicial rent being fixed and filed in Court. The tenant, for every 25 acres of good land held by him, was bound, on necessity being shown, to build a cottage for a labourer and allot to it half-an-acre of land; but, as a rule, the law in that respect was a dead letter, for which he considered the Sub-Commission were, to a great extent, to blame. He would give an illustration from his own experience. He had a small property in the county he represented near Dungarvan. Although his tenants were leaseholders he had allowed them to adopt their own mode of valuation; they elected arbitration. The arbitrators, in his opinion, had leaned too heavily against him. Their award resulted in depriving him of one-fourth of his income, although he believed the two principal tenants, to whom his remarks would altogether refer, were not only fairly rented, but at the rents they paid previous to the arbitration, had very valuable interests under him. However, he submitted to the arbitration, and did not appeal, as he might have done, against it. Two of the principal tenants held each over 100 acres of good land, and he directed his agent, as these tenants had obtained such very large advantages, to ask them to do something for the labourers in the way provided by Act of Parliament. This they refused to do. The matter was brought, at his instance, before the Sub-Commissioners at Dungarvan, and these gentlemen decided in favour of the tenants not doing anything in consequence of their allegation that they provided for their labourers in their own houses. Now, the Committee could judge of the nature of the accommodation when one labourer slept over a boiler-house, and another over a most unwholesome potato-house; and he believed the rest of the accommodation was not of a better character. He contended that the Sub-Commissioners ought to have informed themselves better on the subject before they decided off-handedly against the labourers. Amongst other things, they should have been influenced by the fact that the farms in question were fully three miles away from the only town where accommodation could be procured, and that his tenants only temporarily gave shelter to the labourers employed. He would now turn to that portion of the hon. Member for Sligo's speech in which he found so much fault with the Land Act, and predicted that if the landlords did not sell on reasonable terms to the tenants, they would in the end only obtain five years' purchase for their properties. He thought the hon. Member made a great mistake in giving so little credit to the Land Act, as it was really taking from the credit of the Party to which he belonged. It should, in fairness, be admitted that only for them it probably would not be so good or so soon passed into law. It had done much good for the tenantry of Ireland, although it was still open to improvement; and he hoped the efforts in that direction of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) would prove successful. He trusted that the value of the landlords' interests would not be reduced to five years' purchase. If so, what would become of them? He (Mr. Blake) spoke from a selfish point of view, being a small landowner. If the hon. Member for Sligo's prophecy should turn out correct, the landlords should either earn their bread, or ask for outdoor relief. [An hon. MEMBER: With the workhouse test.] He was sorry the landlords had not accepted the situation with a better grace, and turned their thoughts from hunting a poor fox to something nobler and more useful. Nothing, he thought, showed them in a more contemptible light than their lamentations when they could no longer go out to inflict a needlessly painful death on an unfortunate terrified animal. They gave themselves too much up to that and kindred pursuits to the neglect of things more elevating and beneficial to themselves and the human race. How different were the old French noblesse, and later the nobility of Poland? They were men of culture, and had acquired the knowledge of many useful things that stood to them in their hour of need. When they lost their land and had to fly their country, they became the best music masters, fencing, drawing, and even dancing masters to the civilized nations of the world. But from the difference of their tastes and occupations, what would the great body of the Irish landlords be fit for if they had to live by their own exertions? He really did not know, unless it would be to become huntsmen, horse jockeys, whippers-in, and gamekeepers to all Europe.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA said, it was the habit in these discussions to review the Land Act either with eulogium or unmixed censure, according as it was regarded from the Government point of view or the lordlords' side. The hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Dickson) appeared to hold a brief on the Government side. The fact was that the Land Act was hastily passed, and the House had not considered how it would affect the various classes in Ireland other than the particular tenants who were to be benefited by it. There was no proper provision made for insuring that the tenants who were benefited would act fairly to their labourers; and the small portion of the Act which referred to labourers appeared to be altogether disregarded by the Commissioners in their valuations and rules. Unless someone was present before them on the part of the labourers, nothing was done for them. The lowering of rents which had not been raised for the last 20 or 25 years or longer was a subject for fair consideration; he admitted that those rents should be lowered to whatever amount the Commissioners believed a man could live and thrive under. But there were various degrees of living and thriving, and that House was not the proper arena for a debate upon that question. But with regard to rents which had been raised exorbitantly of late years, that appeared to have been done, for the most part, by the new proprietors who came into possession under the Encumbered Estates Act, and subsequently under the Landed Estates Court Act. The Encumbered Estates Act was at the time considered a panacea for all difficulties; but those new landlords for the most part regarded the matter altogether in a mercantile spirit, and raised the rents as high as they could. But what about those who purchased under the Encumbered Estates Act, and did not raise the rents at all? What was to be done with them? Would the State say they must be mercilessly cut down to the standard of fair rents, according to the views of A or B, and receive no compensation? He knew of landlords, however, who had purchased under these two Acts he had mentioned, but had not raised the rents. They had paid full market value for the land according to the rental; and how could the State now step in and say that although they had a right, under the Acts passed to induce them to purchase, to their rents, those rents must be cut down without compensation? That injustice placed men who were willing to enter into fair arrangements in a wrong and invidious position. This was the injustice—the Act had left those who had raised their rents better off than those who had not. He had never raised his rents, but he wished to consider the subject as one who had no experience one way or the other; but he knew of landlords on whose lands the rents had not been raised for 50 years, but who had been treated by the Land Commissioners worse than those who had raised their rents 30 or 40 per per cent in 25 years. These things ought to be carefully considered by the Government, in order to see in what cases there should be compensation given. He would, in some cases, give compensation to those who had inherited property, as well as to some of those who had purchased under the Landed Estates Court Act. He did not say any of the rents had been lowered below a proper point; he did not take up that position; but the Committee might depend upon it that if they did not apply fair principles in Ireland, as elsewhere, the landlords of England would be subject to similar rules. About one-fifth—or one-fourth, perhaps, would be nearer—of the rental value of the land had been reduced by the judicial assessments, and that might be taken as a fair example of what was to come; and he believed that in two-thirds of the cases there would have been very little compensation requisite. The rents had merely been restored to what the landlords ought to submit to, and would have submitted to in case of arbitration. The tenants of Ireland were not the whole population of Ireland; the landless peasantry were quite as numerous; and there was a very large proportion of the population, for instance, in Mayo and Donegal, who, unless there was further legislation for them, would be, without any sensible difference, as poor if they got the land for nothing as they now were, for, notwithstanding that they had not paid rent for some years, they were now reduced to the lowest depth of poverty; and he did not think the Government were dealing with them in as liberal and considerate a spirit as was shown elsewhere. He had been very much tempted to ask whether the 11,000 people who were now receiving relief in Lewis were getting indoor or outdoor relief, and whether the workhouse test was applied to them? A far more liberal policy ought to be adopted by the Government in regard to the distressed districts of Ireland; otherwise, he would venture to say that the Liberal Party would be accountable for a state of things which would reduce the people to perpetual poverty.

Mr. KENNY said, he wished to call attention to the manner in which the Sub-Commissioners were distributed in Ireland. There were 17 Sub-Commissioners, and what might be called 34 teams of Sub-Commissioners; but seven of those Sub-Commissioners were in the Province of Ulster, and the remainder had to suffice for the three other Provinces. In answer to his question, the Attorney General for Ireland stated that the Sub-Commissioners were arranged in accordance with the number of applications sent in from the different Provinces, and that Ulster was not unduly favoured in that respect; but he found now that that principle had not been always adhered to, and he could point out cases within his own knowledge in which that principle had been entirely violated. There was a single Sub-Commissioner appointed for Clare and Limerick; but the number of applications from Limerick was something like 1,500, and from Clare nearly 3,000. The Sub-Commission would, in the current quarter, sit four times in each of these two counties; but already from Limerick there were 973, and from Clare 3,000 fair rent applications, and only 696 had been settled. Of course, that included the cases fixed out of Court, and they were somewhat more numerous in Limerick than in Clare; but that did not materially affect the matter. Therefore, he thought that if the guide suggested by the Attorney General for Ireland were adopted, it should be adopted in regard to all cases, and the people of Limerick and Clare ought not to be allowed to suffer in this matter. The people of Clare felt very much aggrieved at the manner in which they were treated, and considered that they had been defrauded of whatever benefits the Act afforded. The Attorney General for Ireland had stated that in some counties the applications had almost entirely ceased; but the reason of that was that the farmers saw no probability of their cases being heard for an indefinite period. Some of the applications from Clare had been pending for 16 months; and how could others be expected to apply when they saw there was not the slightest probability of their cases being heard for no one could tell how long? The Attorney General for Ireland had referred to some counties in which the work of the Sub-Commissions was nearly complete. He hoped that when their work was completed the Sub-Commissioners would be sent to other counties where there was a tremendous number of cases still unheard, where the people were rack-rented, and stood very much in need of relief. The appointment of a sufficient number of Sub-Commissioners was a matter that concerned the people in a very serious manner; and he thought it was entirely unfair that the tenant farmers should be kept in suspense for four or five years, as they would be if the present system continued. The principle of dating the judicial rents from the date of the original application was one which he thought should be extended, so that now when applications were made the rents fixed should date from the gale day immediately following the date of the original application. That plan would meet a great many difficulties which at present were experienced. The people of Ireland felt that by the present manner of administering the Act they were unfairly treated, and with just reason, for there were many cases in which the inability of the Sub-Commissioners to deal with them had led to bankruptcy and enforced emigration. What he desired to impress on the Irish officials was that they should send into the congested districts a sufficient number of Sub-Commissioners to dispose of the cases in a reasonable time. He could not account for the observation of the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Macartney) that the Ulster tenants were not desirous of taking advantage of the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act; but in the remaining three Provinces of Ireland, where the agitation had been thoroughly carried on, and where the people fought for a better object, they were very anxious to take advantage of those clauses. In all those Provinces the people were too poor to advance one-fourth of the purchase money; but if the Government would advance the money, they would take advantage of the offer, and the Government could rely on the security of the land for the redemption of the loan within a reasonable time. The number of applications from leaseholders had been 1,500; but only about 105 of the leases had been declared void. There were about 135,000 leaseholders in Ireland, and by being deprived of the benefit of the Act they were unfairly treated. He knew a case in which leases had been forced on all the tenants on an estate except five. Four of those went to the Court and obtained reductions, varying from 40 to 60 per cent, and to the one who did not go into Court the landlord voluntarily allowed a reduction of 60 per cent; but the remainder, about 40 tenants, had to continue to pay rack rents, which were forced upon them by threats of eviction. The result was that, in some instances, the tenants, being unable to pay those rack rents, were evicted, and disorder and crime followed, bringing discredit on the district. Extra police were drafted in, and in consequence the tenants had to pay rack rents, and also 7*s.* 6*d.* in the pound for the cost of the extra police. He thought the manner in which the Sub-Commissioners were doing their work was a subject which demanded the attention of Parliament.

Mr. BRODRICK said, he understood that he had been saddled with a statement that the Government were bound to see all the predictions fulfilled. He had said nothing of the sort. What he had done was to warn the Committee against trusting to further predictions, or receiving, without the utmost caution, any prediction coming from so unreliable a quarter, and to warn the Government against entering upon any course involving expenditure against the advice of those most qualified to judge.

Mr. LEAMY asked the Chief Secretary, whether he could state in how many cases the Sub-Commissioners had used their power under the Act to order tenants to provide accommodation for their labourers?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he could not state, because the Commissioners had not made any Return of such cases.

Lord JOHN MANNERS said, it appeared, from the uncontradicted statements of several Irish Members, that the wise and humane provisions in favour of the erection of labourers' cottages had become almost a dead letter. He, therefore, asked in how many cases the Labourers' Clauses had been put in operation, and in how many cases houses had been built under those provisions?

Mr. TREVELYAN repeated, that he was unable to say.

Vote *agreed to.*

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £15,410, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, for the Salaries, Allowances, and Expenses of various County Court Officers, and of Magistrates in Ireland, and of the Revising Barristers in the City of Dublin."

Mr. SEXTON said, he had a few words to say as to this Vote—he wished to make one or two suggestions. This question of County Court Judges, Special Resident Magistrates, and Resident Magistrates was very important for Ireland. The County Court Judge formed a Court of Appeal for persons accused under the provisions of the Prevention of Crime Act, and sentenced by the Resident Magistrate; and the suggestion he had to make in regard to this matter was that steps ought to be taken to induce the Inferior Court to allow prisoners the right of appeal to the County Court whenever they desired it. At present, a person sentenced under the Prevention of Crime Act had not a right of appeal unless the imprisonment exceeded a certain term, and numerous cases had occurred in which prisoners found guilty had appealed for an increase of sentence in order to enable them to go before the County Court Judge, although, in several instances, the Inferior Court had refused that appeal. The Government, he maintained, should use their influence in some way with the Inferior Courts to enable all persons convicted to appeal if they chose. Then the County Court Judges, instead of acting as moderators, as it was expected they would, were even more severe than the magistrates themselves. The Mayor of Wexford was sentenced to a fortnight's imprisonment by the Resident Magistrate. He desired to have an appeal, and, in order to secure it, asked for an increased imprisonment. His imprisonment was accordingly increased to five weeks, and he appealed; but in the Court above his sentence was confirmed, and it was with the greatest difficulty that he induced the Judge to reduce his imprisonment to the original fortnight. Now, John Chute Nelligan, the Chairman of Westmeath, in the case of Mr. Harrington, laid it down that to tell a man he was apathetic constituted an offence under the Prevention of Crime Act. He would like to know whether the Government approved of that principle laid down by Mr. Nelligan? Mr. Nelligan was a Kerry squire, and Mr. Harrington was what Mr. Nelligan would regard as a Kerry agitator; and when the Kerry agitator got into the hands of the Kerry squire, he had very little mercy to expect. He claimed two rights—first, that men convicted under the Prevention of Crime Act should have, if they wished for it, a right of appeal; and the second, that instead of a rigorous, County Court Judges ought to exercise a moderating influence. With regard to the Resident Magistrates and the Special Resident Magistrates, the Predecessor of the present Chief Secretary created a series of Pashalicks in Ireland. The jurisdiction of the ordinary magistrates was suspended, and for a time the jurisdiction of Dublin Castle was also suspended, in favour of Mr. Clifford Lloyd and half-a-dozen others, who had authority more supreme than Queen Victoria for the time being. He saw that these appointments were originally made only to last till June, so that he supposed it was intended to dispense with them then; but he now found that they were to be continued up to the month of April. At any rate, did the Chief Secretary expect that he would be able to dispense with the special Vote for the salaries of these Special Magistrates by April? It was said that Ireland was in a disturbed condition. Was that the case? Was not the country tranquil; at least, was it not peaceful? He would refer the Chief Secretary to the speech he had delivered at Hawick, in which he referred to the tremendous decrease which had taken place in crime in Ireland since last year. The right hon. Gentleman was able to show that crime in Ireland now was only a fraction of what it was up to a recent date; and, in further proof of the fact that crime had decreased, he would refer the Chief Secretary to the speeches of the Judges who had lately been on Circuit. From those speeches it appeared that the Judges had not found it necessary, in most cases, to refer to the County Inspectors' Reports, because the Calendars contained a fair and accurate idea of the amount of crime in each county.

He would challenge the right hon. Gentleman to show that the country was not eminently peaceful, or he would challenge the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther) to rise at the Table and show it in his usual loud and effective manner. To go to another point, he would ask the Chief Secretary for an explanation of an occurrence which took place recently in Ireland, in the county he himself represented (Sligo). He had happened to come within the jurisdiction of one of these Special Magistrates, a meeting at which he was present, and which he was to have addressed, having been suppressed by an armed force of the Crown at a place called Cliffoney, in County Sligo, where his constituents had arranged to meet him. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had said in that House, and in his (Mr. Sexton's) absence, that if he had known he had intended to address the meeting, the Government would not have taken the measures they did. But why did not the Government know that he intended to address the meeting? The district had been placarded with an announcement that he intended to address his constituents, and the week before he had inserted a notice in *The Freeman's Journal* to the same effect. He had intimated that he intended to speak at three places. At the first place the meeting was held, and the proceedings were orderly, and were entirely to the satisfaction of the police. On the following day he spoke at Sligo, and then went to Cliffoney, where he was to address the next meeting. The Head Constable of Sligo visited him at his hotel, and informed him that he would not be allowed to address the meeting. He had asked for a copy of the proclamation forbidding the meeting, but the constable had not got it. He drove to the place of meeting, where an immense concourse of people began to assemble, some arriving on horseback, and some on foot. As he himself moved up the police came out with arms loaded, and indulged in a series of threatening manœuvres; and on his attempting to organize the meeting one of the Special Magistrates went up to him and told him it could not be held. Why had this meeting been suppressed? The conduct of the Government on this occasion was such as might have led to very serious results; for if the people had not been very intelligent, and allowed themselves to be guided by him out of the village, and for a mile or two along the highway, the consequences might have been most deplorable. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would be able now to give some assurance that, for the future, no meeting between a Member of Parliament and his supporters would be interfered with. On the occasion in question he had succeeded in inspiring the people with the necessity of recognizing the authority of the law; but on some future occasion a Member of Parliament might not be so successful in inducing the people to follow his advice as he (Mr. Sexton) had been in Cliffoney.

MR. TREVELYAN said, the hon. Member for Sligo, arguing from his own knowledge of the state of Ireland, and likewise from statements of influential persons who had every possible reason to know what that state was, expected the time would be soon approaching when the Government, from their own point of view, would be able to dispense with these Special Magistrates. The hon. Member said his opinion was that things had mended in Ireland. He (Mr. Trevelyan) had given an intimation of this a fortnight ago, and the Reports for the past fortnight agreeably confirmed that intimation, so that the task of maintaining order in Ireland made it less and less necessary to have recourse to the Prevention of Crime Act. The number of cases tried under that Act had fallen from the very large number of 40 and 50 a-week to what was now a pretty steady average of five or six, and that in itself was a very great indication of tranquillity in Ireland. The hon. Member asked when the tenure of office of the Special Resident Magistrates, who undoubtedly were originally instituted under very special circumstances of turbulence, would come to a close? As to that, the hon. Member could not expect him to say more than this—namely, that in making and revising the police and magisterial arrangements the Government had, and would have, very great regard to the state of Ireland—which he thought he might now call an improved state—and that, while they were quite determined that in any alteration they made there should be no risk of order being again disturbed, they would make it their object to reduce the great burden on the taxpayers—of which they had heard something to-day from a quarter from which, he must confess, he did not expect it—namely, from the right hon. Gentleman opposite, whom he did not now see in his place—and to remove those anomalies in the administration of Ireland which the Government considered, when they adopted them, were necessary, but which they deeply deplored. He did not want anything he had said on this occasion to give rise to the suspicion that the Government were willing to allow the hold which the law had regained on the country to be in any degree relaxed. They had already given an indication of their willingness to take advantage of the amelioration of the state of things in Ireland to entirely remove from the Army the disagreeable duty of protection and patrol. Every single soldier had long ere this gone back to his military duties; and he had no doubt that as time went on they would be able to absorb the temporary magistrates in the country—he meant the Special Resident Magistrates, who were appointed in very considerable numbers to supplement the Resident Magistrates. With regard to the ultimate arrangements the Government might have to make for the supervision of the peace and order of the country, he should be to blame if he made any allusion to them before the Government scheme could be laid on the Table of the House. The considerations, however, to which the hon. Member had referred, would certainly not be lost sight of. With regard to the occurrence at Cliffoney, of which the hon. Member had spoken, he (Mr. Trevelyan) had not anticipated that it would be mentioned, although he quite admitted it was a very natural thing for the hon. Member to refer to it. He was not prepared with the details of the circumstances; but the outlines of it he had, he thought, very clearly in his head. He did not intend, in consequence of the hon. Member's remarks, to defend generally the policy of the Government in forbidding certain meetings to take place. He might say, generally, that in these proceedings they had been governed by the advice of the authorities on the spot as to the state of the district in which the meetings were announced to take place, and as to the class of people who were supposed to have made arrangements for the meetings. As to the meeting at Cliffoney, the plain fact was that he had not been informed by the authorities on the spot that the hon. Member intended to address his constituents.

Mr. SEXTON asked whether the local people did not send a placard to the Castle, announcing the fact that he was to address his constituents?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, a placard was sent—he had it now in his hand—but it arrived too late. The information sent was of the usual kind, and a general recommendation was made, founded upon certain circumstances, which, on examination, were found to be thoroughly borne out. There was no doubt that the number of outrages in the district in 1881 and 1882 was very great. They had been 1,781 and 1,982. The meeting in question was got up under the auspices—or it was supposed that it was got up under the auspices—of Henry Brennan, an ex-"suspect," who had been recently in prison for three weeks for assaulting the police. The Government were informed that that part of the country was very much disturbed, and the recommendation to forbid the meeting only came on the Saturday as the meeting was to be held on the Sunday or Monday.

Mr. SEXTON said, that could not be, as the order stopping the meeting was sent on the Saturday.

Mr. TREVELYAN: Yes, on the Saturday. The Government were, he thought, right in every case in which they stopped meetings, although he could not expect everyone to believe so. They had always thought that it was important to give the notice stopping a meeting as early as possible; and, considering the auspices under which the meeting in question was to be held, and the condition of the district—which was reported as very dangerous—they had little hesitation in saying that the meeting should not be held. The one circumstance which would have induced them to take a different view of the matter was wanting to their deliberations. But the hon. Member might say that a meeting had been stopped at which they knew a Member of Parliament was to be present—the meeting that was going to be attended by the hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. Commins). Well, that case was a very serious one. The place where the meeting was to be held was in the immediate vicinity of the spot where Mr. East was murdered; and at the moment that instructions were given to stop the meeting he (Mr. Trevelyan) was in possession of special information in connection with that murder, which showed him that the family of Mr. East, and a small circle of farmers to which Mr. East might be said to have belonged, were in real danger, and that any extra excitement in that district would have led to their inconvenience, and probably have placed them in real peril. The murder of Mr. East was one of the most serious that had occurred, and was a recent affair. Even though the hon. Gentleman the Member for Roscommon was announced to speak, the Government came reluctantly to the conclusion that, on the whole, the meeting must be stopped. The total number of meetings which had been prevented from taking place was very small, probably a dozen all over the country. It might be retorted that, by stopping a dozen, they, in fact, stopped hundreds, and he allowed there was some weight in that argument; still, his firm belief was that, where meetings had been prevented, the districts were such as it would have been dangerous to hold meetings in. The stoppage of meetings in districts where it was dangerous to hold them had not caused the stoppage of meetings in places where it was safe to hold them. The more tranquil Ireland became the more possible would it be to hold meetings without danger, and the more willing would the Government be to refrain from that interference which was so extremely distasteful to them. As to the pledge the hon. Member wished him to give, that they would never interpose between a Member of Parliament and his constituents, all he would say was that it might be relied upon that if they did interfere it would only be most reluctantly, and under the most exceptional circumstances.

MR. PARNELL said, the excuse which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had given for proclaiming the meeting which was to have been addressed by his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) was that the Executive was governed by the advice of the local authorities. The right hon. Gentleman stated that the resident or local authorities in the neighbourhood where the meeting was to have been held advised the Castle to proclaim on Saturday this meeting, which was announced to take place on the following Tuesday. He wished to point out that, where many days' notice of the holding of a meeting was given, the local authorities should be directed to send their recommendations, with regard to the proclamation or non-proclamation of that meeting, within a sufficient time before the date on which the meeting was to be held. In the case of the proclamation of many other meetings in Ireland, the placards proclaiming them had only been posted on the morning of the day of the meeting, and that only in the immediate neighbourhood; and it had consequently happened that crowds of people had assembled from all parts of the country, and that considerable risk had arisen of a collision with the police, two young men, ignorant of the law and of the fact that the meeting had been proclaimed, having, on one occasion, afforded some pretext to the police for charging them under the Prevention of Crime Act. It was only reasonable that, where the Lord Lieutenant decided to proclaim a meeting, considerable notice of the intention to hold which was given by placards, some days' notice should be given that the people were not to attend the meeting. In the example of the meeting that was to have been addressed by his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo, there was fully 10 days' notice given of his intention to address his constituents in the particular locality, and yet it was only on the Saturday, with all the knowledge of the officials regarding the state of the district, and notwithstanding all the placards the hon. Member had sent round, as to his intention to hold the meeting, that the local authorities sent word to the Castle that they desired the meeting to be proclaimed. Further, it was only on the Tuesday that placards were published in the village of Cliffoney, warning the people not to attend the meeting, and his hon. Friend had only received the placard after he reached the field where the meeting was to have been held. If his hon. Friend had not possessed considerable influence with his constituents, and had not advised them to withdraw, there might have been a collision with the police. It was surely one of the first duties of the Government that due notice should be given to the inhabitants of the surrounding districts where these meetings were proclaimed—the latter, he said, should receive several days' notice, considering the large number of people who were interested in them, and the risk there was of collision with the police. The right hon. Gentleman said there had been a large number of outrages in the neighbourhood of Cliffoney—12 in 1881, and 15 in 1882—and that was his reason, conjoined with the fact that on every one of the placards was the name of Henry Brennan, an ex-"suspect," for proclaiming the meeting in question. Now, it so happened that the county of Sligo was the one in the whole West of Ireland which had been most free from outrage during the Land movement; it was, without exception, according to the Government Returns, one of the most peaceable of all the counties throughout the distressed districts. He had in his hand the Returns relating to agrarian offences from the 1st of January, 1882, to the 31st of December, 1882; and, looking over the list of offences laid to the county of Sligo, he found that not one of them was of a grave character, the vast majority of them being the sending of threatening letters and cases of ordinary intimidation. But the column relating to murder, manslaughter, firing at the person, assault with intent to murder, aggravated assault, assault endangering life, assaults on bailiffs and process-servers, maiming the person, incendiary fires, burglary, robbery, highway robbery, taking and holding forcible possession, slaying, cutting, or maiming of cattle, demanding or robbery of arms, riots, resistance to legal process, firing into dwellings — the column relating to these important and serious forms of agrarian outrage for the county of Sligo was blank, with one exception—there had been one case of assault endangering life during the whole year. Having given the Committee a list of all the more serious offences included in the Government Returns, he believed he had shown that the County of Sligo was singularly exempt from any agrarian or other offence during the whole of the year 1882; and the reward which that county got for being so peaceable was the proclamation of a meeting which had been called by its senior and most trusted Member. But with regard to the proclamation of meetings in Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman stated last night that all these had taken place within a period of five weeks.

MR. TREVELYAN: I beg pardon, the hon. Gentleman is referring to a speech I made upon the subject of prosecutions.

MR. PARNELL said, the statement of the right hon. Gentleman applied also to the proclamation of meetings. It happened at the very time that these meetings were proclaimed that agrarian offences throughout Ireland had never been lower for a period of three years; they had been steadily diminishing by leaps and bounds during some months, up to the time when the right hon. Gentleman commenced to proclaim the meetings by leaps and bounds, and practically to put a stop to every public meeting in Ireland. No one in Ireland would, after those proclamations, go to the expense of getting up meetings for the purpose of Constitutional demands or agitation, and run the risk of having it proclaimed on the very day it was to take place, or run the risk of losing the money which the meeting cost to get up, besides the risk of endangering the lives of the people who might attend at the place where the meeting was to have been held. The reward which Ireland got for being quiet was that public meetings were put a stop to. The right hon. Gentleman said he would wait for a better state of things in the country in order to lessen coercion and restore the Constitutional rights of the people in this respect; but it was hopeless to expect that Ireland would ever be more quiet than she was at present, because the outrages were equal to the normal average in times of distress in that country; and to expect that there would be fewer was to expect that the Millennium would come to Ireland before it came to the rest of the world. With regard to the meeting which his hon. Friend was to have addressed, the right hon. Gentleman had alleged an excuse for proclaiming it which he ventured to say was not the right one. It was perfectly well known in the district—he did not know whether it was known to the right hon. Gentleman—that this meeting was to have been held on the property of a gentleman who was a Member of the Government—the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight (Mr. Evelyn Ashley), Under Secretary of

State for the Colonies. During the progress of the Land movement, disputes had continually existed between the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight and his tenants; he believed many of those tenants had gone into the Land Court, where they expected to get considerable reductions of rent, and that the hon. Gentleman had also been obliged to give considerable reductions. However that might be, he had had a long course of wrangling with his tenants, and had caused some persons to be arrested. Mr. Henry had organized the tenantry on the estate, and helped them in their demands for the reduction of rent, which were afterwards agreed to. The hon. Member for the Isle of Wight felt the pressure of Mr. Brennan's opposition to his love of rack rents, and his influence was so strong that he persuaded the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) to arrest Mr. Brennan under the Coercion Act, and keep him in gaol. The charge of assault brought against Mr. Brennan was simply this. The police were in the act of arresting a servant of Mr. Brennan, who, as he was walking along the street, happened to see the altercation going on between the police and his servant. He went out into the road, laid his hand on the shoulder of the policeman, and said—"What is the matter; why are you arresting my servant?" That was the only assault alleged before the magistrates, and for it he was sent to gaol for three weeks. In this way the law was administered by the Resident Magistrates and by the Sub-Inspectors and County Inspectors of the right hon. Gentleman in Ireland; and it was upon their advice that he prevented the Constitutional exercise of the right of the people to assemble for the purpose of discussing their grievances, and demanding legitimate alterations in the law of the country.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 88; Noes 16: Majority 72.—(Div. List, No. 27.)

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £33,020, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Commissioners of Police, the Police Courts, and the Metropolitan Police Establishment of Dublin."

MR. J. LOWTHER asked the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, if he could inform the Committee what arrangements had been made consequent upon the retirement of the late Chief Commissioner of Police in Dublin? Captain Talbot served many years to the satisfaction of those under whom he served, and it was not unnatural to inquire what arrangements had been made with regard to his pension. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman at present knew what the amount of pension was that Captain Talbot was to receive. He (Mr. Lowther) had no reason to think that Captain Talbot was in any way inclined to make a grievance of this matter; and he certainly had no authority to make, on Captain Talbot's behalf, any demand on the public purse. Still less was it his (Mr. Lowther's) intention to raise any question as to the action of the Irish Government in making arrangements for the substitution of a new officer in the place of Captain Talbot. He had, however, formed his own opinion as to the career of that officer; and he had every reason to believe that he was thoroughly deserving of a substantial remuneration upon his retirement. Captain Talbot, in religion and politics, held views differing from his own; and he believed the Government had selected as his successor one of the most efficient officers engaged in the Public Service in Ireland, who, moreover, had not entered the Public Service under their auspices. He, therefore, made no Party attack or accusation in this case, but merely desired to express a hope that the Treasury would be induced to relax, not only in the interest of Captain Talbot, but in the interest of the Public Service, any regulation which might preclude an officer of long standing receiving adequate remuneration in his declining years. There was one other matter which he should like very briefly to refer to. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had described the condition in which he had found matters in Ireland when he took Office; but there was one point he had not dwelt upon, but which to his (Mr. Lowther's) mind was the most serious element in public affairs which had been known in the time of any living man. They had been familiar with popular discontent in Ireland; everybody, except the Prime Minister, was fully aware that a large numerical majority of the people, if the ordinary safeguards of law and order were relaxed, would not be slow to avail themselves of that opportunity to break the law; but there was no one connected with the administration of Irish affairs who had the slightest idea until recently that the Constabulary or the Metropolitan Police Force were in the slightest degree otherwise than thoroughly reliable and loyal in the service of the Crown. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to confirm what he hoped now was an opinion, rightly and generally entertained, that the elements of danger in regard to those Forces had disappeared. He thought the Committee would do well to mark the fact that for the first time in the history of Ireland they found that a most serious danger to the tranquillity of the country—far more serious, to his mind, than any amount of disaffection which might be found in any other section of the population—had recently exhibited itself in the disaffection of the Constabulary and Metropolitan Police Forces in Ireland. One word upon a matter upon which he did not wish to press the right hon. Gentleman for any answer, if he thought it in any shape or form contrary to the interests of the Public Service, and that was with regard to rumours which had obtained general currency within the last few days—namely, as to the gradual escape, one after another, of some of the persons who, rightly or wrongly, were believed to be concerned to a very serious extent with the perpetration of murderous outrages in Ireland. He had seen it stated that there had been a failure upon the part of the authorities to effect the arrest of one of the most important functionaries of an Organization which had been stigmatized from the Treasury Bench as the organizing force of outrage in Ireland. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give the Committee some information on that point, though if it was not convenient, he should not press for a reply. Speaking the other day of the Police Forces of Ireland, the Home Secretary made some observations which he (Mr. Lowther) was sorry to find had not unnaturally given great offence to those most distinguished bodies of men. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of those Forces as having required thorough re-organization at the time Lord Spencer went over to Ireland. So far as he (Mr. Lowther) was aware, all that was required was the strengthening of the detective branches of those Forces. He believed the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had realized that any impression which prevailed as to the Head of the Detective Department being inefficient was entirely without foundation. The Head of the Detective Department, who had still been retained in his position, was a most efficient officer, and his character had been recognized by the present Administration. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take the opportunity of removing any false impression that had got abroad through a most unfortunate observation of one of his Colleagues, who had no means of knowing anything at all about Ireland; and that he would also be able to assure the Committee that the utmost vigilance was being exercised with a view of preventing any person escaping whom it was desirable to arrest.

Mr. DAWSON said, that, connected as he was with the City of Dublin and its management, this was an appropriate occasion to enlighten the Committee as to the state of things existing between the police and the municipal authorities in that city. He had no desire to make the slightest complaint against the men of the Police Force; he quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, that, on the whole, the police of Dublin had discharged their duties satisfactorily, and appeared to be anxious to do their duty, not only well, but civilly. He had frequently been sorry, during his connection with the Corporation of Dublin, that the Police Force was not of the same nature as that which existed in all the cities and towns of the United Kingdom; because they would then have had this happy state of things—that the police, depending upon the Representatives of the people in times of difficulty and danger, would have had behind them that moral support, far more powerful than brute force—namely, the sympathy of the people in the administration of the law. In England and Scotland the Police Forces were municipal bodies; but, unfortunately, it was not so in Ireland. He had, nevertheless, always paid a tribute to the police, and he was sorry that circumstances in many cases had not allowed him to come down and stand by the police and co-operate with them in the discharge of their duties. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther) had indirectly referred to the recent strike of the Dublin Police Force. He (Mr. Dawson) might say that the conclusion of that strike and the settlement of the difficulty then existing was entirely due to the action he took upon that occasion. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would remember that when the Government issued their Proclamation, in the first instance, concerning the strike of the police, he (Mr. Dawson) drew attention to its illegal character. The law provided that in such a case of emergency, the Government were empowered to enlist special constables, and the law also provided that those special constables should be natives of the parish, town, or residence within the immediate neighbourhood. The Proclamation of the Lord Lieutenant, however, invited every subject of the Queen, no matter whether he came from England, or Belfast, or elsewhere, to enlist as special constables. He immediately drew the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the illegality of the Proclamation, and in half-an-hour another Proclamation was issued. He (Mr. Dawson) was then asked by His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant to come to an interview with him, at which he was asked to swear in special constables. He refused to do so, because he knew that previously the Government had enlisted men who would be the cause and focus of disorder, instead of the preservers of the peace. The city was particularly tranquil during the absence of the police—a testimony to the good order of the people of Dublin which could never be effaced from the memory of those who were just enough to remember the circumstances. One of the most distinguished men in the House of Commons walked alone through the streets, and the next day he confessed he had never received the slightest insult. That state of things changed when the special constables of the right hon. Gentleman made their appearance. Young, fiery disputants came down to irritate the people by brandishing their batôns and the other implements supplied to them. He (Mr. Dawson) happened to come in on Sunday from his country residence to see whether the citizens were observing a Proclamation he had issued asking them to be calm. When he came into College Street he found the young men he had spoken of were attacked by a great crowd, and he went down and told the people not to attack them. He could not be in other parts of the city at the same time, and in other places where his influence could not be felt, there were serious rows between those fomenters of disorder and the people. The next morning he informed His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant—whose courteous and gracious manner to him on all occasions he must recognize, so different from the ferocious manner which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) had assumed towards the Conservative Lord Mayor who preceded him (Mr. Dawson)—he went to the Castle and told Lord Spencer that he had consulted his legal advisers, and he himself, in pursuance of his rights, would swear in special constables, but would not swear in young students and men from nondescript places. He said he would swear 100 respectable citizens and tradesmen recommended to him by their parish priest or rector; that he would take one from each ward in Dublin; and that he would have 1,500 men at his disposal in the space of a few hours. His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary found that he was within his rights; they knew that he could do it, and that he would do it; that he could get, at any moment, 1,500 respectable men to keep the peace. That action he took, and immediately the difficulty was solved and the Gordian knot was cut, the special constables were dismissed and the old constables re-instated. That was the history of the matter, which had been so unfairly described by the correspondents of the English Press in Ireland, who lived on the bread of calumny; who fattened and prospered by the trade to which they were hired; who calumniated and villified the people of their country. They were in Dublin, as all Corporations were, a sanitary authority; but they could not have in the city those separate dwellings which Belfast and any cities of recent creation possessed. He had started an Artizans' Dwellings Company, which he was glad to say had proved to be a financial and social success. He was engaged with the Corporation in clearing the congested districts—the districts of disease and crime—but what they particularly wanted in Dublin was an army of sanitary officers to enable them to vigorously carry out the powers which that House had given them under the Public Health Act. The Corporations of Glasgow and Edinburgh and other places had their own sanitary officers; in Dublin, the constables knew nothing about sanitary matters. He had witnessed violations of the sanitary law, and he had spoken to constables concerning them, and when he told them he was Lord Mayor, they said—"Oh, you can look after it yourself." The constables of Dublin were always scenting the air to find out some political crime, instead of performing those municipal duties which rightly devolved upon them. He and his hon. Friends must object to this Vote, because the police in Dublin were completely and essentially a military and political force. He did not blame the constables themselves; he did not blame them at all; they were civil men; they were splendid men to look at; but they had no idea whatever of municipal or civil duties. The present unnatural, abnormal, and unjust state of things ought to no longer continue. Captain Talbot, to whom the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. Lowther) had referred, he did not blame—he gave to him every credit for his courtesy and attention to them. They went the other day to him and asked him to give them aid, by means of the police, in improving the sanitary condition of the city, which was now in a most deplorable state; but Captain Talbot simply replied—"I cannot help you. I know there is rubbish thrown on the street; but some of the police are watching Judge Lawson, four or five are on duty at this man's house, and four or five are on duty at that man's house." The population of Edinburgh was about 230,000, and the Police Force for municipal and sanitary purposes numbered 401. The population of Dublin was 270,000; but the police there numbered 1,100, in addition to the Marines, who had been lately sent over there. In Dublin there were twice as many police as would be necessary if the Force were placed in the hands of the municipal authorities; because then they would simply be called upon to discharge municipal duties, and not to foment political discontent, which, he contended, they did at the present time. For the Dublin Police Force the State paid £162,000, and the people were required to pay a police tax, for which they got no value whatever, of 8*d.* in the pound, and publicans' licences, pawn office licences, court fees, and hackney-carriage dues, all went to swell this already blatant Vote to something like £250,000 a-year. Why, in some countries, half the size of Ireland, either in extent or population, the whole War Vote did not amount to as much as the cost of the Metropolitan Police in Dublin. There was a general proposition in this country which had a grain of truth in it, but he would prefer to invert it. People, like the candid friend, said to Ireland—"Oh, be quiet, and we will settle everything." He, however, would invert that, and say—"Settle everything, and then we will be quiet." If this country was waiting for Ireland to be quiet before anything was done for her, England was acting as much in vain as the rustic who waited for the stream to dry up before he could pass over, forgetting that as long as the fruitful source was there the stream would continue to flow. If the English Government waited until discontent ceased before introducing any reform, they would be like that rustic, still waiting, while the bounteous and plenteous source of misery and crime was daily making the stream more violent and more voluminous, until it should carry the nation further and further every day upon its turbid waste to increased dishonour and increased disloyalty. The last act of this Government was worse than the first. The act of bringing Marines from England was a melancholy comment on the Police generally, and on the Government. They had been obliged to come to England, and, not content with the awful outlay and little result of the municipal arrangements in Dublin, to supplement the existing army with a still greater army. The Government could not take a wiser step than that of reforming this system in Ireland. Mayors and landlords, and the people generally, were calling out to be relieved of this enormous army. In his early days the guardians of the peace had a municipal character and appearance; but now they were seen with helmets glittering in the sun, scoffing at everything, and basking like grenadiers in the sunshine to terrorize the people. What was found *pari passu* with this? In Limerick, for instance, Parliamentary and municipal life was steadily declining. In one ward in which there were 30 or 40 voters there were 100 policeman to every one found in an English town. Nothing was seen in Irish towns but soldiers and policemen bristling at every step. That was the outcome of English legislation, and its present extraordinary administration in Ireland. He wished he could reduce this Vote by £100,000; but he could only deal with this Supplementary Estimate, and he would move that it be reduced by the amount required for the Marines.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £19,520, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Commissioners of Police, the Police Courts, and the Metropolitan Police Establishment of Dublin."—(*Mr. Dawson.*)

Mr. O'BRIEN said, he did not suppose there was much use in protesting against this Vote, or against any Vote which was objectionable to the Irish people, at this time; still, it was the duty of Irish Members to protest against this Vote, though for reasons different from those of the hon. Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther). On the previous day a Vote for £15,000 was asked for to bribe and debauch one class of Irishmen—the members of the Irish Bar. This sum of £33,000 was simply so much money spent on denationalizing another class of Irishmen—the police. What he would say to the Government was—"Give the Irish people the control of the police. Make them pay the whole cost if you like, and they would not have any the worse policemen; but we will not have policemen who break people's heads, where a London policeman would simply tell them to move on. We shall not have them bludgeoning people in the Phœnix Park, or organizing a riot in Sackville Street, and then putting it down with bloodshed, as they did when the hon. Member for the City of Cork was arrested, and in regard to which the right hon. Member for Bradford said, 'Clearing the streets was no milk-and-water matter.'" The Corporation largely paid these men out of the money of the citizens, and that was the only satisfaction the citizens got. If the Government could not trust the Irish people with the control of their police, what was that but a confession that every policeman in their employment was, in his secret heart, opposed to the Government; and it was, therefore, necessary to keep the purse and promotion in their own hands, in order to get these Irishmen to do their work, and to stifle their natural feelings as Irishmen. Possibly, from the point of view of the right hon. Member for North Lincolnshire, the Government were right; but they would find that they could not go on ruling Ireland in that way for ever.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he was glad to have an opportunity of expressing his admiration for Captain Talbot, which feeling was also entertained by everybody who had had to do with him officially and socially. Captain Talbot had the honour of being one of the six survivors of the glorious Battle of Allahabad. He was one of the three Commissioners of Police in Dublin; and as his full term of service was on the eve of expiring, and in view of the changes which had taken place in the Detective Department, the Government thought that was a good opportunity for his retirement with that honour which Her Majesty had conferred upon him—a Companionship of the Bath, and the fullest consideration of his services which the Regulations would allow. [Mr. J. Lowther: What will his pension be?] He was informed by the Secretary to the Treasury that it would be two-thirds his salary. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to an observation made by the Home Secretary, which had been largely commented upon. The observation, however, as the Secretary of State for War had stated, had been misunderstood in the warm and interesting debate. The advantages which the present Government derived for the suppression of crime were not that the police were finer or more trustworthy men than those they found; but consisted in certain arrangements depending on the appointment of the Assistant Secretary for Crime, and on the union of the Detective and Constabulary Forces. There were also some arrangements with regard to the Resident Magistrates which he had already explained, and he was unwilling now to repeat that explanation. These were the heads of the increased and improved means of dealing with crime which the present Government enjoyed. With regard to the interesting and, in some degree, unexpected speech of the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Dawson), he always listened to him with a sense of entertainment, which came from hearing some really new point of view expressed in an agreeable and general manner, with certain references to the classical literature of our country, seldom heard in that House. Perhaps the Committee would forgive him if he did not follow the hon. Member in his history of the police strike in Dublin. If he had to write that history, he thought he could write something which, in matter, at all events, would be interesting; but it was one of those cases in which it was better to say as little as possible. The real fact was that the matter was now over; and what had happened had not decreased the confidence of the Government in the Dublin Police. For reasons which he could give as to the causes of this occurrence, he was satisfied that the Government were now as safe as ever they were in the loyalty and affection of the Dublin Police, and that they had even more confidence in the Force now. The statement of the hon. Member as to his relations with the Lord Lieutenant with regard to the swearing in of special constables was different in some respects from his own recollection of the matter, not so much on questions of fact, as with respect to the views of the different parties concerned as to the various interviews. He could only assure the hon. Member that the Lord Lieutenant and himself intended to pay a special mark of respect to him, as Lord Mayor of Dublin, when, at the outset of the proceedings, they asked him to call upon them at the Castle. He did not, however, take exception to the hon. Member's description of what followed; but he could not allow the special constables who were sworn in to be described as bad preservers of the peace. There was no use in shirking the fact that there was serious danger to the peace of the city for two or three days; and in the opinion of the Government that danger was very much diminished by the manner in which the special constables were treated by the people of all classes. Then with regard to the Monday, he must say a word to remove the impression in the hon. Gentleman's mind. On the Monday, in the opinion of the Government, the danger was over. While it lasted the danger was very great; but on the Monday it was over. It was incumbent on the Government, at the earliest opportunity, to dismiss the special constables, and for the moment they were quite satisfied that the city was safe in the charge of the regular police; they wished to show that they had absolute confidence in that body—a confidence which had lasted to this day, and would, he hoped, last as long as the Dublin Police existed. That was the history of the matter, so far as the unwillingness of the Government to avail themselves of the offer made by the hon. Member on the Monday was concerned. He must own, however, that when the hon. Member asked the Government to transfer the charge of the Dublin Police to the Dublin Municipality, he did not feel encouraged to take that step by the hon. Member's observations as to the appointment of those police for the protection of persons who were in danger, for he could not regard that as political service. He did not consider the protection of Judges and juries political service; and he could not allow that the police were engaged as political protectors. He regarded those persons upon whom the police were carrying on what hon. Members might, if they chose, call "espionage," as the enemies of public order—the enemies just as much of the hon. Member as of the Irish Government; and he thought it would be extremely hard to find any one part of their duties which could be described as political service. The Government had the strongest confidence in the attitude of both the Police and the Constabulary in Dublin. As to another question which the hon. Member put, saying he doubted whether he would be able to give an answer, on the whole, he thought the hon. Member would acquiesce in his not doing so.

Mr. DAWSON said, he should be sorry, on account of the position he wished to take in Irish politics—a position of prudence and practical common sense—to convey the impression that he thought the protection of persons, whose lives were in danger, was political and not Executive service; but the necessity for that protection had been brought about by political circumstances, and not by social disaffection.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY wished to ask the Chief Secretary what was the number of Marines actually employed in Dublin at present? The Returns mentioned 298 Marines on duty; but he had heard that more of them had recently been sent over. Then he would like to ask whether these Marines were of any use whatever in detective duty; for he was told by people in Dublin that their walk and demeanour and gestures were well-known to everyone. Even the dogs in the streets knew who they were. Under those conditions, how could they be of any possible use as detectives? He should suppose that their very accent would betray them, for he presumed they did not usually speak with a Dublin accent, and so their very speech would bewray them. He believed they had been employed to make raids on public-houses in Dublin; but did anything ever come of those raids to help to the discovery of crimes? Had not the discovery of crimes been the work of the detectives themselves? Was any good accomplished by the introduction of strange and anomalous Marines into the Municipal Force of Dublin? He believed they were paid at a higher rate—at least, twice that of the regular force. How long did the Chief Secretary intend to pursue this system? How many were there of them; and how soon would the right hon. Gentleman get rid of them?

Mr. TREVELYAN, in reply, stated that there were 300 Marines and officers in Dublin. He was unable to say how long the Government intended to employ them. They had been of the greatest use in keeping order during the most serious matters of all—conflicts in the streets of a murderous character. It must be in the memory of the hon. Gentleman that, if he recollected rightly, on one and the same night there was a sort of battle royal fought in line of battle between the police and people, who were presumed to belong to a gang of "Invincibles," while another party went out for the almost successful purpose of murdering Mr. Field.

Mr. SEXTON: The Abbey Street occurrence was on the Saturday, and the attack on Mr. Field was on the Monday.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, there was evidence that that was not the only case which was planned for the same evening; but it was beyond doubt that in the streets and Parks of Dublin there were these occurrences, which he might call homicides, of a political nature, and which, if not suppressed, would have been a source of great danger. Since the Marines had been sent there the peace of the city at a great crisis—not a political crisis, but when it was threatened by a desperate gang of murderers—had been preserved; and the Government were quite confident that unless the law had been strengthened, and in that manner, the consequences would have been most serious.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN asked whether the Chief Secretary could give any idea of the number of men searched in public-houses in Dublin by police and Marines, and of the results of those searches? The Marines were chiefly associated with the searches in public-houses in Dublin; and he had read more than once, in the Dublin correspondence of *The Times*, that these searches in public-houses averaged about 100 per night; but he never read that any discoveries had followed from these searches. These were outrageous insults; and there was no man in Dublin who had been searched in a public-house in whose memory that search would not burn for all time, and whose friends would not in their hearts resent these atrocious proceedings. He hoped the Government would state how many persons had been searched, and what had been gained therefrom. The sympathy of people all over Ireland was roused when they found that their fellow-countrymen were outraged and insulted, not only by police who were at least Irishmen by name, but by men who were brought over from England, and sent to every public-house to search every person they found there. These searches were probably still going on; and he wanted to know how long they were to continue; how many searches had been made, and what had been gained by them?

Mr. SEXTON said, the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had left the House at a very inconvenient moment, inasmuch as two very important questions had just been asked. One of these related to the searching of public-houses in Dublin, which on one night took place to the number of 116 in the City of Dublin. The police on the occasion entered the houses, while a guard of Marines remained at the door. Not only was every man, but every woman, on the premises searched, and that not in the humane way prescribed in the case of prison discipline, but in a manner altogether offensive to humanity. He pointed out that the searching of men with brutality, and women with indecency, was likely to leave upon the minds of the people of Ireland an impression unfavourable to the preservation of order; and he said that when such things, contrary to the sense of the community, were done, Irish Members were entitled to ask whether they had produced any commensurate results? Was there any evidence to show that the result justified the means? Had the searches resulted in the discovery of arms or documents they might have been satisfied; but if they were nugatory, and without any such result, he thought they might claim some assurance from the right hon. Gentleman that they would not be resorted to in future. He asked the right hon. Gentleman whether it was true that, in the case of the Marines brought from England for the maintenance of peace in Dublin, the sergeants received £2 and the men 35*s.* a week?—because the pay of a police sergeant in Dublin was not more than 30*s.* a week.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, the searches dated from the time when the police were fighting in the dark against a terrible and mysterious conspiracy. The method adopted was, undoubtedly, a most unusual one; but the nature of the crimes to be detected was so unusual that it was necessary to resort to these means. If no great discovery had been made it was no reason why the searches might not have been successful, and productive, perhaps, of some slight circumstance which would lead to important results. On the whole, he thought a Minister would be to blame to make the time when the Estimates were brought forward the occasion for giving a promise which otherwise he would not have given; and, therefore, he hoped the hon. Member opposite would be contented with a general expression of views, which would probably be more satisfactory to him, and more honourable to the man who made it, than would be the case with a promise given under compulsion. With regard to the Marines, it was as the hon. Member had stated. The Marine, undoubtedly, got an addition to his home pay under the exceptional circumstances in which he was employed; but it must be recollected that if it were necessary to send men of the Dublin Police to any towns in England to act in the case of an emergency, there would be an addition to their pay which would bring it up to the amount which the Marines in Dublin were now receiving. Everyone knew that the Marines lived in barracks surrounded by their families; and if they were taken away for a special reason to a part of the country where a dangerous state of things existed, the extraordinary pay which he received was only natural under the circumstances.

Mr. PARNELL said, he was very glad to observe that the right hon. Gentleman evidently considered that the action of the Marines and Police authorities in Dublin in making these wholesale searches, not only of the premises, but of individuals at night, was not a practice which he would like to see sanctioned or recommended for use again. But he wished to ask the Attorney General for Ireland under what Act of Parliament these searches of individuals were made in their own houses; and whether he would state the form of warrant which was granted by the Lord Lieutenant enabling the searches to be made? He found, under the 14th section of the Prevention of Crime Act, that it was lawful for the Lord Lieutenant, from time to time, by warrant in a prescribed form, to direct Inspectors or Sub-Inspectors to search for and seize in a proclaimed district, or any part thereof specified in the warrant, any of the following articles:—that was to say, arms, documents, and, so forth; and, under the 2nd sub-section of that Section, any Inspector or Sub-Inspector was authorized to enter at any time into any house, building, or place, for the purpose of executing such warrant. But it was not authorized, under any law that he was acquainted with, to search a person without taking him or her to the police barracks; and it did not appear that the section of the Statute he had cited gave absolute power to the police to make these searches, without arresting and taking to the police barracks the person to be searched; otherwise it would be possible, under such an interpretation of the Statute, for a policeman to arrest a person in the street and to search him on the spot before the eyes of the public. He could not think it was the intention of the Legislature to give permission to search persons on the premises for the purposes specified in the Act. He would like the Attorney General for Ireland to read the formal warrant under which policemen or Marines in Dublin were authorized to search individuals on the premises in Dublin for the arms, documents, and instruments which were supposed to be concealed there. He would also like to know what had resulted from the searches—whether the police made any discovery whatever by resorting to the extraordinary means adopted on the occasion?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter) said, his impression was that the searches in question were not made under the Prevention of Crime Act, but under the Arms Act of the previous year, by which power was given to search for arms, and to arrest persons and take them before a magistrate. Under the ordinary law, if there was suspicion of felony to justify the arrest, there would be power to search. Although in most cases no arms were found, yet that was no measure of the utility of the search, because no doubt it prevented, in many cases, persons carrying arms. That was one advantage of the searches. However, he agreed that it was not a practice which should be resorted to, except under most pressing circumstances.

Mr. PARNELL said, he was glad to receive the statement of the Attorney General for Ireland that the searches were made under the Prevention of Crime Act. If that were the case, however, it was a breach of the law, because the Act named by the right hon. and learned Gentleman provided that persons when arrested should be taken to the police barracks to be searched. That answer was given by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), in reply to Irish Members, when the Bill was under discussion. But it was notorious that in the searches which took place the Marines did enter these public-houses and search people on the spot. The power which the right hon. and learned Gentleman alluded to, under the ordinary law, of arresting and searching a person suspected of being about to commit a felony did not extend to searching people on the spot, as was done on the occasion referred to. Every person arrested, under circumstances of suspicion that he was about to commit a felony, must be taken to the police barracks; that was the law as laid down in the discussions on the Arms Act, and he was not aware that it had been altered since.

Mr. LALOR asked how many persons had been arrested and searched?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter) said, that when there was reasonable suspicion of felony the police might arrest and search on the spot. He could not state the number of persons arrested and searched.

Mr. LEAMY asked if the right hon. and learned Gentleman meant to say that the police might enter a public building when a number of persons were collected and search them on the spot? Would he say that it was right for the police to surround a field where a meeting was being held and search everyone present, because some persons attending it might happen to have arms? Everyone knew that the search was made for arms, and that it was unsuccessful. He was surprised to hear this doctrine laid down by so able a lawyer as the right hon. and learned Gentleman. There was no reason why, on the same principle, the police should not enter a church, and search all the persons present on the suspicion that some of them were carrying arms. If such things were allowed, he could see no use in having any law at all, or any Acts of Parliament.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN said, he could not understand how the Government could not state the number of persons who had been arrested and searched in the public-houses in Dublin. He presumed the police and Marines were required to make some kind of Return to Dublin Castle of the persons arrested; and he might have to ask a question upon the subject at a future time, if the number of arrests could not be given on the present occasion.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, if the hon. Member put the Question to him under Notice he would endeavour to satisfy him.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the right hon. Gentleman to state whether any Return of these searches was made, showing the number of persons searched on each particular occasion?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he preferred to answer this Question in the manner he had indicated.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he wished to refer to the legal point raised by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). The Attorney General for Ireland had stated his impression to be that the searches took place under the Arms Act of 1881. He had since looked at the Act, and found that it was provided that any person carrying, or reasonably suspected of carrying, any arms in contravention of the Act might be arrested without warrant by a police officer, and, as soon as he reasonably could be, conveyed before a Justice of the Peace, in order to be dealt with according to law. It was important to observe that the people arrested on the occasion in question were not brought before a Justice of the Peace.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter) said, he had stated that it was his impression that some of the searches took place under the Arms Act, on the reasonable suspicion of arms being on the premises. He had also said that searches were made on the spot under the ordinary law when there was reasonable suspicion of felony.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR remarked that the Attorney General for Ireland had fallen back on the Common Law. He asked whether, by the Common Law, the police were authorized to search a person unless there was ground for supposing that such person, as an individual and not as a member of a general gathering in a particular place, was about to commit a felony? Did the Common Law give the police or the Government the right to cause a number of persons, all and sundry, to be examined as if they were all about to commit felony, because there might be some individual amongst them who might be reasonably suspected of having the intention to commit it? He denied that this principle was sanctioned by the Common Law. If the Common Law allowed any individual to be searched because he was reasonably suspected of being about to commit a felony, it did not allow the police to search all and sundry simply because there was a suspicion that some one individual was in the possession of arms.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he thought it would be more convenient to get this question raised in the Irish Court of Queen's Bench. What was the use of asking the Government whether a certain outrage was legalized under the Prevention of Crime Act? If it was not legalized under the Common Law it was legalized under something else. If a Statute of Victoria would not do, one of the Acts of Charles I. might. If a Statute of Charles I. was unfit for the Government purpose, why, then, the right hon. and learned Gentleman could go back to Edward III, and from that reign to the Heptarchy, for a justification of their action. The further the Government went back in search of an Act that would legalize the brutal system at work in Ireland, the more hearty would be the applause from the Liberal Benches. He thought the whole course of the discussion must have convinced Irish Members that there must be a new departure taken in Irish national affairs. The brutal apathy with which Irish protests were met by English public opinion must impress upon the Irish National Party the necessity of taking legitimate steps to promote a livelier attention on the part both of the British Government and the British public.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 12; Noes 63: Majority 51.—(Div. List, No. 28.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

(4.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £3,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, for the Expense of the Superintendence of Prisons, and of the Maintenance of Prisoners in Prisons in Ireland, and of the Registration of Habitual Criminals."

Mr. PARNELL said, there were some things in this Vote which he was anxious to bring before the attention of the Committee. The subject of prison treatment was a subject which had engaged the attention of the Irish Members for many Sessions. In the Session of 1877, during the passage of the Prisons Act—an Act which placed the local prisons of the country, English, Irish, and Scotch, under the jurisdiction of the Central Government—the Home Office in England, and the Prisons Board in Ireland—the Irish Members directed the attention of the House of Commons to several matters of considerable importance; and he was glad to say they had succeeded in obtaining for untried prisoners special statutable guarantees—guarantees which were inserted in the Act, and became the law of the land—that, for the future, untried prisoners, and certain other classes of prisoners—namely, prisoners convicted of sedition and seditious libel, should receive a special and exceptional treatment. During the discussion of the Prevention of Crime Act, the Irish Members again brought the question of the prison treatment of different classes of prisoners before the House; and the right hon. Gentleman the then Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant was good enough to say that he would appoint a Royal Commission for the purpose of inquiring into every question affecting the prisons in Ireland, and the treatment of prisoners therein. That Commission had, he believed, been appointed; but, as yet, he had not heard that it had held any sitting, or had taken any steps whatever to carry out the objects of its appointment. The right hon. Gentleman also during last Session—not the Autumn Sitting, but the early part of last Session—promised that he would still further ameliorate the condition and treatment of prisoners awaiting trial, and that he would endeavour to make the food of these prisoners at least as good as that of those detained under the Coercion Act of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster). Well, he was sorry to say that, so far from the treatment of untried prisoners having been ameliorated since the promise which the right hon. Gentleman had given, in the particular instances which had come under their notice it had been distinctly altered for the worse. Not only had the right hon. Gentleman not done anything to better the condition of untried prisoners while in prison, but, as he (Mr. Parnell) thought he should be able to show, the statutory guarantees granted to untried prisoners had been distinctly violated in the treatment of prisoners awaiting trial on charges of murder and murder conspiracy in Dublin at the present moment. He trusted the Chief Secretary would excuse him for calling attention to this matter. It was a question in which he had always been very much interested, and which he had specially studied from the first moment of his entrance into Parliamentary life; and it was with the greatest possible disappointment that he found the guarantees they had fought for and won from the Conservative Party, when they were in Office, had been filched from untried prisoners in Ireland by the Imperial Government. It would be impossible for the Irish Members to allow this matter to pass by without drawing the attention of the House of Commons to it. He should always look back at the concessions they had obtained from the late Parliament in favour of the soldiers and sailors of Her Majesty with the greatest pride; and he should resist any attempt, such as that which had been recently made, to render nugatory the provisions of the law, and to set up an arbitrary standard of treatment and arbitrary rules for that treatment, from time to time, as the necessities of particular cases, or of a particular case, might seem to require, in entire forgetfulness of the provisions in the Statute Book, which were such an honour to the Prisons Act of 1877. He would give the Committee, shortly, the provisions of the Act of 1877, which he considered had been violated by the Lord Lieutenant in the treatment of the prisoners awaiting trial for the murder conspiracy in Dublin. The 13th section of the Prisons (Ireland) Act was introduced after very long discussion in the House—very heated and excited discussion—by the right hon. Gentleman the then Home Secretary of the Conservative Government (Mr. Cross). This section was a very remarkable one. It was almost in the nature of an Act in itself. It was, at the very least, the solemn declaration of the intention of Parliament at that time, and the intention of both Parties in the House, that a clear distinction should be made between the treatment of untried prisoners and convicted prisoners, since the English law held that prisoners until they were found guilty should be looked upon as innocent. This section said, in effect, that whereas it was expedient that a clear difference should be made between the treatment of prisoners unconvicted of crime, and in law presumably innocent during the period of their detention in prison for safe custody only, and the treatment of prisoners who had been convicted of crime during their detention in prison for the purpose of punishment, and in order to secure such difference there should be certain rules prepared to render the detention of untried prisoners as little as possible oppressive, due regard only being had to their safe custody, to the necessity of conformity to general rules for the purpose of maintaining order and good government in the place in which they were confined, and to the physical and moral well-being of the prisoners; therefore it should be enacted that the General Prisons Board should make, subject to the approval of the Lord Lieutenant and the Privy Council of Ireland, certain Rules and regulations. Then followed three sub-sections, which gave in more detail the particular direction the Rules in question were to take, and the purposes they were supposed to cover. Now, in pursuance of that section, the Irish Prisons Board—for the Lord Lieutenant had no power to make or alter Prison Rules—had prepared certain Rules. The function was given to this body by the Statute to which he had referred in regard to Irish prisoners. In pursuance of the provisions of the Statute, on the 22nd of March, 1878, the Duke of Marlborough, then Lord Lieutenant, sanctioned a set of Prison Rules for the treatment of untried prisoners. To some of these Rules he (Mr. Parnell) would draw the attention of the Committee, and he would then proceed to show how they had been broken in the particular case of the treatment of these prisoners in Dublin. The prisoners were to have, on the payment of a small sum fixed by the Prisons Board, the assistance of some person appointed by the Governor, relieving him from the performance of any unaccustomed task or offices—

> "The Visiting Committee must permit persons awaiting trial to have supplied to them at their own expense such books, newspapers, or other means of occupation, other than those furnished by the prison, as are not in their opinion, or, in their absence, pending their approval, in the opinion of the Governor, of an objectionable kind."

The Visiting Committee were also to be permitted to prolong the period of visits to prisoners—

> "Each prisoner awaiting trial will be permitted to be visited by one person, or, if circumstances permit, by two persons at the same time, for a quarter of an hour during any week day, during such hour as may, from time to time, be appointed."

Then there was the Rule he had referred to out of its order—

> "All untried prisoners shall, at their request, be allowed to see their legal advisers, by which is to be understood a certificated solicitor or his clerk, if such clerk is furnished by his principal with a written authority, on any week day at any resonable hour, and, if required, in private, but, if necessary, in view of an officer in the prison."

The object of that was, of course, to prevent any improper communication taking place between the prisoner and his legal adviser; and at Kilmainham, to his (Mr. Parnell's) knowledge, there was a cell specially fitted up for the purpose of interviews between prisoners and their legal advisers. It had a glass door, so that a warder could stand there to see that nothing that was prohibited by the Prison Rules was passed to the prisoner by his adviser, while the warder could hear anything that passed between the two—

> "Paper and all other writing materials shall be furnished. Any confidential written communication prepared as instructions to a solicitor may be delivered personally to him or his clerk, without being examined by the officer of the prison; but all other written communications are to be considered as letters, and are not to be sent out of the prison without having been previously inspected by the Governor."

The points in which he alleged that the Prison Rules thus framed, with the sanction of the Duke of Marlborough, had been broken—he supposed under the direction of the Duke—were the following:—The prisoners had not been allowed to see any of their relatives or any of their friends. They had been kept in solitary confinement since their arrest. They had been refused permission to see their legal advisers, except in the presence of a warder, who had been placed—as he had been informed by the public reports he had seen in the newspapers—in such a position as to hear everything that passed between the two. He (Mr. Parnell) need not say that he should be very glad to be corrected by the Chief Secretary as regarded any of these matters if he were wrong; but statements to that effect had appeared in the newspapers, and he had no reason to suppose that the information was incorrect. It would seem,. if the information was correct, that the defence of the prisoners had been disclosed to the warders, and possibly also to the Crown authorities. The prisoners had not been permitted to read any newspapers since their arrest. They had not been permitted to write to any of their relatives, or to write upon anything whatever in relation to their businesses. The deprivation of visitors, the detention of these prisoners in solitary confinement, the presence of a warder during interviews between the prisoners and their legal advisers, and the refusal to allow the prisoners to read any newspapers, were the points to which he had to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, with the exception of this—that the prisoners had been, for a certain time, compelled to clean out their own cells. They had not been allowed the services of convicted persons, or persons especially set aside for the purpose under the provisions of the Rules. In fact, the whole spirit of their treatment had been this—it would seem as if it was sought to convey the impression that these persons were guilty, absolutely before they had been tried, or convicted of any offence. The whole spirit of the treatment of these men had been entirely opposed to the spirit of the Act of 1877 and the Rules that had been framed in accordance with that Act. He would now go on to another branch of the subject. When the Prevention of Crime Act was passing through Committee, the Irish Members had drawn attention to the treatment of the agrarian and political prisoners who might be convicted under the Summary Jurisdiction Clause. They urged the Government that it would be most desirable that some separate treatment should be adopted in the case of these prisoners—that they should not be kept in association with prisoners convicted of ordinary offences, and that so much relaxation of the ordinary Prison Rules should be granted them during their period of imprisonment as might be possible under the circumstances. In fact, they would have wished that some separate clause specially governing the treatment of this class of prisoners had been inserted in the Act—that power had been given to the Lord Lieutenant especially governing the treatment of this class of prisoners. The justice of the position the Irish Members took up had been rendered manifest by occurrences which had recently taken place at Spike Island, where, in consequence of the association of agrarian prisoners with other prisoners, riots had broken out, which might have resulted in serious loss of life, and which the authorities had found it necessary to rigorously quell. He did not know that these riots had been occasioned by agrarian prisoners; but the disturbances—according to what he had seen in the newspapers—were in some way due to the mixing up of agrarian prisoners with prisoners who had been convicted of other crimes. Sir Walter Crofton, late Director of Prisons in Ireland, gave as his experience of agrarian prisoners that it was most desirable they should be kept separate from other classes of prisoners. Such persons were convicted of offences more or less of a political character. In nine cases out of 10—in 99 out of 100—the offence was committed for the purpose of forwarding the political ideas of the person committing the offence, and not for the purpose of obtaining any advantage for himself or his particular friends. That was the distinction he drew between an offence of a political character and an ordinary offence. A man might rob a house, or he might commit a highway robbery, and that would be an ordinary offence, because it was committed by a man for his own benefit. In like manner, a man might kick his wife to death, being under some idea that the result would be of personal advantage to himself; but the youth who went out in the West of Ireland and committed a Whiteboy offence could not be said to have been actuated by considerations of his own personal gain or profit. However misguided the youth might be in the particular act, still it was an act which he committed for the sake of the public benefit, as he supposed. The journalist indicted under the Intimidation Clauses of the Prevention of Crime Act, and sentenced to six months' imprisonment and a plank bed, committed a political offence, because he committed that offence for the public good, as he supposed—for his motives might be mistaken—and not for his own individual good. Let them take the case of Mr. Harrington, or Mr. M'Philpin. Could it be said that these gentlemen had made the speeches for which they had been prosecuted and imprisoned with the idea of gaining benefit for themselves by injuring other people? Certainly not; therefore their offences were of a political character, and, according to his (Mr. Parnell's) contention, called for separate treatment. He wished to ask what the treatment was which was given to persons convicted of these political, or semi-political, or politico-agrarian offences? The Prevention of Crime Act permitted the magistrates to give sentences not exceeding six months' imprisonment with hard labour. First of all he came to the food. A person sent to gaol with hard labour in Ireland would receive to eat, on an average, during his term of imprisonment, per day 16 ounces of bread, and about 8 ounces of potatoes; he would be required to lie on a plank bed during the first month of his imprisonment every night, and during the second month he would be required to lie on that plank bed every alternate night. He would be required to pick oakum, or break stones, or undergo some other form of labour for which, by his previous training, he was altogether unfitted. Take Mr. M'Philpin, Mr. Harrington, Mr. O'Brien, Town Councillor of Cork, Mr. Hodnett, Mr. Healy, and others—no; not Mr. Healy, for he was not imprisoned under the Act, but he might just as well be—these gentlemen were not fit for such work. The cells in which these prisoners were confined were hardly ever warmed in winter. When he (Mr. Parnell) was at Kilmainham, he had to pass through the criminal portion of the prison every day in going out to exercise, and out of curiosity he used to put his hand on the hot water pipes to see if they were heated as he went along. On an average, throughout the winter, these pipes were only heated twice a week; consequently, the cells in which the convicted prisoners were confined were both damp and cold, adding to the aggravation of the semi-starvation which a diet of 16 ounces of bread, and 8 ounces of bad and watery potatoes inflicted upon a prisoner's constitution. The windows of the cells in many cases were broken, so as to let in the cold air. The clothing of the prisoners was entirely insufficient in the winter; and he could see from the appearance of the convicted prisoners in Kilmainham that they were starved by both cold and hunger. Now, what he would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to consider was this—whether some classification of prisoners convicted of offences manifestly of a political character under this exceptional Prevention of Crime Act might not be attempted; and whether, at least, there might not be some better system of treatment for persons who did not come from the ordinary criminal classes—whether they might not be kept separate from the ordinary criminals convicted under the ordinary law of the land, receive a lighter description of work, and a somewhat better quality of food, and have some attempt made to warm their cells during the winter time? He had no means of knowing how many persons were at present in prison under the summary jurisdiction powers of the magistrates in Ireland; but he could well understand the large amount of irritation and vindictive feeling which was harboured by the man who had come out of prison if, while in that prison for a political offence, he had been half-starved by cold and hunger, and made to associate with, and do the work of, criminals. He (Mr. Parnell) had thought this would be a good opportunity for directing the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant to these matters. It had always been one of the special stains on the English prison treatment that no distinction was drawn between the political offender and the person who had committed ordinary crime. The laws of France, Germany, and even of Russia, drew this distinction; but until the Act of 1877 was passed, in which the Irish Members had obtained the insertion of special powers for the treatment of prisoners convicted of sedition and seditious libel, there never had been any attempt made in the Statute Book of England to give exceptional treatment by law to political prisoners, although exceptional treatment was often extended to them by the special interference of the authorities.

It was useless to say that these offences were not political. Many of them were political in the highest sense, and the Government did not degrade them, or the people who committed them, in the eyes of the Irish people, or in the view of the public opinion of the world, by throwing the offender into prison, and treating him in the horrible and abominable fashion that had been described. He therefore trusted that the right hon. Gentleman might be able to give consideration to the whole matter, and that he would also be able to give him some assurance with regard to the extraordinary treatment of the untried prisoners in Dublin.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had been called upon so often to address the Committee that he had asked him to say a few words in answer to what had fallen from the hon. Member for the City of Cork. He might be permitted to offer a few remarks upon this subject; first of all, because he had some knowledge of the question; and with reference to prisoners generally he had even, perhaps, more experience than his right hon. Friend. The hon. Member for the City of Cork had referred to two subjects—the one was the treatment of untried prisoners, and the other was the treatment of prisoners who had been tried and convicted. He would say a word upon both subjects separately. It was perfectly true that a distinction had been drawn, and properly drawn, between the position and treatment of men who were in prison awaiting trial, and those who were in prison after conviction. It was quite proper and just that it should be so. The hon. Gentleman had referred to the Rules made on the subject, and he had said that those Rules had not been strictly observed in respect to the prisoners who were at present in Kilmainham on the charge of murder. Now, he would begin by saying that the statement of the hon. Member for the City of Cork was, in some particulars, accurate, and in some particulars, according to the information he possessed, inaccurate. In the first place, the prisoners now confined in Kilmainham were allowed, under the Rules, to see their solicitor. That was very proper. Whether warders watched the interview between solicitor and prisoner through glass doors or not, he was unable to inform the hon. Member.

Mr. PARNELL: That is an important matter.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he was sorry neither he nor his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary could speak positively on that subject. The information they had was that the prisoners were allowed to see their solicitor; that they were allowed to correspond with the managers of their business in order to prevent their pecuniary interests suffering. They were allowed also to see the newspapers.

Mr. PARNELL: Does the right hon. and learned Gentleman know since when that privilege has been allowed to them?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that was all the information they possessed. Now, there were two things which the prisoners were not allowed to do. They were not allowed to receive visits from their friends, or to communicate with one another.

Mr. PARNELL admitted that, according to the law and the rules in such cases, it was quite right that they should be kept from communicating with each other; but he found fault that they were not allowed to see their friends, even through gratings.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he was answering the complaints made by the hon. Member when he used the words "solitary confinement," and as to their not seeing their friends. He (Sir William Harcourt) must leave it to the judgment of the Committee whether, considering the character of the offences they were charged with, considering the formidable and malignant character of the secret society with which it was alleged they were connected, it would not entirely defeat the whole objects of justice if these prisoners were allowed freely to communicate with their private friends in Dublin? He took as much responsibility upon himself as rested upon Lord Spencer in this matter; and he maintained that no Government would be justified in allowing such a state of things; circumstances must govern these matters. Though it might be a rule, and a proper rule, in cases of ordinary offences, that prisoners should be allowed communication with their friends, he thought every reasonable man would admit that the present was a case in which an exception was absolutely necessary. That really was the answer he had to make to the hon. Member for the City of Cork upon that head. The second exception really followed that which he had alluded to. The hon. Gentleman complained that the prisoners were not allowed to receive or send letters on private matters. Now, they were allowed to see their solicitors for the purposes of their defence; they were allowed to communicate with their men of business for the protection of their pecuniary interests; but they were not allowed communication on private matters; and his contention was that to have allowed such a state of things would have been to defeat the ends of justice altogether. So much for the question of the untried prisoners in the particular case of the Phœnix Park murders, and the attempted murder of the juror, Mr. Field. He would now pass to the other point stated by the hon. Member, which had reference to the prisoners who had been convicted under the Prevention of Crime Act. The hon. Member contended that agrarian offences under that Act should be placed upon a different footing to other crimes. If he (Sir William Harcourt) remembered rightly, that argument was used, and fully discussed, when that Act was passing through the House. He opposed that view, because he did not think that a distinction ought to be made between the motives that led to crime. If they allowed motives to determine the punishment of a crime, the whole system of the suppression of crime would crumble in their hands; and, therefore, he could not, for one moment, admit that the motive of a crime ought to determine its character or its punishment. If he thought it necessary to enter at any length into the subject he should not agree with the hon. Member that these particular agrarian crimes proceeded from the highest motives. On the contrary, it seemed to him that there lay at the bottom of them motives of greed and cupidity. Agrarian crimes were methods by which "no rent" manifestoes were carried out, and he could not regard that as belonging to the highest order of moral virtue. He declined altogether to judge of a crime by its motive. A man committed a crime, and he was punished for it, without any speculation upon the motive in his mind. When a man had cut off the legs of a beast he was surely not to be better fed and bettter treated than any other man, simply because he had acted with a high political motive? In cases of crimes of that character there was no possible reason why any distinction whatever should be made in the punishment of the men. The hon. Member spoke of the Whiteboy offences; but those offences comprehended amongst them the most heinous crimes it was possible to commit. Were they to be covered by the pretext of political virtue? He must say that it would be the most dangerous of all lessons that they could read to the Irish people as a nation, that crime became venial because it was covered by political pretext.

Mr. SEXTON said, he had no fault to find with the tone of the reply of the right hon. and learned Gentleman; but the substance of the reply was far from satisfactory; in fact, it was no answer whatever to the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork. When he saw the right hon. and learned Gentleman rise he did not regard the reply with anything like hope; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman had actually made the case of his hon. Friend somewhat better than it appeared after the speech of his hon. Friend. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had made it appear that at present, at any rate, the prisoners confined upon the tremendous charge of murder were allowed to have intercourse and converse with their legal representatives; but he did not say whether they were allowed to have conference in such a way that it should be private, so far as the officers of the prison were concerned. The right hon. and learned Gentleman was not able to say whether a warder was present during the conferences, or whether he merely watched the interview through glass doors. It must be apparent to the Committee that it was in the highest degree important that interviews between solicitor and client must be strictly private; and therefore the whole point of the case was whether or not the warder was allowed to hear what passed? If he was so allowed, the right of defence of the prisoner was absolutely taken away. He did not see what justification the right hon. and learned Gentleman considered there was for preventing these men from communicating with their friends by letter, notwithstanding the character of the crimes with which they were charged. Why should not the Governor of the prison read the letters going out and the letters coming in, and thus be able to satisfy himself that there was nothing contained in those letters detrimental to the cause of justice? In like manner, he could not understand why the prisoners should not be allowed to be visited by their families and friends. He had heard through the public Press that in some of the cases of the men now confined in Kilmainham, the family circumstances were of the most sorrowful description; and that it would be a great consolation to the relatives of the men, as well as to the unfortunate men themselves, if communication between them were permitted. Under Forster's Act the regulation was that visitors should be allowed to see the prisoners across two partitions, the visitor standing on one side, the prisoner on the other, and the warder between them. The warder, therefore, could hear every word spoken, and nothing possibly could pass without his knowledge. That was allowed, no matter how serious, and tremendous, and grave were the interests of justice involved; and he (Mr. Sexton) maintained that it was wanton and unreasonable, and, in fact, a breach of the law, to forbid the men now imprisoned in Kilmainham having a reasonable right of access from their families and relatives. If the Home Secretary was able to show the Committee that the reasonable claims of justice would be endangered by permitting the interviews between prisoners and friends, he would not say a single word in favour of such interviews; because he recognized that the Government, having a number of men in prison on a serious charge, was entitled to protect itself, was entitled to sustain the charge by every fair and legitimate means. But it would be perfectly easy for the Government to allow three things—to allow restrained intercourse between solicitor and client, to allow the prisoners to receive visits from their wives, families, and friends under the same restrictions as were enforced under Forster's Coercion Act. These three privileges might be allowed, without in any way interfering with the cause of justice. Now, as to the second class of prisoners—namely, those who were convicted of offences under the Prevention of Crime Act. The Home Secretary, as he (Mr. Sexton) expected, refused to recognize the political character of any crime whatever in Ireland; but whatever the Home Secretary might refuse to do, a difference was embedded in the hearts and consciences, and common sense of man; every nation recognized, every code of law recognized, that there was a clear and wide difference between a criminal who committed a crime through jealousy or love, or to rid himself of an inconvenience, or to gain for himself some advantage, or for some other personal motive—there was a gulf of a difference between that criminal and the man—he did not say a man who houghed or maimed cattle—who by any act done, or by any words spoken, endeavoured, however mistaken he might be, to advance the public interest. All mankind recognized that difference. He asked, what was the object of torturing the Mayor of Wexford, whose only crime was that, being the proprietor of a newspaper, he had allowed the insertion in his newspaper—he (Mr. Sexton) believed quite inadvertently—of a resolution passed by a Land League branch? Of course, the Home Secretary would say that the effect of that paragraph would be to lead to disorder; but, at any rate, it was evident that the Mayor of Wexford had no such purpose in his mind when he permitted the resolution to appear in his paper. The gentleman was thrown into gaol, and he (Mr. Sexton) went to see him the other day, and at that time he was wearing a grey jacket, living on the most miserable food, living on food, in fact, only sufficient to sustain life; in short, the man was left in a state of most unimaginable misery. He was lying on a plank bed, and was ordered to pick oakum; and he (Mr. Sexton) learned from the prison chaplain that because the Mayor of Wexford had failed to complete his task of picking oakum he was subjected to the treatment ordinarily applied to criminals in such cases. When he (Mr. Sexton) presented himself at the prison he asked that the fact of his having done so should be conveyed to the prisoner; but he was told that the fact would be only made known to the Mayor of Wexford when he was leaving the gaol. What good purpose, he asked again, could be served by torturing the Mayor of Wexford in this manner? When the gentleman left the prison he was met by the citizens of the town. The man who had worn the ordinary grey prison jacket, who had been required to eat the worst food, was, when he was released, met by his fellow-citizens, and led in procession round the town. He contended that when the Government tortured a man like the Mayor of Wexford, they had only planted in his mind the seeds of permanent hatred, and made the whole community enemies of the system of government under which they lived. He would revert, for a few moments, to the case of M'Philpin and the Loughrea reporters, who were guilty of the hideous crime of remaining in a field after a meeting convened to be held there had been proclaimed. These reporters were remaining in the exercise of their professional duty; they did not leave the field as rapidly as the magistrate thought they ought; and, therefore, they were sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. Mr. M'Philpin, who was the editor of *The Tuam News*, and his fellow-prisoners were removed from one prison to another, clothed in the ordinary convict dress. The memory of such atrocities would not leave the minds of the people of the West of Ireland for many years to come; and if the Home Secretary could show that any good purpose whatever could be served by treating men in that way it would greatly surprise him. Again, what was the crime Mr. Harrington, the Member for County Westmeath, had committed? It was that he had made a speech in which he told the farmers that unless they did certain things the whole force of the labourers' agitation would be turned against them. It certainly required a great deal of reading between the lines to find anything wrong in that. Mr. Harrington had been thrown into gaol, ordered to wear the customary grey jacket, and was subjected to the ordinary prison treatment. On the day he was elected Member for Westmeath, he (Mr. Sexton) desired to see him, and he addressed a note to the Director of Prisons, informing him of his desire to see Mr. Harrington, and requesting him to obtain the necessary permission. Next morning the Governor of the gaol was told that if he (Mr. Sexton) called he was to be allowed to see Mr. Harrington personally; but an hour or two afterwards there came another telegram instructing the Governor that if he (Mr. Sexton) presented himself he was on no account to be allowed inside the prison. It appeared that the Prison Rule was not only ferocious, but cowardly. So long as they had Mr. Harrington in gaol, shut away from the public and the scrutiny of the public, they were satisfied. That Gentleman, however, would presently be in the House of Commons to answer for himself. He hoped the Prime Minister had paid attention to the few observations that he had made, and that greater latitude would be allowed to the men in Kilmainham. He would also appeal to the Home Secretary to reconsider his decision, that there ought to be no difference of treatment in the case of political and other offences.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR begged to propose a reduction of the Vote by £1,000, and he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would take advantage of the Amendment to answer some of the points raised by his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). What possible harm or danger could there be in allowing the prisoners to have interviews with their wives and families, subject, of course, to all the safeguards that the Prison Rules provided? He quite agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) that the Committee had no right to scrutinize too narrowly the action of the Government in regard to the prosecutions they thought necessary to take respecting a conspiracy of the character of the one which they were now dealing with; but he could not imagine that if interviews between the prisoners and their relatives were permitted that conspiracy would be aided in any respect. A warder would, of course, listen to all they had to say, and, if necessary, he would be able to put a stop to any portion of the conversation that might appear to him dangerous. The men were in a very terrible position; and that very fact, in his mind, ought to induce the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to see that no unnecessary torture was imposed upon them. He wished also to ask why it was that these men should not be able to see their legal advisers under the restrictions provided by law, and under those restrictions only; and whether the Lord Lieutenant was or was not justified, under any circumstances, in breaking the law, which was made for him as well as for other people? Was he not breaking, not only the letter, but the spirit of the law, in refusing to let these men see their counsel under the legal restrictions and in the presence of the warders? The hon. Member for Sligo had alluded to some tragical occurrences in the families of these men during their incarceration; and, however heinous their crime might be, they should not be deprived of the miserable consolation of communicating with their friends and relatives under such circumstances. He would not go over the controversy which the Home Secretary had raised as between political and ordinary crime; but he thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman's view was not that of his Colleagues. If ordinary and political crime were the same, why was it that in Extradition Treaties political crime was specially distinguished from all other crime? Mr. Byrne was accused of being an accessory to murder; murder was an ordinary crime; but the French Government had refused to extradite him, because, in their opinion, he had a political motive. He believed he was correct in saying that a great many offences which would otherwise be ordinary crimes, if they could be shown to have political motives, would not come under Extradition Treaties. Could an intimidating paragraph or speech be treated as a political crime? When the hon. Member for Westmeath (Mr. Harrington) took his seat in that House, could it be said that hon. Members in any part of the House would have the same feeling towards him as if he had been imprisoned for stealing, or maiming cattle, or murder? Did anyone believe there was any moral guilt or opprobrium to be visited upon his head, because, in the course of a political speech, he had used some words which, in the opinion of his political opponents, might be of an intimidating character? Would anybody refuse to make the acquaintance of a man imprisoned for a political speech, as they would of a man imprisoned for stealing? If that was so, was it right or proper that the hon. Member should be subjected to all the degrading circumstances of prison life? Mr. Harrington was dragged through the streets of Cork with his own clothes behind him, and wearing a prison jacket. What would be the feeling of the people when they saw a respected journalist of that city dragged through the streets in handcuffs, as though he were a felon? That scene would not pass from the memory of the people for a long time to come. The Chief Secretary ought never to forget that he had to deal with something more than a mere temporary problem in Ireland. England had to carry on the government of that country; but the present Ministry were making wider every day the chasm of hatred between the two countries by these atrocious acts in regard to respectable men like Mr. Harrington. He begged to move the reduction of the Vote by £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, for the Expense of the Superintendence of Prisons, and of the Maintenance of Prisoners in Prisons in Ireland, and of the Registration of Habitual Criminals."—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*)

MR. PARNELL said, he had hoped the Chief Secretary would have promised, at least, to consider the various points that had been brought before him.

MR. TREVELYAN said, it was through no disrespect to the hon. Members for Cork and Galway that he did not rise sooner; but he had not considered that the questions were put interrogatively with reference to some details on the Estimate. He had rather taken it for granted that the hon. Members had chosen this very proper occasion to impress certain views on the Government, and especially upon himself. Those views he knew they held, and, to a certain extent, he held them himself; but not to such an extent as to lead him to assent to a serious change being made in the policy pursued by the Irish Government. With regard to the difference between political and ordinary crime, acting, as it seemed to him, on the lines of the Prevention of Crime Act of last year, and thinking that Parliament was, on the whole, right in the details of that Statute, Lord Spencer and himself, advising, when necessary, with the Home Secretary, had sought to carry out the will of Parliament by arresting people who had brought themselves within that Act, and treating them as they had been treated. They had certainly not strained the Prevention of Crime Act against any prisoner. In the case of Mr. Harrington, he thought it would be recognized that the utmost that could be done had been done by the Executive; and what had been done showed that the Executive admitted that it was, perhaps, a little unfortunate that Mr. Harrington was in the position in which he found himself during the first two or three days. But when he came to the case of the Loughrea "suspects" and the Ballina meetings, he must join issue with the hon. Member, for he thought the circumstances under which those persons found themselves within the scope of the law were such as to very much resemble what was criminal and also political. The distinction between political and ordinary crime which the hon. Member for the City of Cork drew was one which he could never allow, and in Ireland least of all countries. The hon. Member had alluded to the mixture of agrarian and ordinary criminals in prison. Well, some of the agrarian prisoners were in prison for the most dreadful crimes—beating men within an inch of their lives and other offences, which were caused by some personal or family quarrel about land; and he thought that where a Whiteboy offence was committed under circumstances of that kind, he could not allow it to be named a political crime. However, the Government would always consider whether the character of an offence was such as to justly allow a distinction to be made between an ordinary criminal and a person suffering under the Prevention of Crime Act; but in nothing they did would they depart from the principles which Parliament evidently meant to lay down in that Act—namely, that the punishment should not only be preventive, by shutting people up in prison, but should also be deterrent, by sending men to prison under that Act, under such conditions as would deter other persons from imitating his example. With respect to the treatment of the Dublin prisoners, he had nothing to add to what had been said by his right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary. What had been done was done after long deliberation, and very unwillingly, from the highest motives of public safety. Hon. Members must recollect that during the first eight months of last year four people were done to death under circumstances which rendered it almost certain that they were killed for having broken the laws or violated the policy of a secret society. Under those circumstances, the Government knew as well as possible that the lives of recognized informers, and the lives of possible informers, were in danger. The Government knew that if they were right as to the men arrested belonging to secret societies, those men were quite capable of communicating with their friends, even in the presence of a warder, by words and tones which would convey quite a sufficient meaning. [Mr. PARNELL: No, no!] That, at all events, was the motive with which these strict Rules were passed—to protect the lives of people outside the prison, and prevent evidence being obtained by intimidation, or even got ready by more serious means. That this view was not cruel was proved by the fact that there was grave suspicion that these men belonged to secret societies, which would not stop at anything to gain their end; and after long consideration it was thought necessary to pass these Rules. He would certainly, however, communicate with the Lord Lieutenant on the first opportunity, and ask him whether there were any circumstances which would enable him to allow this or that Rule to be relaxed, as some of them had been, although he admitted that they were harsh enough now. This was one of the painful results of the extraordinary condition of Dublin City; but the object of the Government was to put down crime, which was as much to the interest of hon. Members from Ireland as to the interest of the Government.

MR. PARNELL inquired if there had been any Rules framed to regulate the treatment of the particular prisoners under the Act of 1877; and, if so, whether they could be laid upon the Table? If there were any such Rules, were they framed by the Lord Lieutenant, or by the Prison Board?

MR. TREVELYAN replied, that no such Rules had been framed.

MR. PARNELL said, the right hon. Gentleman excused himself on the ground that the necessities of the case justified him in breaking the Statute; but even if that were so, when these men were arrested, surely now, when matters had progressed so far as they had, there was no possible or imaginary necessity for depriving the wives and children of these men of the privilege of seeing them through two sets of bars. He did not admit—and, from his own experience of prison life, did not believe—it was possible to communicate anything which the authorities did not desire to have communicated, when a warder of sufficient character was present. The fears of the Government were entirely imaginary when they supposed that there was any probability that such interviews could be abused and utilized to carry out the objects the right hon. Gentleman had alluded to. But, if that had been possible, it was impossible now.

MR. TREVELYAN admitted that the feeling of the hon. Member was justified to a certain extent; and, although the question was one of extreme gravity, he would further consider these points.

MR. M'LAREN said, it was the unanimous wish of that House that people who were arrested under the Prevention of Crime Act should not be subject to the same discipline as ordinary criminals and murderers; and whatever official interests might require, he was sure that the feeling of Englishmen and Irishmen would always be opposed to that form of discipline that had been applied to the hon. Member for Westmeath (Mr. Harrington). He thought the Chief Secretary might mitigate some of these Rules; and if he did so, he could assure him that, at all events, English working men would in no way consider that he was relaxing any efforts to put down crime.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was very well satisfied with the course the discussion had taken, and thanked the hon. Member opposite (Mr. M'Laren) for his interference. He felt that the Chief Secretary had gone as far as he could reasonably be expected to go; and, being confident that the right hon. Gentleman would carry out the kind intention he had expressed, he would withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

(5.) £128, Suez Canal (British Directors).

(6.) £2,059, South Africa and St. Helena.

CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

(7.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £7,851, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, for the repayment to the Civil Contingencies Fund of certain Miscellaneous Advances."

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR complained that the Vote was presented to the Committee in a very unsatisfactory form. This Fund was established in 1862, in amount £120,000, to be available for the payment of Civil Charges which unexpectedly sprang up, and to meet which the Departments in which the charges arose had no available funds, and thus loans were obtained from the Civil Service Contingencies Fund. Now, the Account to which the present Estimate applied was the one for 1881-2. But that Account was not yet before Parliament. The latest Account was for 1880-1; that was presented and ordered to be printed on 7th February, 1882; and the Account for 1881-2, though ordered to be printed on 15th February, 1883, was not yet in the hands of Members. For this reason alone the Vote ought not to be pressed. But there was this objection to the mode of voting the money asked for. This Fund was a general one for all the Civil Services. It was not intended to be an accounting fund, merely one for lending money to the needy Departments, and it was the duty of the borrowers to apply to Parliament for the funds spent, and, when granted, then to repay to the Fund the amounts borrowed. Here they had the Fund actually reversing this course, and applying to Parliament for moneys lent, thus relieving the Civil Accounts by lessening the expenditure of the several Services to the extent of the borrowed money. He must here point out that in 1859 the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) raised the like objection; and the then Secretary to the Treasury, now the Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing), distinctly promised to rectify the blunder; and though 23 years had passed, they found it still continued; but he supposed by the time the quarter of a century had passed the change would be made—this he hoped to aid in effecting.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the first item in this Vote was £878 6*s.* 8*d.* for fees paid on the installation of the Kings of Saxony and the Netherlands as Knights of the Garter. It seemed to him that some explanation might reasonably be asked for with regard to an item, which must appear questionable and extraordinary to an ordinary Member of the Committee. The Kings of the Netherlands and Saxony might have as many Garters as they pleased at their own expense; but he could not see why an installation might not be arranged through the post and entered in *The London Gazette*, like many other things quite as important. When they were refused the miserable sum of £50, or £100, or £500, for the poor, starving fishermen of Ireland for the repairs of piers and the sheltering that was indispensable to enable these people to earn their living, it did seem to him like heartless satire to ask the Committee to vote £878 for the installation of certain Foreign Potentates as Knights of the Garter. Who did the money go to? Why, to someone who held a sinecure office in this country. It was not needed —there was no moral claim to it—and the Representatives of the people ought not to be asked to vote it. He should move to reduce the Vote by this item of £878 6*s.* 8*d.*; but while he was on his legs there was another item to which he wished to call attention—namely, £2,769 for Earl Spencer's Equipage—money spent on the noble Earl's appointment as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The name of "Spencer" reminded him of another man of the same name who was Chief Secretary 300 years ago, and who advocated the settlement of the Irish difficulty by means of famine, and who recommended that all the cattle in the country, and all the corn, should be destroyed, so that the inhabitants, being absolutely without subsistence, might die of starvation. The name "Spencer" recalled that recommendation, and they heard at the present time an echo of that policy. It was now proposed to get rid of the people by means of starvation. The Lord Lieutenant offered to the starving people of Ireland, whom the Chief Secretary had actually seen eating seaweed, the workhouse as preparatory to emigration. The proposal was not the actual one of starvation; but it was something extremely like it. They were asked to vote out of public money, of which the Irish people had to pay their quota, £2,769 for the Lord Lieutenant's Equipage; but why they should be asked to pay that amount to Earl Spencer, over and above the handsome salary he received, was a thing which called for some explanation from the Government. There were other items in the Vote which he thought were open to challenge—for instance, the charge for special packets for the conveyance of distinguished persons.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £6,973, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, for the repayment to the Civil Contingencies Fund of certain Miscellaneous Advances."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

Mr. COURTNEY said, it was rather a strong use to make of this particular Vote, because it involved a payment for the equipage of Earl Spencer, to bring up again a reference to the author of *The Faery Queen.* The Select Committee on the Reduction of Salaries considered the item in question, and came to the conclusion that they could not recommend its being discontinued. In pursuance of that decision, the amount was allowed to Earl Spencer. As to the fees paid on the installation of the Kings of Saxony and the Netherlands as Knights of the Garter, the hon. Member appeared to be ignorant of the way in which the money was spent, and yet a Return giving an explanation of the appropriations was furnished last year. As to the policy of making these payments, the question was one of some magnitude, and he could not now enter into it.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he wished to supply a deficiency in the explanation of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury. The hon. Member had become converted to the policy of payments of this kind, and so suddenly that he (Mr. M'Carthy) did not despair of seeing him one day Usher of the Black Rod, possibly a Knight of the Garter. But the hon. Member ought to have explained to the Committee, in the regular official fashion, that by this Vote they purchased the goodwill for ever of the people of Saxony and the Netherlands.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:* — Ayes 24; Noes 45: Majority 21. — (Div. List, No. 29.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. RAMSAY said, he thought it right to say that he had voted with the Government on the present occasion; but he had done so, not because he was satisfied with the explanation of the Secretary to the Treasury, or with that of the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. M'Carthy), and he would beg leave to make an appeal to the Government to relieve them from the necessity of voting with them on occasions like this after the money had been expended. Let them consider how they could best get rid of the necessity of voting money like these three first items. As to the Vote for special packets for the conveyance of distinguished persons, it must be painful to the Secretary to the Treasury to have to refuse small sums for useful purposes, and allow Votes such as this. Their sense of duty was, in a manner of speaking, appealed to, inasmuch as the money they were asked to vote had been already expended. He trusted that he was not making these observations in vain, and that on future occasions they would not be asked to vote such items as these.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. Fowler) had moved for the names of the "distinguished persons" who were taken across the Channel in special packets. Had the Secretary to the Treasury supplied that Return? It had been provided for this year, but they had not yet received it; and, under the circumstances, he would ask the Secretary to the Treasury to be good enough to read out the names. But whoever the "distinguished persons" were was a matter of perfect indifference to him (Mr. Labouchere), and to hon. Gentlemen around him, who took an interest in matters of this kind. Their view was that there were some excellent steamers running between Dover and Calais, and no persons, no matter how distinguished, were debarred from taking passage in them and paying their fares in the ordinary way. He should move the reduction of the Vote by £740, which was the amount charged for packets.

Mr. COURTNEY said, the Return asked for had been laid upon the Table, but had not yet been printed. It did not appear to be very necessary that it should be printed, seeing that the hon. Member (Mr. Labouchere) himself took no particular interest in the affair.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked whether the "distinguished persons" were the same as last year?

Mr. COURTNEY said, they were not identically the same; but the individuals were all of the same class. Most of the items were of £40, although there was one of £100. The name of Prince Leopold appeared four times, and there were amongst the rest such names as the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, the Princess of Waldeck, and the King and Queen of Greece.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN said, here was an excellent opportunity for showing some consideration for the British taxpayer. It was a most remarkable thing that when these opportunities for practising economy arose, when money could be saved in cases like this, where the expenditure was so much waste and extravagance, they heard nothing whatever about that unfortunate individual the British taxpayer. That person was never quoted until some little sum was asked for the relief of Irish distress, or the promotion of Irish industry, or the doing of some good or other to Ireland. Whenever an appeal was made for assistance, however slight and equitable, to Ireland, immediately the bleeding British taxpayer was trotted out before them. Night after night they voted money for all kinds of nonsense, and yet he had listened and waited in vain to hear some plea on behalf of the British taxpayer. A few nights ago, in a few minutes, bang went £55,000 for repairs to a Royal Yacht. Then they had to vote £300 for 50 boxes for holding the papers of hon. Members. He had not yet had the pleasure of seeing any of those boxes; but when he did he had no doubt he should find them gorgeously got up in black and gold, or some other superb fashion. If he did not find them like that, how £300 could be spent on 50 of them he did not know. There was then stationery, upon which a large and liberal sum was spent, and no sufficient explanation was given to the House as to the details of the item. As to Irish lawyers, it would seem as though the

Bar of Ireland had been saturated with public money. How was it, when these things occurred, that no tenderness was exhibited by hon. Gentlemen opposite for the British taxpayer? They had adopted a gigantic scheme of outdoor relief for the barristers and silk-gownsmen of Ireland——

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must remind the hon. Member that he is discussing Votes which have already been passed.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN said, he was contented—his argument had simply been by way of illustration. He had simply been anxious to show that, at some point or other, this long dormant tenderness for the British taxpayer ought to arise. As they had allowed so much money to fly from them, they should now begin to consider the desirability of drawing the line somewhere. To his mind, it was time to draw it here. When they asked for a little money for the purpose of humanity and charity, for the relief of starvation, for which that House was, to a large degree, responsible, the plea of economy was urged. He was in favour of economy, and the cutting-off of the expenditure of public money on tomfoolery like this steam-packet item.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, he saw both the Secretary to the Treasury and the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in their places; and from one or other of them he should like to know whether there was any reciprocity in this business? He should like to know, also, whether any Foreign Parliament ever had a Vote presented to it for the conveyance of distinguished personages from this country across the Channel or anywhere else; or whether the folly and absurdity of this system was confined to our own Government? It really seemed to him that unless Radical Members spoke with trumpet tongue these absurdities would go on to the crack of doom. If ever there was a Vote upon which they should press the Government sorely it was the present, when, by making such an absurd proposal, the Government seemed to anticipate that their credulity would swallow anything in the world. He hoped one or other of the hon. Gentlemen he had mentioned would answer him as to whether there was any reciprocity in this matter. If they could not tell the Committee that there was, surely that would be sufficient reason why they should abandon these absurdities.

MR. CAINE wished to know whether, in addition to packet accommodation, the Government supplied railway accommodation for distinguished personages? If they supplied the one they should supply the other; if they did not pay railway fares, he failed to see why they should supply steamboats.

MR. COURTNEY said, there was a good deal of reciprocity in these matters, though, owing to obvious reasons, it did not take the form of steam packets. In foreign countries carriages were extensively provided for our distinguished personages. The reason why the practice of supplying special packets had grown up was this. Formerly, when distinguished personages were either coming to or leaving this country, the Queen placed at their disposal one of the ships of the Royal Navy to take them across the Channel. That was only done now on great occasions, as it was a much more expensive and troublesome business than providing packets. In sending over a yacht they did not incur the expense of sending over a ship of the Navy, the one being a substitute for the other.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he thought, from the hon. Member's own showing, there was very little reciprocity in the matter; at any rate, they got very much the worst of the bargain. They were to supply all sorts of distinguished foreigners with packets, because occasionally, when a Member of our Royal Family journeyed abroad, a carriage was provided for him. He protested against the system adopted by the occupants of the Front Ministerial Bench. Directly an hon. Member called attention to an extravagant, ridiculous, or unnecessary Vote, up jumped a Member of the Government with some kind of argument or other in favour of it, if only the statement that there was a precedent for it. If Members of a Liberal Administration were to continue these abuses, practised by the Conservatives before them, he would ask what was the use of the country putting a Liberal Government in power? This argument of "precedents" was this. A man was accused of theft, and answered—"I was in the habit of committing murders, but now I only steal a little occasionally." That was not the way to argue. The country very strongly objected to this sort of absurd expenditure. He wished to speak with great respect of Prince Leopold; but he would say that Prince Leopold, if he wished in a private manner to cross the Channel, should be expected to pay his fare like everybody else, out of the £25,000 the country allowed him.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, he did not think the explanation the Committee had received at all adequate to justify the Vote. It was that at one time it was usual to place a man-of-war at the disposal of these distinguished persons for the purpose of crossing the Channel. When there was no regular steam packet communication there might have been some excuse for that, but no such plea could be urged now; and he wished to know why they presented these Royal personages as paupers—[“Oh, oh!”]—well, he would call them Royal hereditary paupers—should be permitted to be continually dipping their hands into the pockets of the public. It would be well, if they were to go on voting money like this—at least to apply the principle of the workhouse test to its recipients. He would go a step further, and say this—in the face even of the hon. Member for Kendal (Mr. Cropper), who was too fastidious for every day life—that it would do Prince Leopold and many other of these distinguished persons a great deal of good if they occasionally mixed amongst the public, if only to the extent of now and then travelling in a packet in which good and honest people were crossing the Channel.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 27; Noes 41: Majority 14.—(Div. List, No. 30.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

(8.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

‘That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £138,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Post Office Services, the Expenses of Post Office Savings Banks, and Government Annuities and Insurances, and the Collection of the Post Office Revenue.”

Mr. ARTHUR O’CONNOR said, this Vote purported to be an additional sum required to improve the position of certain Post Office officials, and amongst others the postmasters, sub-postmasters, letter carriers, and clerks in Ireland. Well, he was not aware that any of the money was to go to the sub-postmasters in Ireland, although their position was such as loudly called for notice at the hands of the Post Office authorities. These men were singularly overworked, and singularly underpaid; and it would be exceedingly difficult, in the whole extent of the Civil Service, to find any set of men who received such a small allowance, and from whom was exacted such an extraordinary amount of personal service. The sub-postmasters who were in charge of money order and telegraph offices in Ireland had, first of all, to set up an office at their own expense—not at the expense of the Government. They had to enter into a personal bond of £500; they had to be in attendance at their office from 8 o’clock in the morning to 8 o’clock at night; they were not allowed to be off duty during those hours for one moment—they were liable to censure if any complaint was made about them as to their being away from their official desks for ever so short a time. It was well known that for this double duty of post and telegraph service it was absolutely necessary for many of these men to obtain assistance, and that they did not receive any allowance for that assistance. They were obliged to obtain assistance, because it was physically impossible for them to attend to all the duties of sub-postmaster and telegraph clerk. The allowance these persons received as sub-postmaster was the munificent sum of 7*s.* a-week, and for telegraph clerk a further sum of 6*s.* a-week. That was to say, a man had to enter into this bond for £500, give constant attendance all the year round from 8 in the morning to 8 at night, and find an assistant, and to bear the responsibility of most important duties for 13*s.* a-week. For telegraph duty, to work what was called the sounder instrument, the sub-postmaster was bound to employ, or be himself, a skilled operator; whereas, for duties precisely similar, an ordinary telegraph clerk was allowed from 30*s.* to 50*s.* a week; and besides that, he received an extra allowance when he was on what was called relief duty. The telegraph clerk worked only eight hours a day; whereas the sub-postmaster had to be on duty, without break, for 12 hours a day. The clerk obtained 1*s.* an hour for every extra duty that he might have to discharge, so that if he worked as the sub-postmaster did—and the sub-postmaster's was really a much more important duty of the two—he would receive 4*s.* a day extra allowance. The telegraph clerk was allowed three weeks' leave of absence in the year, and he was allowed, if necessary, six months' sick leave on full day; but the sub-postmaster was not allowed leave of absence at all the whole year round. He was not allowed anything if he should happen to be sick—he was sick at his own expense. The telegraph clerk was entitled to a pension; but the unfortunate sub-postmaster, when he was appointed to his post, had to sign a document, which declared that he did not claim any right to pension whatsoever, however many years he might occupy his post. He (Mr. O'Connor) had shown, in as few words as he possibly could, that there was much to be said of the hardship of the position of the sub-postmasters of Ireland, and that theirs was a position well deserving the attention and consideration of the Post Office authorities.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that nearly the whole of this large Vote was due to increase of the salaries of postal clerks, telegraph clerks, letter carriers, and others.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: But not Irish sub-postmasters.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he had thought that class would be included. At any rate, he hoped the hon. Gentleman would be satisfied for the present with having made this statement, for, no doubt, it would receive the careful attention of the Post Office authorities. At the same time, the hon. Member and the Committee must not forget that the whole of this large Supplementary Vote, which added so materially to the charge for last year and the current year, was due to increase of salaries in the Post Office.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he should be satisfied if the right hon. Member would assure him that he would bring the matter under the attention of the Postmaster General; because there was no one in the House whom he thought more of, and in whom he had greater confidence than the Postmaster General.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, there was a feeling amongst the Post Office Sorting Clerks in Edinburgh, who enjoyed the increase of salary consequent on the introduction of the new scheme, for which they were all grateful to the Postmaster General, that they had not been put in a position of equality with the English and other clerks in a similar rank in regard to holidays. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would bring this matter also under the notice of the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General.

Mr. WARTON said, that, as he read the Estimate, sub-postmasters were receiving additional pay.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN said, there was one matter in connection with this Post Office expenditure on which he should like to obtain a little information from the Government, and that was with regard to the Letter Opening Department. Many hon. Members were entirely in the dark, and were very anxious to know into whose hands work of this description was committed? It was admitted that both in Ireland and England there was a good deal of this class of work done, and it was certainly important to know who performed it. Was any sub-postmaster, or any Post Office clerk, entitled to detain any letter he thought fit? If so, into whose hands did he pass the letters so detained, and who ultimately received and examined them? He did not make this inquiry in any frivolous spirit. It was a matter of importance to many people to know that if this letter opening was done—as they knew it was—they should be made acquainted with the class of men who did it.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he was afraid he could throw no light on the subject. The matter was entirely in the jurisdiction of the Home Secretary; and, during the short time he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had administered at the Post Office on the part of his right hon. Friend (Mr. Fawcett), he had not received any communication on the subject.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN said, the Home Secretary was not present, so that seemingly they had to give the money without receiving any information. He would move that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £1,000.

Motion made, and Question,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £137,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Post Office Services, the Expenses of Post Office Savings Banks, and Government Annuities and Insurances, and the Collection of the Post Office Revenue,"—(*Mr. T. D. Sullivan,*)

—put, and *negatived.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next.

Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [March 9] *reported.*

Resolutions 1 to 6, inclusive, *agreed to.*

(7.) "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £31,312, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, for the Expenses of Her Majesty's Embassies and Missions Abroad."

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that this morning at 3 o'clock the Vote came on, and he had opposed an item of expenditure relative to the Czar's Coronation. He had taken the opportunity of asking whether it was the intention to send a special Ambassador to the Coronation, and was assured by the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that it was the intention. The noble Lord, however, held out no sort of hope that the approximate expenditure on the special Mission of the Duke of Edinburgh would appear in the Votes this year, and he gathered from him that the Vote would appear in the Supplementary Estimates at the end of the year. This, he thought, was hardly fair to the House; because they would be placed in a false position if the money had been spent, and then they were asked to vote it. He wished to ask the noble Lord whether the Treasury Department would reconsider the matter?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, the question was properly one of Parliamentary procedure. He felt quite as strongly as the hon. Member how very objectionable Supplementary Estimates were, and that objection had been stated over and over again by successive Ministers. But there was no more objection to presenting a Supplementary Estimate for a purpose of this kind than for any other; and the circumstances in this case were rather peculiar, and justified the present proposals, which had been foreshadowed by his hon. Friend. There was a well-known principle in regard to all Votes of this kind—namely, that if they were foreseen they were placed upon the Civil Service Estimates of the year; but in this case, until a short time ago, there was no certainty that this expenditure would be asked for; there was no certainty that the Coronation would take place until a short time ago within the next financial year; and the Treasury and Foreign Office did not consider themselves justified in proposing to place on the ordinary Civil Service Estimates of the year any demand or charge which they were not assured would be incurred. Now that it had been settled that the Coronation was going to take place, the probable result would be that a Supplementary Estimate would appear on the Votes which he would be called upon to defend; and he trusted, as he had already indicated, that it would be laid on the Table during the present Session. Previously to 1861 the ordinary course was that a charge of this kind was placed upon the Votes for Civil Contingencies, and to enumerate in that charge contingencies for which Estimates were required and would be laid before Parliament. In 1861, upon representation by a Committee of the House, a Civil Missions Fund was constituted. He sincerely hoped that the House would see no reason to go back from the decision of the Committee last night in regard to the small sum asked for this year for the expenses of the Coronation; and with regard to the Vote of next year, which, no doubt, would have to be asked, a defensible course had been pursued.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR doubted if any subject like this had been brought before the House with more cool audacity, unless the noble Lord meant to perpetrate a joke. The whole gist of the remarks of the noble Lord was that the money had been spent, and the House of Commons ought to vote it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, it was a question whether the House was to give *carte blanche* to the Royal Family. He thought it was the function of the House to exercise a real control over the money expended. Surely somebody must know what the expense would be; there was no difficulty in this case which did not surround every Estimate.

Mr. RAMSAY regretted extremely that the explanation of the noble Lord was the best he could offer in justification of bringing before the House next year a Vote similar to that which was now objected to. He voted just now with the Government, on the ground that the money they asked for was already expended; but the noble Lord had taken from him the power of voting for the present amount if there should be a division, because he had told the House that these Supplementary Estimates were a necessity of the circumstances of the Government. If that was the position taken up, they must necessarily vote against all Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. WADDY observed that if the Government would be in a position to tell them that some information within a limited number of days might be given and laid on the Table, it would be unnecessary to take the course that would otherwise be necessary—namely, that of moving the rejection of the whole Vote.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he should be fully ready to give every reasonable information in his power, in a short time, as to the amount that would be required, if he were asked a Question on the subject. It was the duty of the Treasury and the Foreign Office to see that nothing was done in the matter that was unreasonable.

Resolution *agreed to.*

Remaining Resolution *agreed to.*

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the years ending on the 31st days of March 1882 and 1883, the sum of £2,233,958 9*s.* 8*d.* be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolution to be reported upon *Monday* next; Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

House adjourned at half after Ten o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 12*th March,* 1883.

MINUTES.]—*Took the Oath for the first time*—The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

Select Committee—House of Lords (Construction and Accommodation), *appointed.*

Public Bill — *First Reading*—National Gallery (Loan) * (18).

HOUSE OF LORDS (CONSTRUCTION AND ACCOMMODATION).

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

Earl CAIRNS: My Lords, in moving the Resolution of which I have given Notice—and with which I think your Lordships will not be disposed to disagree—I may mention that, as long ago as 1868, a Committee was appointed which sat for two Sessions, to consider, the construction of the House with reference to its acoustic properties. That Committee made a Report, and offered some suggestions; but I do not think anything was done in consequence of their Report. More recently—I think two or three years ago—a Committee was appointed to consider the question of reporting; and that Committee made a Report, though not without some difference of opinion amongst its Members, and the suggestion they offered in reference to the accommodation of reporters in the side Galleries did not meet with your Lordships' approval. I ask your Lordships to appoint a Committee "to consider the construction and accommodation of the House and Galleries." The question of reporting is by no means the only one to consider; but the Reference has regard generally to the seating and accommodation of Members of the House as well as of the reporters. I do not think any opposition will be offered to the Motion; therefore, I will merely move in the terms I have given Notice of, and which are on the Paper.

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the construction and accommodation of the House, including the galleries, more especially in reference to seating, hearing, and reporting; and whether any and what improvement therein can be made."—(*The Earl Cairns.*)

Lord DENMAN said, he was opposed to the Motion; but as he was so accustomed to being treated as a mere cipher in the House, he was not surprised at the assertion of the noble and learned Earl (Earl Cairns), that no opposition would be offered to his proposal. As he (Lord Denman) had seen in the newspapers that the noble Earl the Leader of the House (Earl Granville) was in favour of the Motion, it was to be regretted that the noble and learned Earl had not said more in favour of it. He (Lord Denman), for his own part, believed their Lordships were extremely well reported, and no one more so than the noble and learned Earl; and he really thought that if they appointed this Committee, they would be doing that which would encourage some noble Lords to speak in a low tone, and others to shuffle about in the House and make a noise, so that no one would be able to hear. It would not, therefore, be of the slightest use to appoint the Select Committee. They knew that the noble and learned Earl who made this proposal had some notion of a new Gallery underneath the existing Gallery, which would act as a sounding board; but they had seen so much of demolition by way of improvement, and there had been so much doubt as to whether demolitions really led to improvements, that he did hope they would now let well alone. The noble and learned Earl had often said that he did not treat with asperity those who differed from him; and he (Lord Denman) hoped the truth of that statement would be exemplified in his (Lord Denman's) case, seeing that he now, and often before, had the misfortune to differ from the noble and learned Earl. He thought it was a pity there should be such continual complaints of the reporting amongst their Lordships, seeing what excellent reports were furnished of their speeches, particularly of the speeches of the noble and learned Earl.

EARL GRANVILLE: The noble Lord who has just sat down (Lord Denman) has stated that I am in favour of this Motion, and I certainly am, though I am not aware that I confided the fact to anyone longer than half an hour ago, when I mentioned it to the noble and learned Earl (Earl Cairns) himself. I am glad that some little opposition has been offered to the present proposal, because, on several previous occasions, there has been perfect willingness to appoint Committees; but there has not been the same willingness to adopt the Reports of those Committees. As there is now a little opposition to the appointment of the Committee, I hope there will be only a little opposition to the adoption of its Report.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he wished to point out that the words of the Motion were—"To consider the construction and accommodation of the House and galleries," and that the inquiry would not extend to the accommodation furnished in the rooms outside this Chamber belonging to the House of Lords. Having regard to the future, it was desirable that better accommodation should be furnished for the Lord Chancellor's Office in the House. His staff had not the accommodation which it was desirable it should have, and the interests of the public suffered in some respects in consequence. He would suggest that words should be inserted in the Motion to enable the Committee to consider the accommodation furnished in the rooms connected with their Lordships' House.

EARL CAIRNS said, he would certainly amend the Motion, if the noble and learned Earl (the Lord Chancellor) believed that the word "House," as it stood on the Notice, would be taken in the technical sense as meaning the place in which they spoke. There were rooms, corridors, and offices provided for the accommodation of noble Lords, the condition of which might be a proper subject of inquiry; and it might be very desirable to consider especially the accommodation afforded to the noble and learned Lords who, from time to time, might have to preside over their debates. If the noble and learned Earl would suggest any words he would like inserted in the Motion to make these points quite clear, he (Earl Cairns) would be quite willing to adopt them.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES) said, there would be great difficulty experienced in giving better accommodation to noble Lords in the rooms connected with that Chamber. The House of Commons had already robbed them of a number of their rooms, and, instead of being satisfied, was seeking more. There was, undoubtedly, scant accommodation for Parliamentary purposes in the Palace of Westminster.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR proposed that, after the word "galleries," they should insert the words "and rooms belonging to them."

EARL CAIRNS said, he would amend the Motion by inserting, after the word "House," the words "including the galleries and rooms belonging thereto."

Motion, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

STOLEN GOODS BILL, 1882.

QUESTION.

EARL BEAUCHAMP asked the Lord Chancellor, What course the Government intend to take in reference to the Stolen Goods Bill of 1882?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR, in reply, said, that, in deference to the objections of the trade, the course which the Government intended to take in regard to this Bill was to separate the question so far as it affected pawnbrokers, and to include this portion with the new regulations, which might be thought desirable in a distinct measure. The new Bill would not be introduced till after Easter, but whether in that House or the House of Commons he could not at present state.

LUNATIC ASYLUM (WORCESTER).

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

EARL BEAUCHAMP, in rising to move—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for copies of a correspondence between the Clerk to the Visitors of the Lunatic Asylum for the County and City of Worcester and the War Office,"

said, that the Correspondence in question had reference to the cost of maintenance of a pensioner in the Royal Engineers who was an inmate of the asylum. Only a portion of the pension possessed by the man was paid by the War Office for his maintenance; and although the clerk to the visitors had written several times upon the subject to the War Office, they had not succeeded in eliciting any satisfactory reply. The amount paid for his maintenance did not recoup the asylum for the expenses incurred. He thought that the War Office had exercised their discretion in this matter in a way to cause great injustice to the ratepayers in withholding a portion of the pension earned by the lunatic without stating any reason for so doing. They were entitled, in his opinion at least, to the production of the regulations under which the War Office had acted.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for copies of a correspondence between the Clerk to the Visitors of the Lunatic Asylum for the County and City of Worcester and the War Office."—(*The Earl Beauchamp.*)

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, he had to express his regret at the delay which had taken place on the part of the War Office in conducting the Correspondence, and by way of explanation would point out that some portion of it was due to the number of inquiries from different authorities that had to be made. They had to find whether the pensioner had a wife and children, and to ascertain the exact amount of the pension that was paid and the exact sum that was stopped. It had been found that the unfortunate man's lunacy was due to the elopement of his wife, and the War Office had had to take into consideration the cost of the maintenance of his children. The War Office had thought it undesirable that the whole of the pension should be applied to the maintenance of the lunatic, as the children would have to be supported in some way or other. The part of the pension which they did not feel justified in handing over to the asylum authorities they considered should be allocated to the maintenance of the children.

EARL BEAUCHAMP inquired if the balance of the pension was given to the children?

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, that it was not allocated, but was held in reserve for their maintenance if required.

EARL BEAUCHAMP observed, that there was nothing to show that the children required the money. It had never been stated in the Correspondence that a portion of the pension was required to maintain the lunatic's children.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAY.

RESOLUTION.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN, in rising to call attention to the ventilators now being erected by the Metropolitan District Railway Company on the Victoria

Embankment and in Westminster; and to move—

> "That the evidence taken in 1879 by the Select Committee on the Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railways (City Lines Extension) Bill, and in 1881 by the Select Committee on the Metropolitan District Railway Bill, and also the report of the proceedings of those Committees, so far as they respectively relate to the subject of the ventilators, be printed and circulated,"

said, that the storm of indignation which had arisen outside of the House in consequence of the carrying out of works, the effect of which would be to spoil the noblest public work in London, rendered it unnecessary that he should make any apology for bringing this matter under their Lordships' notice, the more that it was to that House, rather than to the House of Commons, where the railway, or rather the "directorial" interest was so powerful, that the public looked for the protection of their rights, properties, and interests from the grasping and devouring jaws of aggressive Railway Companies. When, some 15 years ago, the Victoria Embankment was on the point of completion, some uneasiness was caused in the public mind by its being disturbed for the construction of the Metropolitan District Railway. The alarm was, in some measure, dissipated by the assurance that little was to be heard and nothing seen of the railway, but the two hideous stations at the Temple and at Charing Cross. The Victoria Embankment was to be a beautiful boulevard, embellished with gardens, and to be a source of delight to the toiling masses of the Metropolis, who were to take their pleasure under the shade of its plane trees. Such was the state of things until a short time ago, when London awoke one day to the knowledge that the Metropolitan District Railway Company were proceeding coolly to utterly mar and destroy this magnificent public work by erecting on it, at short intervals of 100 yards, these hideous and abominable structures on the Victoria Embankment. The construction of these ventilators, as he had said, would utterly destroy the beauty of one of the noblest public works in the Metropolis; and he would remind their Lordships that the Embankment, combined with the series of landscape gardens which had sprung up during recent years, formed such a boulevard, and was the source of such an amount of pleasure and delight as had been anticipated. These ventilators would belch forth volumes of smoke, steam, and stench upon the luckless citizens who frequented the gardens or walked along the Embankment itself. He (the Earl of Milltown) quite agreed with the President of the Board of Trade that this was nothing less than an outrage, and an outrage which aroused the greatest indignation; and people demanded, with surprise, what Parliament had been about to grant such powers as enabled the Company to put up these odious structures, and they asked what had become of the safeguard provided by the Act of 1864, by which it was enacted that no erection should be placed on the Embankment without the consent of the Metropolitan Board of Works. He wished to know what had happened in the 13 years that the railway had been in existence to cause such a sudden and urgent necessity for the construction of these ventilators? On that point he would read an extract from a newspaper which might be considered somewhat of an expert upon this question. Speaking of the ventilation of the railway between Charing Cross and the Mansion House, *The Engineer* said—

> "It is a mistake to suppose that the Company want to make the air in this section better for the sake of its passengers; as a matter of fact, the air is not so bad there as it is in many other places on the line. What the Company want to get rid of is steam, with which the tunnel—especially between the Temple and the Mansion House—becomes so charged, that it is impossible for the drivers to see the signals until they are within a couple of yards of them. We state this as the result of observations personally made, not from the carriages, but from the footplate of an engine. There ought to be no steam in the tunnel of the Metropolitan Railway; and there would be none, if the Company provided proper means of condensing the exhaust steam of the engines. For that purpose, nothing more is required than a sufficient supply of cold water in the engine tanks. The Metropolitan engines making the round trip, as we may call it, from Moorgate Street, have lost all power of condensation long before they reach the section under Queen Victoria Street. It will be understood from what we have said that the proposed ventilating shafts will give forth a great deal of steam; and the dwellers in Queen Victoria Street will find, all too late, that they will have far worse trouble to contend against than invisible foul-smelling gases. Of course, the proper remedy does not lie in discharging steam and bad air into the centre of a great public thoroughfare, but in preventing the accumulation of either in the tunnel."

It was said by other eminent authorities that the ventilating shafts would give forth a great deal of steam, the evil effects of which would soon be felt by the dwellers in Queen Victoria Street. He understood that the railway did not require better air, but that they wanted to get rid of their steam. There were several alternatives that might be introduced, besides the obvious remedy of condensing their steam. There were compressed air engines, which had been tried with success in various places, and there was the endless rope system, which had also been proved satisfactory; but, even if ventilating shafts were to be used, there was no reason why they should be sent vertically into the Gardens. Less inconvenience would be caused if lateral, instead of vertical, shafts were erected. Why could they not be placed on property of the Company, where they might, in many quarters, smoke to their heart's content? Greater expense would be involved, it was true; but were they to be told that the beauty of the Thames Embankment was to be destroyed, and the comfort of millions of the inhabitants set at nought, in order that the District Railway Company Directors might declare a better dividend? In justice to the public, whose trustees their Lordships were, and in the hope that steps might be taken, even at the eleventh hour, to avert the establishment of an offensive system, and prevent what would be nothing short of a national calamity, he begged to move the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Moved, "That the shorthand-writer's notes of the proceedings of the Select Committees on the Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railway Companies Bill, 1879, and on the Metoopolitan District Railway Bill, 1881, and of the evidence taken before the said Committees, be laid on the Table, and that such portions of the said proceedings and evidence as relate to the ventilation of the railways be printed."—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

THE EARL OF BELMORE said, that, as he had acted as Chairman of both of the Committees before whom the question of the ventilation of the Railway had come, he must trouble their Lordships with some observations. What seemed to be the prevailing impression was that, in 1881, Parliament gave the Metropolitan Railway Company a perfectly new power of roving about the Metropolis, and doing generally what they pleased in the way of making ventilators. He would show that this was not the case. He had understood his noble Friend (the Earl of Milltown) to say that the ventilation of the railway tunnel had been good enough for many years, and was therefore good enough still, and the same had been said by people out-of-doors. He had also said that there were alternative systems of ventilation which would obviate the necessity of building these ventilators. Now, the first portion of the Underground Railway opened was that which ran under the Marylebone Road, past Portland Road and Baker Street, over which line Sir Edward Watkin now presided. It did not appear that, at that time, the smoke difficulty was anticipated, as no provision was made for any ventilation. The Metropolitan Railway, however, were ultimately compelled to get certain powers to enable them to ventilate the tunnel in the Marylebone Road. This they did by agreement with the street authorities. In 1871 a Bill was passed through Parliament, authorizing a railway to commence somewhere near Charing Cross, and to run to the North of London. That line had, it appeared, fallen through, but it was *bonâ fide* intended to be made. Provision had been made in that Bill for the ventilation of the line into the streets, by agreement with the street authorities, or, failing that, in such manner as should be decided by an engineer appointed by the Board of Trade. This was the first occasion that an arbitrator was provided for—now 12 years ago. Again, in 1874, a similar provision was inserted in an Act called the "Inner Circle Completion Act." This line was generally known as "Mr. Newman's line," and the Act was, perhaps, obtained to sell. At any rate, the powers were abandoned by an Act of 1879, in which the Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Companies agreed to give Mr. Newman's Company a sum, upon arbitration, not exceeding £50,000, in compensation for their expenses in obtaining their Act, and for some mysterious advantages they were supposed to possess, the nature of which he did not quite comprehend. The whole of this amount was, he believed, ultimately paid. He would now ask their Lordships' attention to the Committee of their Lordships' House that sat in 1879 to consider the Bill he had just referred to, and which was a measure dealing with many matters, among which the question of ventilators was only one. That question was fought out on principle. Three proposals were at the time put forward, the first being to construct an open-air station in Trinity Square. That the Committee refused to allow, unless the Elder Brethren of the Trinity House should give their consent. The second was that ventilators should be constructed in various places, as at Queen Victoria Street; and the third was to make lateral shafts from the sides of the tunnel under the houses, and from the back of the houses to run up chimneys to admit fresh air. Sir John Hawkshaw, who always gave his evidence in such a straightforward manner as to carry conviction to one's mind that he was giving the result of his own practical experience, and not merely theorizing, was called to give evidence before the Committee, and expressed a strong opinion that the only proper mode of ventilating the tunnel would be by making openings into the air. Before the Committee of 1881, the evidence of the District Railway Company went to show that it was not a shareholders' question at all, but one which concerned the convenience of the 35,000,000 who travelled over the line every year. The Metropolitan Board of Works, who were opponents of the Bill, did not for a moment dispute this; but the point of difference was whether the Board of Works should have an absolute veto, or should be subject to the decision of an arbitrator. But between Westminster and Blackfriars the Metropolitan Board of Works were not the only persons interested in this question. There was a gentleman owning property on the Embankment — Mr. De Keyser, the proprietor of the large hotel near Blackfriars Bridge—and there was the property on which the City of London School was now built. The owners of these properties had strong objections to ventilators being run up beside their buildings. At this spot there happened to be a subway under the Embankment between the railroad and the carriage road; and, at Mr. De Keyser's instance, the Committee of the House of Commons had decided upon a ventilator being opened through the crown of the tunnel into this subway, which would carry the steam out to the river. The Corporation of London objected to this; but the Committee decided to leave the clause as it came from the House of Commons. Next, as to the Embankment itself, the Committee considered the point whether mechanical means could be employed for ventilating the tunnel, so as to dispense with the use of shafts. As to those means, Mr. Myles Fenton, formerly manager of the Metropolitan Railway, and now manager of the South-Eastern, gave evidence to the effect that he had gone into the matter in connection with the Metropolitan Line. Mr. Fowler, the Company's engineer, thought that, by having a fan as part of the machinery, something might be done by way of exhausting the foul air, and admitting fresh air; but after some experiments at the Portland Road Station, the worst ventilated station on the line, it was found that that would not answer. Again, when Sir Edward Watkin became Chairman, he thought something might be done, and consulted Mr. Ramsbottom, a gentleman of great experience in such matters, and then tried some further experiments in this direction, but without any good result. He (the Earl of Belmore) had seen it stated that the Metropolitan Board of Works made but a lukewarm opposition. The fact was, however, that they made as good an opposition as they could. One of the principal witnesses in opposition to the Bill then under investigation was Mr. Richardson, Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee of the Metropolitan Board of Works; and he stated that between Blackfriars and Westminster alone 20 openings would be required, so that no one could walk in the gardens without receiving the fumes from the tunnel. Mr. Richardson admitted there must be openings somewhere, and the only question was where those openings should be placed. And as to the fumes arising from the tunnels, Mr. Richardson, when asked if the Metropolitan Board of Works would say where the openings for their emission should be placed, said he would rather have them come into the road than into the gardens, because the gardens were for the enjoyment of the public, and their comfort would be less interfered with if the ventilators were in the road; and that somehow these fumes did disappear within a few yards of the openings. Still, the witness considered the openings a nuisance. Then Sir Joseph

Bazalgette, the engineer of the Metropolitan Board of Works, came into the box. He must trouble the House with a few extracts from his evidence. [The noble Earl then quoted from Sir Joseph Bazalgette, and particularly from an answer of his in cross-examination, in which he admitted, with regard to a plan suggested by him for ventilating tunnels by exhausting the air, that he had only known it tried in a tunnel closed at one end—that was, in construction.] He (the Earl of Belmore), therefore, regarded the evidence as applied to tunnels in use as mere theorizing. He would refer to a discussion which had taken place between the counsel and himself, with a view of showing that the Committee had taken every pains to make the powers of the arbitrator as ample as possible. He (the Earl of Belmore) wished to remind the House of what had been done already, and what the scheme precisely involved. He had visited the sites of the ventilators on Saturday last, and he found that in Queen Victoria Street there were to be four ventilators, none of which were as yet finished. On the Embankment, between the City of London School and the Temple, two ventilators, from which steam and smoke issued freely, were already in existence. The first of the new ventilators other than the subway was on the other side of the Temple Gardens, and was agreed to by the Benchers of the Temple, who, in 1864, obtained a clause providing that no ventilator should be made within 100 yards of their Gardens. They now accepted a clause reducing the distance to 30 yards. Another new ventilator was to be placed in the Savoy Gardens, on the Embankment, where three others had been now for some time in working order, one adjoining Charing Cross Railway Station, and the two others at a very short interval. There would also be a new ventilator between Charing Cross and Westminster Bridge, another near St. Margaret's Church, opposite the Aquarium, and another near the Westminster Palace Hotel. The latter would, no doubt, be a nuisance; but no one had appeared to oppose it, on behalf of the Hotel Company, before the Committee. These, together with the five smaller shafts already existing, were all that were proposed for the ventilation of this part of the Railway. The Duke of Westminster had come to terms with the Company about another in Eccleston Street, and had agreed to sell them some land for the purpose, as provided for in the Bill. He did not think that the refuge ventilators, such as the one now being constructed on the Embankment, would be open to very serious disadvantages. He did not pretend that ventilators of any kind were an improvement; but ventilation of some kind was an absolute necessity, and he contended that the Committee had decided, in the best possible manner, the question how to give, in the least hurtful manner, the ventilation which was absolutely necessary. As to alternative means of ventilation, he thought that a number of lateral shafts from the top of the tunnel of the Railway, leading to the river, running under the Embankment, and unseen from the road, might possibly be substituted in that part of the line, and might answer the purpose. He thought that if their Lordships would allow the evidence given before their Lordships' Committee to be printed and circulated, it might be of service, and would justify the action of that Committee, as showing that they had come to a decision in accordance with the weight of evidence.

Viscount BURY said, the question appeared to have been treated as one which was to be fought over between the Metropolitan Board and the Metropolitan District Railway Company; but it seemed to him (Viscount Bury) that there was another party to be considered, and that was the public at large, who were jealous of sacrificing one of the few beautiful places the Metropolis had recently obtained, which had no sooner been given up to public recreation and enjoyment than all who had to carry out a public work sprang forward to seize a part of it. The noble Earl (the Earl of Belmore) gave up the whole point he had been contending for when he said that it was not at all necessary to use the Embankment if an alternative scheme of shafts from the tunnel to the river wall by means of the subway were practicable. In that case, they had an alternative scheme in no way open to the same objections as the other. It might be useful to have the evidence given before their Lordships' Committees published; but the noble Earl had given very copious extracts from that evidence which would probably be sufficient. What they wanted was that the public at large, who enjoyed the Gardens and the Embankment, should have the case reopened, because they believed that both the Metropolitan Board of Works and the Railway Company had neglected the interests of the public. It was also requisite there should be a pause during which the question might be reconsidered with a view to obviating the very grave objections to this mode of ventilating the railway. Against the award of Captain Galton there was nothing to be said, because he was tied down by the terms of reference. He (Viscount Bury) had been over the whole of the line where the proposed ventilators were to be placed, and he would only say that they would entirely destroy the character of those beautiful Gardens on the Embankment. A compromise might be effected, and lateral openings made under the road of the Embankment to the river.

Lord SUDELEY said, that the position of this matter was very peculiar. The Railway Company had the law on their side beyond a doubt. They had gone through all the usual forms, and, after the fullest investigation before the Committees of both Houses, had obtained an Act of Parliament. That being the state of the case, the Board of Trade were powerless to interfere in the matter, and could express no opinion or take any steps whatever as regarded it. On the one hand, their Lordships must be convinced, after the statement of the noble Earl who was Chairman of the Committee of that House (the Earl of Belmore), that every care was taken to go thoroughly into the question submitted to them, and that the Committee considered fully, on their merits, all the points which were then raised in opposition to the Bill, and gave their decision only after full and mature deliberation. On the other hand, their Lordships must sympathize most deeply with the feelings expressed by the noble Earl who introduced this question (the Earl of Milltown). Although unable to express any official opinion, yet, speaking as a private Member of the House, he (Lord Sudeley) apprehended there could be no doubt that it would be a great public scandal and disadvantage that the great highway which had been such a magnificent improvement to the Metropolis should be defaced, and to a great extent blocked, by hideous brick ventilators. The Gardens formed so material a part of what we proudly regarded as the "lungs of London," where in summer months crowds of people resorted for fresh air and to enjoy a view of the river, that if they were turned into a pestilential quarter, where sulphuretted hydrogen and steam would be continually poured forth, it would be a national loss. It seemed to him that there could be no practical use in printing and circulating the evidence taken before the Committee last year, and in incurring a large expenditure. Suppose the evidence were all printed, the utmost it could show would be that, so far as the matter then rested on the evidence given two years ago, the Committee did their duty. After the statement made by the noble Earl they might take that as granted. Whatever that evidence was which was then tendered, it was certainly not equal to what they now found in actual results. Nothing would alter their opinion as to the present position of the case, and the possible magnitude of the evil. Under these circumstances, he ventured to submit that, so far as the Papers were concerned, to print the evidence would be useless. The matter rested with the House, but the Government did not recommend it. The great difficulty and practical question was, what ought now to be done? As he had said, the Board of Trade did not see how they were to interfere in the matter, and could express no opinion whatever; but it was hoped that when the Railway Company saw that Parliament and the public were distinctly and unanimously hostile to this scheme, and that there was a widespread expression of public opinion upon the point, they would see that it was to their interest to bow to that opinion, and make such alterations as might be desirable.

The Earl of REDESDALE (Chairman of Committees) said, he fully agreed with what had been said by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Sudeley) that there would be very little good in printing the evidence. They knew what it was, and what was the decision of the Committee. The question was whether anything could be done now to remedy the evil. There could be no doubt that in putting up these ventilators the Railway Company had power to do what was conferred on them by Parliament. No doubt, if they came again to Parliament and asked for that sort of thing, some condition would be made. At present, the Company had the game in its hands, unless Parliament should do what it had never done, in order to take away privileges given by Act of Parliament. Therefore, in his opinion, some other remedy must be sought. If new evidence were taken, persons practically acquainted with the subject might suggest alternative schemes; but, perhaps, the best thing that could happen in the form of relief would be that, by the great improvement of electrical power, the use of steam on these railways should be dispensed with. It was a strong consolation if the travellers by the railway were benefited, for the passengers under the Embankment were far more in number than the persons who used its surface.

The Earl of MILLTOWN said, that, after the discussion which had taken place, he would withdraw his Motion.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

INDIA (NATIVE STATES)—HYDERABAD —ILLNESS AND DEATH OF SIR SALAR JUNG.—QUESTIONS.

The Lord Stanley of Alderley having given Notice of certain Questions—

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: Before my noble Friend (Lord Stanley of Alderley) puts the two pages of Questions of which he has given Notice, with reference to the death of Sir Salar Jung, I wish to make an appeal to the House as to whether those Questions ought to be put. The greater part of them are directed to most flagrant and unjust aspersions on a most distinguished public servant; for, my Lords, I believe we have no more distinguished man in the Indian Civil Service than Sir Richard Meade. Your Lordships will see that these Questions are not Questions at all in the real sense of the word, but are simply a long string of accusations. The 4th Question, for instance, is as follows:—

> "Whether in 1877 the British Resident, Sir Richard Meade, though fully cognizant of these facts, and that Vikar-ul-omra was a deadly enemy of Sir Salar Jung, forced him on Sir Salar Jung as his colleague in the Regency against Sir Salar Jung's strongest protests?"

Again, your Lordships will find that the 7th Question is in these terms—

> "Whether the Resident, Sir Richard Meade, and his assistant, Major Euan Smith, did not openly support their spoliations, and whether their support of them did not end in disgraceful rumours to the effect that they both had been corrupted by the said Vikar-ul-omra?"

Here, as your Lordships will perceive, is an allegation of corruption against Sir Richard Meade. Then my noble Friend asks whether the editor of a certain London newspaper could not furnish some evidence as to the truth of the above-mentioned disgraceful rumours. Another Question has reference to "a heavy wooden case," and all the Questions throw on Sir Richard Meade the very gravest imputations. The noble Lord then refers to the death of Sir Salar Jung; and although it is not plainly stated, yet I cannot help feeling that, looking at the commencement of these Questions and at the end of them, there is some kind of imputation that some person mentioned in this long string of Questions is connected with the death of Sir Salar Jung. It seems to me that these Questions constitute a speech, if they constitute anything. They are not Questions in the ordinary sense of the word. If my noble Friend has a speech to make in this House, and proofs to bring forward on the subject, it will be our duty to listen to him; but in the form of Questions these imputations ought not to be made.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: My Lords, I confess that I quite concur in the opinion of the noble Earl who has just spoken (the Earl of Kimberley), and I would add to the considerations which he has pressed on the House that my noble Friend at the Table (Lord Stanley of Alderley) imputes to Sir Richard Meade acts of administration for which there are persons responsible—namely, the Government of the day, who authorized Sir Richard Meade. In Question No. 4, my noble Friend asks, Whether in 1877 the British Resident, Sir Richard Meade, though aware that Vikar-ul-omra was a deadly enemy of Sir Salar Jung, forced him on Sir Salar Jung as his colleague in the Regency against Sir Salar Jung's strongest protests? Now, in 1877, the Government of Lord Beaconsfield was in Office, and if anybody is responsible in this matter and ought to be gibbeted it is myself, and not Sir Richard Meade. I protest, in the strongest way, against putting into an official document language imputing responsibility to a man for that which he did in obedience to the orders of his superiors. There are Constitutional ways of dealing with those superiors. As to the rest of these imputations, that somebody poisoned Sir Salar Jung, that somebody stole something in a wooden case, and that somebody accepted a watch, if my noble Friend wishes to make a charge, he can move a Resolution, and the matter can be debated; but it appears to me that it is an utter misuse of the power of putting Questions to insert imputations of this kind. If this had occurred in the other House, the Speaker would not have allowed such Questions to appear on the Paper; but we have no such power in this House.

Earl GRANVILLE: My Lords, I think it is unnecessary for me to add anything to what has been stated by my noble Friend near me (the Earl of Kimberley) and by the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury). Therefore, I will take the liberty of moving that these Questions be not put, and that they do not remain on the Minutes of your Lordships' House.

Moved, "That such questions be not put."—(*The Earl Granville.*)

Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY said, it was rather irregular that an attempt should be made to stop Questions before they were put. He had put this series of Questions on the Paper in order that he might not be accused of taking the noble Earl (the Earl of Kimberley) by surprise, and in order that he might get an answer. With regard to the charges he would go into them first of all. ["Order, order!"]

Earl GRANVILLE: I rise to Order. It is perfectly irregular for the noble Lord to go on arguing after I have moved, "That the Questions be not put."

Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY wished to say a few words in explanation. He had not taken this course lightly. Nine years ago he made some charges against a Colonial Governor; and the then Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Carnarvon) and the present Secretary of State for India attacked him for what he had said, and laid down that charges should not be made except for the purpose of their being investigated. The noble Earl could not blame him for bringing these Questions forward unless he could produce despatches from Lord Hartington and the Government of India showing that these matters had been investigated.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: I rise to Order. I shall be ready to give a plain and distinct answer at the proper time to any accusations which may be made. We are not now, I submit, discussing what Lord Hartington said, but whether these Questions are Questions which ought to be put.

Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY: Will the noble Earl state in what form I am to put these Questions?

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: It is not for me to state that.

On Question? *agreed to.*

NATIONAL GALLERY (LOAN) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill for enabling the Trustees and Director of the National Gallery to lend works of art to other public galleries in the United Kingdom—Was *presented* by The Earl Granville; read 1^a. (No. 18.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Six o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 12th March, 1883.

MINUTES.]—New Member Sworn—Lieutenant Colonel Gerard Smith, *for* the Borough of Chipping Wycombe.

Supply—*considered in Committee*—Army Estimates, 1883-4.

Resolutions [March 10] *reported.*

Ways and Means—*considered in Committee*—£4,121,300, Consolidated Fund.

Resolution [March 10] *reported.*

Private Bills (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Croydon and Norwood District Tramways Companies*; Great Eastern Railway (High Beech Extension), *negatived.*

Public Bills—*Ordered—First Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 1)*; Friendly and Industrial Societies Law Amendment* [117]; Sea and Coast Fisheries (Ireland) Fund* [116].

Second Reading—Distress Law Amendment* [44].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY (HIGH BEECH EXTENSION) BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON said, that as some misconceptions seemed to exist in regard to the object and scope of this Bill, he thought it would be as well that he should, in moving the second reading of it, say a few words by way of explanation. A great deal had been said and written, outside the House, in regard to the Bill; and many people thought it was an attempt on the part of the Railway Company, for the benefit of themselves and their shareholders, to take away a portion of Epping Forest which had been dedicated to the public for ever, and in that way to infringe the provisions of an Act of Parliament. Now, nothing could be more foreign to the mind of the Great Eastern Company, or more contrary to the fact; and he thought he would only be assisting the House in forming a judgment on the subject if he were to state, in as few words as possible, what the actual facts of the case were. In 1878 an Act of Parliament was passed, which dedicated Epping Forest to the public for ever, and vested the management of the Forest in the Corporation of London, under the name of Conservators. The Conservators were to manage the Forest, and see that the intentions of Parliament, in regard to it, were properly and duly carried out. After having had some experience of the management of the Forest the Conservators found that the public—which really meant the poorer classes of London, were unable, with the existing means of communication, to have any real enjoyment of the greater part of it. At the present moment the railway communication to the best and most beautiful, and by far the larger portion of the Forest, did not proceed further than Chingford, and was at a distance of three miles from High Beech, and the greater portion of the people conveyed by rail instead of being able to enjoy themselves, and to derive benefit from the beauties of the scenery of that lovely portion of the Forest, were compelled to remain at Chingford, to the benefit of the owners of the public-houses there, and certainly not to the advantage of themselves. Such being the case, the Corporation of London felt it necessary that, in order to enable the public to reach the Forest, some extension of the railway should take place, to a convenient distance of the most beautiful part of it. Therefore, the Great Eastern Company, whose line served that district, had, in conjunction and with the full approval of the Conservators of the Forest, projected the line of railway, which formed the Bill now before the House. This line of railway proceeded from Chingford to High Beech, and in so doing it had to intersect a small arm of low-lying land, forming part of the Forest. For the purposes of the line it would be necessary to take about nine acres, and no more, of this land. The 200 acres which the opponents of the Bill said would be cut off from the public would be thrown entirely open to the public, by the construction of three archways, or, should the Conservators wish it, of a greater number. The embankment, upon which the line was to run, would not be, as was alleged, 30 feet high, but at the highest point would only be 21 feet high; and it was to be planted with such ornamental trees as the Conservators, from time to time, directed, so that this particular part would really form an ornamental feature of the Forest. At the present time this land was swampy, low-lying, and ill-drained, and it was impossible for people to walk across it, except in the finest state of the weather. When the line was made, it would be properly drained, and the promoters proposed to run a high road along it intersected by paths running under the arches; and therefore, as a matter of the fact, this portion of the Forest, which it was now almost impossible for the public to enter, except in the finest state of the weather, would be open to the public at all times of the year. It would, therefore, be seen that in promoting this Bill the Great Eastern Railway Company came forward in that House with the full consent of the Conservators, who had charge of the Forest for the benefit of the public. There had been a good deal of opposition to the Bill, and from a variety of quarters. The opposition comprised several learned Professors, a great many butterfly fanciers, and a considerable number of gentlemen who used the Forest to a large extent, in the pursuit of the insect tribe. These gentlemen, by a variety of misrepresentations, had unquestionably induced a larger number of persons than themselves to join in opposition to the Bill. He should like, therefore, to call the attention of the House to those who were in favour of the Bill. The Bill, as he had said, was opposed by a small number of interested persons. In favour of the Bill, Petitions had been presented, first of all, on account of the Great Eastern Railway Company by 16,000 persons living in the Metropolis, and including 2,000 ministers, managers of Sunday Schools, superintendents of the Band of Hope Unions, and persons connected with educational, temperance, and social agencies, representing, in the aggregate, somewhat more than 300,000 adults and children. These persons were unanimous in favour of the Bill, and he should like to give the House the names of a few of them. In the first place, there was the Suffragan Bishop of East London, the Bishop of Bedford, the Vicar of East Clapton, Dr. Bernardo, whose name would be well known in that House; Mr. E. North Buxton, one of the Verderers of the Forest, and Chairman of the London School Board; the Rector of Stepney, and many leading men connected with the Church of England Temperance Society; the Church of England Band of Hope Unions of the Tower Hamlets, Hackney, and Finsbury; the Chairman of the North-East London, North London, and East London Auxiliary Sunday School Unions, as well as the President of the Sunday School Union of the whole of London. He might mention another fact which would carry great weight. The other day the Metropolitan Board of Works met to discuss this Bill, and the Board decided, by a majority, not to take any part against it. It was stated at the time that a few years ago many members of the Board would have opposed the Bill; but, upon making inquiries, they had been converted into supporters of it. The Bill was also supported by Mr. Munro, Chairman of the District Board of Works of Whitechapel, and a good exponent of the feeling of the working classes; and by Mr. Turner, of St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, which parish, as the House well knew, comprised a densely populated district; also by Mr. Selway, who stated that he himself was an opponent of the Bill two or three years ago, but that he was now strongly in its favour. He, therefore, thought he had showed that a large portion of those entitled to represent the feelings and wishes of the poorer classes in London were decidedly in favour of the Bill; and it rested with those who would presently get up and speak on behalf of the opponents, to show who they were, and how far the House ought to listen to their opinion. All the promoters wished, as a Company, was that the Bill, as in every ordinary case of Private Bill legislation, should be allowed to pass a second reading and go before a Committee upstairs. He felt that it was altogether impossible for hon. Members—the bulk of whom had, perhaps, never visited Epping Forest—to be able to form any decision as to the merits of such a Bill as this; but he felt perfectly convinced that if the Bill were once committed to a Committee of the House, that Committee, after due inquiry, and hearing evidence upon both sides of the question, would not do otherwise than pass the measure. He also felt that if the measure were rejected by the House at the present time, the House would be directly infringing the intentions of the Act of Parliament, in dedicating Epping Forest to the people for ever. ["No!"] Hon. Members might say "No;" but he said "Yes." It was not for the use of a few interested persons, but it was intended for the benefit of the whole of the poor of London; and the great mass of the poor in London were now debarred from having the free enjoyment of this ground, which had been dedicated only a short time ago, by Her Majesty the Queen herself, for their use for ever. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Lord Claud Hamilton.*)

MR. BRYCE said, he rose to move the Resolution of which he had given Notice in regard to this Bill. The Resolution was as follows:—

"That this House, while expressing no opinion as to the propriety of making a Railway to High Beech, disapproves of any scheme which involves the taking for the purposes of a Railway of any part of the surface of Epping Forest, which, by 'The Epping Forest Act, 1878,' was directed to be 'kept at all times

> unenclosed and unbuilt on as an open space for the enjoyment of the public.' "

He had put his opposition to the Bill in the form of a Resolution, because he thought that that was the best way of raising the true issue. Those who proposed the Bill endeavoured to represent the issue as if it were whether or not the Forest should be made accessible; but he, and those who agreed with him, said the true issue was whether the Forest should be sacrificed or kept for the enjoyment of the public. The promoters of the Bill had laid hold of some expressions which had been made use of by some naturalists, and they endeavoured to represent the opposition to the Bill as being due to a desire on the part of these naturalists to keep the Forest in a state of primitive seclusion. Now, whether the Forest ought to be kept secluded or not, was not the ground upon which he had given notice of opposition. His opposition was entirely based upon this fact—that however desirable it might be to make Epping Forest accessible, that object ought not to be purchased by injuring the Forest itself. His sympathies were entirely with the expressed wishes of the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton), that the Forest should be made as accessible for the poor people of East London as possible. The more the Forest could be opened up the better, and those who proposed to open it up would always find him prepared to give them a hearty support. But on the question of the accessibility of the Forest he hoped he might be permitted to offer a few observations. The first was that the Forest was already accessible. This was not a Bill for opening up the Forest, but for making a railway to one particular spot —High Beech. There were no less than 13 stations already, and there was no part of the Forest more than two miles from one of these railway stations. Even the very place, High Beech itself, to which the railway was proposed to be made, was distant only a mile and a-half from one of these stations. Was it possible to contend, on such a state of facts, that the construction of a railway to High Beech was a matter of the first necessity, in order that the working classes might enjoy the Forest, or that the Sunday School children should be taken there to ramble in it? The hon. Member read a letter which he had received on Saturday from a clergyman of one of the poor parishes in the East of London, in which the writer stated, from the experience he had gained last summer in taking about 500 children through the Forest, the walk from Loughton Station to High Beech was one of the most enjoyable features of the day. The writer concluded by saying—

> "I heartily wish you success in your opposition to the Bill, which is calculated to destroy the Forest."

Even assuming, however, that High Beech should be made more accessible, he did not agree that there should be this further access to it, if it were only to be purchased by injuring the Forest. It was all very well to express a desire to carry people to High Beech; but if it were necessary to destroy the Forest they went to see in order to do so, they would be paying much too dear for it. Epping Forest was really the only large open space which now remained within a moderate distance of London. There were plenty of Parks like Battersea, and other suburban Parks, surrounded by villas and houses; but Epping Forest was the one spot in the neighbourhood of London which had been left in a state of primitive nature. In February, 1863, the House of Commons passed a Resolution—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that She will be graciously pleased to give directions that no sales to facilitate Inclosures be made of Crown Lands or Crown Forestal Rights, within fifteen miles of the Metropolis."

This Resolution was passed after numerous Memorials to the House, and in February, 1870, there was another Address to Her Majesty, praying her—

> "To take such measures as in Her judgment She may deem most expedient in order that Epping Forest may be preserved as an open space for the recreation and enjoyment of the public."

After the strenuous efforts which had been made to arouse the lords of the manor and the Government to a sense of their duty, it was too much to say now that Epping Forest was to be sacrificed in the interests of a Railway Company. It was said that the Bill ought to go to a Select Committee. He admitted that, as an ordinary rule, it was desirable that Bills of this kind should be submitted to a Committee upstairs, in order that they might examine all questions of detail. But the present Bill did not raise any question of detail. The issue put to the House was entirely an issue of principle; and he submitted that the House itself was a far better tribunal for deciding questions of principle of this kind than a Select Committee. He had the case of another railway in his mind at this moment. If the Bill which enabled the Metropolitan District Railway Company to destroy the Thames Embankment, by putting up the ventilators now in course of construction, had ever been considered and discussed by the House, could it be supposed that it would ever have been allowed to pass? It was because it was allowed to go to a Committee, and there was no proper person to represent the interests of the public, that a great misfortune like this to the whole of London had been suffered to pass without comment. He hoped, therefore, that the House would feel he was taking a proper course, when he asked for its opinion and judgment upon the question, and when he asked hon. Members to decide whether it was not their duty to take into consideration the interests of the public. He had already denied that he opposed the Bill in the interests of any particular individuals, or that he opposed it on behalf of particular landlords. It was said that the promoters only proposed to take nine acres of the Forest. But what were those nine acres? They were nine acres in one of the most beautiful parts of the Forest, and it was proposed to build and erect upon them an embankment which would destroy some of the most beautiful views of the Forest; while the embankment itself would cut off about 200 acres from the use of the public, and, therefore, it would to that extent diminish the enjoyment of the public, because there would no longer be free access hither and thither across it. He contended that a railway should never be made across a Forest of this kind for anything short of absolute necessity. This was not a case of absolute necessity; because it was quite possible to make a railway to High Beech without touching the Forest at all, either by diverging from the Chingford line, or by a branch from the main line near Ponder's End. The question of expense was not a question which ought to be raised as against the interests of the public. The interests of the public were pre-eminent; and though a line might cost a few thousand pounds more to make in another direction, it was for the interest of the public that they should be able to enjoy unimpaired the Forest which had been given to the people of London as their heritage. It was a priceless heritage—a heritage easily lost, and, when once lost, never to be recovered. Upon these grounds he asked the House to say that this heritage never should be lost, but that it should be preserved for the enjoyment of the people of this Metropolis for ever.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, while expressing no opinion as to the propriety of making a Railway to High Beech, disapproves of any scheme which involves the taking for the purposes of a Railway of any part of the surface of Epping Forest, which, by 'The Epping Forest Act, 1878,' was directed to be 'kept at all times unenclosed and unbuilt on as an open space for the enjoyment of the public,' "—(*Mr. Bryce,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS said, he thought that his hon. Friend who had last spoken had raised the proper issue upon the question, and the only issue, to his mind, that ought to be raised. He bore no animosity against the Great Eastern Railway Company. He believed that the Great Eastern Railway Company had been heavily mulcted in the price it had been compelled to pay for the land that it had to pass through; and he knew that its development had been, to a considerable extent, retarded by the action which had been taken by Parliament. He, therefore, had no personal feeling against the promoters of the Bill, and he was not animated by any idea of that kind whatever. He had, however, put down upon the Paper a Notice of his intention to move the rejection of the Bill; and he had done so simply because he thought it was inexpedient to take away part of the Forest within so short a time after the Legislature had, with the gracious assent of Her Majesty, dedicated it for ever to the people of London. With regard to the opposition to the Bill, he presumed the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton) had told them that he was interested in the Great Eastern Railway Company. He thought the House might gather that from the speech of the noble Lord. The noble Lord had, however, certainly appeared there in quite another capacity—namely, as the advocate of the Temperance Unions of North London. Now, he (Mr. Rogers) had had an interview with the managers of the Temperance Unions of North London the other day, and he had pointed out to them that it occurred to him it was quite possible, if this railway were constructed, and that part of the Forest thrown open, public-houses would very soon find their way there. At any rate, that had been the result of previous experience. It was said that the Bill only took away nine acres of the Forest; but that was not the point. The point was that, while the Railway Company took nine acres of the Forest away, it cut off an additional 200 acres. The noble Lord had spoken of a certain number of persons who were interested in the Forest for recreation purposes. Now, he (Mr. Rogers) presented a Petition, the other day, from nearly 1,000 bank clerks in the City of London against the Bill; and he presumed that it should be referred to a Select Committee, if the Bill passed a second reading, to examine into the merits of the Bill. He also heard, on the best authority, that not less than 10,000 working men of London were engaged in the study of natural history, and to them Epping Forest was almost the only ground open. Parliament, therefore, ought to be very loth to take it away from them. He had no wish to find fault with the Corporation of the City of London; they had done great service to the public in the efforts they had made to acquire the Forest for ever for the use of the people; but he confessed that, when he looked at some of the terms of the Act under which the Forest was constituted public property, the Conservators, who were the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Town Council of the City of London, had placed a very misty interpretation upon their duties, which were, under no circumstances, to permit any disfigurement of the Forest, or its alienation from the purposes of the Forest. In construing the Act it would appear that the Conservators had completely lost sight of their duties in connection with the Forest, and that they had taken a step which would go far to deprive them of the gratitude of the people of London. The noble Lord defended the cutting off from the poor people of London of a portion of the Forest, and devoting it to railway purposes; but would he be prepared to sanction the making of an overground railway across one of the London Parks? He (Mr. Rogers) thought not; and he did not see why the claims of those persons who were not able to make themselves heard in that House should not be respected as well as those of Railway Companies. He contended that it was perfectly possible for the Railway Company to get the same result by a small additional outlay of money; and it was, therefore, desirable they should be told that, at all hazards, Epping Forest should be preserved. The Bill was one of those things which, if once allowed to pass by Parliament, they would never know where to stop. There would be nothing to prevent the Great Eastern Railway Company from bringing their railway system into all parts of the Forest, and cutting it up like a chess-board. He hoped the House would show, in a decisive manner, that it was prepared to maintain and preserve the Forest.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he only rose to say a word in regard to what had fallen from his hon. Friend the Member for Southwark (Mr. Rogers). His hon. Friend seemed to think that the Corporation of London were in favour of the Bill. Now, the Corporation of London had taken no part in regard to it, and he believed that, as individuals, they were much divided upon it. He had known the Forest all his life, and he, for one, should deeply regret the passing of any Bill which would spoil the beauty of it. He should, therefore, cordially support the Motion of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce).

Sir THOMAS CHAMBERS said, he quite agreed with the remarks of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. R. N. Fowler), and would deeply regret that anything should be done to spoil the beauty of the Forest. But no one could deny that Epping Forest itself had been rescued and preserved for the use of the people of London by the exertions of the

Corporation of London. The Corporation were not less anxious now than on all former occasions to see the Forest maintained in its integrity and beauty for the enjoyment of the inhabitants of London, and that they felt that long ago was proved by the action they had taken. He would read some short extracts from the Reports which had been made to the Court of Common Council upon this question. In the spring of 1873 the Great Eastern Railway Company introduced a Bill into Parliament for the purpose of cutting up the most secluded and one of the prettiest parts of the Forest, by constructing a line from their Chingford Station to High Beech, and the Corporation not only solicited the Crown to refuse its consent to the Bill, but directed the City Solicitor strongly to oppose it. Their opposition was entirely successful; and it showed that, at all events, the Corporation, as a Corporation, were anxious to maintain this piece of woodland in its integrity. In 1874 the same Committee presented a Report to the Court of Common Council upon a communication received from the Great Eastern Railway Company in reference to the extension of their line to High Beech, with the object of giving increased facilities to the public for reaching Queen Elizabeth's Lodge and High Beech. This scheme was also opposed by the Corporation. In 1877 the City Solicitor reported that the Company were desirous of continuing their line through the Forest to their station at Loughton, so as to make a circular line, and they asked for the views of the Corporation upon the subject. The Corporation carefully considered the matter, and came to the conclusion that it was highly objectionable to have the Forest so bisected by a railway in any form, much more so in a deep cutting; and the result was that they informed the Company they were not prepared to assent to a railway being carried into the Forest beyond the spot at which it had been originally agreed to. The Railway Company acceded to the views of the Corporation, and substituted a line to which the City took no objection. Their Bill, however, was lost through the opposition of some of the landowners. The last Report of the Epping Forest Committee contained a passage which said—

> Your honourable Court will remember the assent you gave in the Session of 1881 to the proposed extension of the Great Eastern Railway Company's branch to High Beech, in consideration of the improvements they were to make in the Forest.

It was found impossible to get any contested Private Bills through the House in that year, owing to the time of the House being occupied in the discussion of important measures affecting Ireland; and the result was that that Bill also was lost. It would, therefore, be seen that the Corporation had been very jealous of any encroachment upon the Forest; but, notwithstanding their just feeling of jealousy, they had come to the conclusion now that it was for the interest of those they represented that the House should pass the present Bill. There was no use in having a beautiful tract of forest scenery, unless they could enable the people to enjoy it. It was all very well to say that the distance of a mile and a-half or two miles was a small matter; but, in his opinion, a station two miles from a particular spot was an argument in favour of giving further facilities. Very young persons, and very old, and even middle-aged, could not walk that distance, and they were prevented from enjoying that part of the Forest altogether. There was no advantage in possessing this Forest, which was 13 miles long, unless facilities were given to enable the public to enjoy it in its full entirety. His hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) mentioned several times in the course of his speech that the Bill involved the utter destruction of the Forest. If anybody could have looked at a map as the hon. Member made these statements, he must have felt amused at the learned Professor making such an assertion, as a justification for the House rejecting a proposal to construct a line which was only a mile and a third in length. In regard to the embankment, the Railway Company had agreed to slope the banks, as far as it was necessary, so as to produce the effect of a natural undulation of the land; so that, in point of fact, the disfigurement would be very trifling indeed, and the work was to be undertaken in order to accommodate a very large number of the public. He denied that any outlying portions of the Forest would be separated from the rest. The Forest consisted of 5,520 acres, and it was absurd to say that the separation of 200 acres would utterly destroy the beauty of the Forest. When the House of Commons remembered that the Great Eastern Railway Company carried no less than 350,000 people to the Forest every year, and that the great majority of them stopped in the neighbourhood of the Chingford Station, they must feel how desirable it was, on every ground, that a portion of this vast number should have the opportunity of continuing their journey to another point, if they desired to do so. At present, they congregated at one spot; and the result was such that he was sure no hon. Member of the House would care to go there. The fact that all the people were deposited on the same spot led to scenes of disorder, which could not well be controlled or kept under by the police. If this Bill were passed, and the Company were allowed to carry a portion of their passengers a little further on, this state of things would be put a stop to altogether. He therefore contended that no case had been made out to justify the House in preventing the Bill from going before a Committee. The Corporation of London were not the promoters of the Bill. All they had done was to oppose every Bill brought in by the Great Eastern Railway Company until the Company consented to the terms which they considered necessary for the preservation of their good faith with the public. The Conservators and the Verderers also agreed in this proposal; and, therefore, all the parties most interested supported the Bill. The Bishop of Bedford, and a large number of persons interested in the amusements and recreation of the poor, asked the House to allow the Bill to go before a Committee; and it would be contrary to the usual precedents of the House to throw it out without an examination of the plans, and of a map of the country—a tract of forest 13 miles long, from which 200 acres only were to be separated by an ornamental embankment. He regretted that the Corporation of London had been attacked, as if they had any interest in the matter. It was nothing of the kind. On the contrary, the persons who were charged with the conservancy of the Forest were of opinion that the line would not interfere with the Forest at all; and their opinion, he thought, ought to have great weight with the House.

Sir HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON said, he wished that the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just addressed the House could have been able to tell them that the Corporation of the City of London remained in the same mind they were when they first opposed the proposal of the Great Eastern Railway Company to extend their railway from Chingford to High Beech, on the ground that it would not only interfere with the the space, but with the beauties of the Forest. As one who probably knew the Forest as intimately as almost any Member of the House, he confessed that he had been somewhat surprised to hear some of the arguments which had been urged in favour of the Bill. He should like first, however, to say that, looking upon it from the point of view of the Act of 1878, he could not help thinking that it was a direct violation of the conditions and terms on which that Act was passed. He had personally had something to do with that Act. He was the draughtsman of it, and he had to carry out the negotiations between those who, as lords of the manor and as commoners, were interested on the one side, and the City of London on the other, who had gained a suit in Chancery for opening up the Forest to them as commoners. It became his duty to negotiate the terms on which a Bill should be passed; and the Bill of 1878 was practically a compromise between the parties for the preservation of Epping Forest as an open space, not only an open space in the sense of a public Park, but an open space of a wild and picturesque nature, and, perhaps, the only specimen of the kind within immediate reach of any other city of the country. Well, now, the Act of 1878 distinctly laid down that the Corporation of the City of London should be appointed the Conservators of the Forest, and that they should preserve it intact from any such purposes as those named in the present Bill. Nothing could be clearer than the terms of the 2nd clause of the Act. He knew perfectly well that the Corporation of London relied upon certain words in the clause, which said that Epping Forest was to be kept unenclosed and unbuilt on, as an open space for the recreation and enjoyment of the people. The clause then went on to say that the Conservators should by all lawful means prevent, resist, and abate all further encroachments for the purpose of building, attempting to enclose, or encouraging to build on any part of the Forest, or attempting to appropriate or use the subsoil and timber contrary to the intentions of the Act. When he was told that it was now only proposed to give additional facilities to the public for obtaining access to the Forest, and that that was an object that was not inconsistent with the purposes of the Act, he fell back upon his own knowledge. He could not but recollect what were the conditions at the time of the passing of the Act of 1878, when large portions of the Forest were taken away from people who possessed a title which had passed the best inspection of the day. It was a title which was at the time supposed to be indisputable. But when this Act was passed there were a number of circumstances which might have prevented the Forest from becoming open to the public for a considerable number of years. A compromise was effected, however, for the purpose of gaining for the public this large open space; and not only were the Conservators bound under that clause of the Act to preserve it in its integrity for the purposes to which it was devoted, but by another section they were not to sell, demise, or otherwise alienate any part of the Forest whatever, or concur in any such sale or alienation. Nothing could be more definite. If hon. Members would look through the Act they would find that all the clauses bore upon that point, and they proved what was the mind and intention of the Corporation of London themselves at the time they asked that they should be intrusted with these powers. That being what he thought was the actual interpretation of the Act and the spirit in which the Act was passed, he should like for one moment to see whether anything had been put forward by the promoters of the Bill which ought to induce the House to alter an Act passed so recently as in the year 1878. It was alleged that greater facilities of access to the Forest would be provided by this railroad. But those who knew the Forest knew perfectly well that it was a narrow strip of ground practically, he might almost say, surrounded by railroads. In fact, there was not a single portion of the Forest which could not be got to within about a mile and a-half from a given station. In this point of view alone, unless they were prepared to go further and place the Forest under the control of the Railway Company altogether, there was no necessity for any further railway communication. He was afraid that that was only the thin end of the wedge, and that the Railway Company would propose by-and-bye to go a great deal further. There were several other beautiful portions of the Forest to which the same arguments might be applied, and to which it might be said the public were entitled to have more immediate access and more immediate facilities. If they once got the railway to High Beech they would find the same arguments used for cutting up the Forest still further, and connecting the railroad to High Beech with other parts of it. There was no difficulty at the present moment for anybody to obtain access to almost any part of the Forest. He was afraid that all these proposals would only lead to one object—namely, the planning out of another public-house in the centre of the Forest—another public-house where they would have repeated again the same scenes which were constantly, to his own knowledge, going on at Chingford and its immediate neighbourhood — scenes which had practically driven a greater portion of the little children, for whom this plea of legislation was raised, away from that part of the Forest altogether, on account of the dissipation and immorality which occurred there. He would not make this statement unless he knew it to be true from his own personal knowledge. He had not the least interest in Epping Forest of any sort or kind. He said that, because he had noticed a letter in the newspapers asserting that the opposition merely came from people who lived in the Forest, and who, therefore, were desirous of resisting all access to it on the part of the public. He lived miles away from the Forest, but he knew it perfectly well. It was in the division which he represented in Parliament; he had constantly occasion to visit it, and he often rode across it. He opposed the Bill because, in the first place, it was a direct violation of an Act which had been recently passed, and passed in order to give the public the full enjoyment of the whole of this space in the natural aspects of its wildness. He opposed it also on the ground that it was not necessary to facilitate the access of the public to the Forest, and also because it would be detrimental to the Forest, from the way in which it would multiply the grievances which were well known to exist already.

Mr. FIRTH said, he should like to read to the House the opinion of one of the Conservators of Epping Forest, written at the time when a similar Bill was before the House in 1881. The gentleman he alluded to was Sir Antonio Brady, who was now dead, but whose name would be well known in the House. That gentleman said that, as one of the Conservators of the Forest, he regarded the Epping Forest scheme—

> "As a grave mistake. He could well understand that certain persons would like to make High Beech a terminus, so that they might be enabled to have readier access to London; but he failed to conceive why the citizens of London should take up the matter. And certainly the proposal, if carried, would spoil one of the most beautiful parts of the Forest."

He was certainly astonished to hear the observations which had fallen from the learned Recorder of London (Sir Thomas Chambers) and the hon. Alderman who represented the City of London (Mr. R. N. Fowler), that the Corporation had nothing to do with this matter. He had certainly been under the impression that this was a Bill of the Corporation of the City of London, and he rested that opinion upon a letter which had been written by the solicitor of the Great Eastern Railway to the Metropolitan Board of Works, in which it was stated that—

> "The authority of Parliament for the construction of this line was sought at the instance of the Epping Forest Committee of the Corporation of London."

The letter went on to say that—

> "If the measure did not meet with the cordial support of the people of London, it would be withdrawn."

He wished to know if the Corporation were really interested in the matter? He found that at High Beech there was a public-house called the "King's Oak," and that an officer of the Corporation had purchased, in 1876, 11 acres of land for £5,100; he probably bought it on behalf of the Corporation; and this officer had stated to several influential persons in the district that it was the intention, if the Bill passed, to build a large hotel on that land—a hotel which was to contain at least 200 rooms. It was, therefore, evidently intended to turn this estate at High Beech into a great building speculation, and it was estimated that these 11 acres, for which there had been paid £5,100, would be increased in value ten-fold; and he thought it probably would. At any rate, if the same people were behind the Bill now as when the proposal was formerly before the House, it was evident that the measure had not been fairly put before them as one with which the Corporation of London had nothing whatever to do. As far as the Bill itself was concerned, he was of opinion that it was distinctly contrary to the intentions of the Act of 1878, and to the undertaking given by the Railway Company themselves; it was also contrary to the interests of the Forest, as far as its preservation was concerned. All the people of London were very much interested in the matter, because the Forest had been paid for by a tax raised upon the food of the people; it had been paid for out of the grain duty, and they were all equally interested in seeing that the tax to which they had contributed was not misapplied. It was most desirable that the people should have some constituted authority able to speak and act in their name; and he should be glad, if for no other reason, that the House would consent to defer the second reading until they were able to constitute some new and properly representative authority.

Mr. Alderman W. LAWRENCE said, he thought the remarks of the hon. Baronet the Member for West Essex (Sir H. Selwin-Ibbetson) were in favour of the Bill being referred to a Select Committee, because the hon. Baronet had brought forward several matters in dispute—namely, whether the Bill was in conformity with the Act of Parliament, and whether it could be carried out without contravening that Act. Surely those were matters for a Committee, and not for controversy in that House. The hon. Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth) said that the Forest had been paid for by money raised by a tax upon the food of the people. All he could say was that, if the Forest was paid for by a tax upon the food of the people, every person had paid his share; and what the Corporation were anxious to secure was that the people of London should have their full share in the Forest. He congratulated the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) on the cleverness with which he had brought forward the Motion. The hon. Member knew that he could not bring forward a direct negative to the Bill. What would the inhabitants of the Tower Hamlets say to one of their own Members if they had found him opposing a Bill the object of which was to render more accessible to them this beautiful Forest? They all knew what had resulted to a former Member who had proposed the inclosure of open spaces. It was very clever indeed for the hon. Member to decline to offer any remark upon the Bill itself, and simply to propose a Resolution, knowing very well that it would have the effect of negativing the Bill. The tactics pursued by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets were clever; but, no doubt, they would be fully appreciated by the inhabitants of the East End of London, who took so great an interest in obtaining access to this Forest. The hon. Member had alluded to the opinion of the House in regard to the preservation of the Forest in former years, and had quoted Addresses presented to the House; but the hon. Member ought to know that the House had done nothing whatever effectual to preserve the Forest to the people. It was the Corporation of London who were compelled to fight the matter in the Law Courts. They had fought it out in the Court of Chancery, and they had risked a large amount of their funds for the preservation of the Forest. Fortunately, they happened to win, and they succeeded in rescuing the Forest from those who had robbed and plundered it without the slightest right or title. Yet now, at the present moment, when the Corporation had done so much for the preservation of the Forest, and were anxious that the people of the Metropolis should have an opportunity of enjoying it, they were accused of being desirous of setting up their own advantage against that of the public. He thought it was too much to say that, when they had spent so much and risked so much for the preservation of the Forest. The Committee of Epping Forest consisted of 12 members of the Corporation, acting in conjunction with four gentlemen who were Verderers, elected by commoners; and he believed that that joint Committee were unanimous in supporting the Bill. [An hon. MEMBER: No!] Well, at any rate, there had only been one dissentient; and, as far as the Committee of the Corporation were concerned, they were quite unanimous. The dissentient was one of the Verderers. The whole question had been brought to the notice of the Corporation, and they had resolved that the Bill ought to pass, in order that the poor of the Metropolis might have an opportunity of enjoying this beautiful Forest. It was now said that every part of the Forest was accessible. If every part of the Forest was accessible, what harm would this station at High Beech do to the public? It was a very important question, and he quite agreed that it could be looked at from two points of view. He sympathized entirely with those gentlemen who were anxious to preserve open spaces in every part of the country, not only in London, but elsewhere. It was not merely in Epping Forest that the Corporation had shown their eagerness for the preservation of open spaces; but they had endeavoured to preserve them for the public elsewhere. Therefore, he said that, at the present moment, when the question in dispute was one upon which two sides had been taken, it was desirable that they should go to a Committee and have the matter fully discussed, where every interest could be represented. His own opinion was that it was not desired to preserve the Forest only for the enjoyment of those who wished to live in it, or simply for the fancies of those who desired to catch butterflies. No doubt, that was a very delightful occupation, and they all knew that many gentlemen were interested in that pursuit, probably to the great advantage of themselves and the country. But he wished to put into the other scale the toiling millions of the Metropolis, who wanted the opportunity of enjoying this beautiful Forest, while those who resided in it were anxious to deprive them of that opportunity. Those who had a means of entrance into the Forest by other modes than a railway objected to the extension of railway accommodation. It should not be forgotten that the persons who were opposing the construction of this railway consisted of those who had strenuously opposed the Corporation of London in all their attempts to obtain this Forest for the benefit of the people. ["No!"] He fearlessly asserted that that was perfectly true, and that all those who opposed the Corporation some years ago were now objecting to the present Bill. [" Oh ! "] Then, if some of them were in favour of the Bill, he was very glad to hear it; and, that being the case, he hoped that the House would afford a proper opportunity for the fair consideration of the question. It was really a question concerning the poor inhabitants of the Metropolis—those who only had one holiday in the year, and who were glad to resort to such a place as Epping Forest to spend that holiday in. He asked the House to be careful how they shut the door to a further inquiry, by which the whole matter could be gone into fully and thoroughly sifted. It was most undesirable that the interests of the many should be sacrificed to those of the few.

Mr. T. C. **BARING** said, he entertained a strong personal feeling on this subject. He had opposed the Bill, and other Bills like it, for many years, and he was quite willing to confess that he had a personal interest in doing so, and he saw no reason why he should not consult that personal interest. He lived at High Beech. He was not a large landowner there, nor did he even own the house in which he lived; but he lived there, and, on behalf of himself and his neighbours, he thought he was bound to exercise that first instinct of human nature — self-preservation. He had certainly no desire to see High Beech reduced to the position of Chingford. They had seen who it was that the Great Eastern Railway brought to Chingford, and they knew that the Corporation had allowed a large public-house to be built on the land they had purchased there. The hon. and learned Member for Marylebone (Sir Thomas Chambers) had very aptly described the scenes that went on at Chingford, and he (Mr. Baring) and his neighbours had no desire to see them repeated at High Beech. But, at the same time, he was well aware that no personal interests, however great, could be allowed to interfere with the public advantage; but he would ask, what was there of public advantage in this case? It was said that the railroad was promoted in order that the public might be served by it. But, as a matter of fact, every householder of High Beech had signed a Petition against the Bill, except one particular class, and that was the occupiers of public-houses. Throughout the whole of the county, in the division he represented, and the division represented by his hon. Friend (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson), there was only one opinion. It was said that the people of London wanted to go down to the Forest; but the respectable people of London found their way there already. Living there, as he did, he was able, from personal knowledge, to judge of the class of persons who went down. Every day in the summer there were thousands of people congregated outside his gates, and they were most respectably-behaved people, too. A great many of them were the very Sunday School children on whose behalf the noble Lord (Lord Claud Hamilton) had made so touching an appeal. They found their way there by van, or otherwise, by road from London; and those who were unable to do so, and who went by train to Chingford, had not very far to walk. The idea that Sunday School children could not walk a distance of a mile and a-half was simply absurd. If they were unable to do so, they were very different now from what he had known them. What he wished to avoid was that class of people who congregated around the public-house, and who had no idea of the beauties of nature; but, having spent their time in a public-house all day, brought about those disreputable scenes at night which the hon. and learned Member for Marylebone (Sir Thomas Chambers) had so justly condemned. The noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton) spoke of the great anxiety experienced on the part of the Sunday School Union and similar bodies for the passing of the Bill. Now, he (Mr. Baring) had received a letter from a man whom he had never heard of before, and who was not one of his own constituents. The letter was dated from Tottenham, and the writer stated—

> "That he was the superintendent of a Sunday School containing 300 children, and of a Band of Hope consisting of 500 members, and he did not think that the promoters had fairly represented the feeling of the class to which he belonged. A good many of them had declined to sign the Petitions which had been got up in favour of the Bill, and all the argument went the other way."

He had received many other letters addressed to him from constituents, and from many who were outside his constituency; and he thought it ought not to go forth to the public, that the whole body of Sunday School teachers and Bands of Hope were in favour of the Bill.

Lord EUSTACE CECIL remarked, that his constituents were very much interested in the Bill, and, therefore, he wished to say one or two words upon it; and they would be only one or two words, because he was quite aware that at this stage of the Bill the House had already heard quite enough argument, and that the question was now ripe for a decision. The hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Alderman Lawrence) had spoken as if the Corporation of London were very much interested in the matter; but surely, if that had been the case, they would have seen the Sheriffs of London at the Bar. It was perfectly clear, from what had been stated by his hon. Friend who represented the City of London (Mr. R. N. Fowler), that the Corporation were not at all agreed on the matter, and that, as a matter of fact, they were neutral. Allusion had also been made to the Metropolitan Board of Words. He thought that his noble Friend (Lord Claud Hamilton), in speaking on behalf of the Great Eastern Railway Company, had stated that the Metropolitan Board of Works were in favour of the Bill. It was quite true that they were in favour of the Bill, but by what majority? By a majority of 2, so that both of these Bodies were really neutral; and it behoved hon. Members in that House who were lovers of beauty to stand up for the preservation, intact from the outrages now proposed to be committed upon it by a Railway Company, of one of the few beautiful pieces of natural scenery now left in the neighbourhood of the Metropolis. One of his own constituents had written to him upon the subject, and he thought it right to quote the letter. Although a good deal had been said about the people of East London, very little had been said as to what the people of West Essex thought upon the question. The writer of the letter to which he referred was a gentleman who was both a schoolmaster and a clergyman, and it might naturally be supposed that he would support the views of the Bishop of Bedford; but he wrote to say that, in his opinion, the passing of the Bill would bring about at High Beech the same ill effects which the extension of the line had already brought about at Chingford. The writer added that the Bill, if passed, would utterly spoil the Forest for Sunday School children. Dancing at Chingford had happily been done away with; but the hotel there was still a Sunday rendezvous for a score or two of young girls who usually went down in twos or threes, and whose morals could not be improved by their visit. If the railway were extended to High Beech, they would have the same sort of scenes there and the same kind of immorality. He trusted that the House, on this occasion, would make a special exception, and show their real feeling by throwing out the Bill.

Mr. BUXTON said, he would not delay the House for more than a few moments. Something had been said by his hon. Friend the Member for the City of London (Mr. Alderman Lawrence) to the effect that the Verderers were not unanimously in favour of the extension of this railway. He held in his hand a letter he had received from a gentleman, who was not only a Conservator but a Verderer, in which the writer stated that the Conservators consisted of 12 members chosen by the Corporation of London, and four Verderers elected by the Commoners, making 16 in all; and that they were unanimously in favour of the proposed extension. The writer added that he did not think that any of the objectors could have been down to look at the place. Well, all he (Mr. Buxton) could say was that he had been to look at the place. He knew the district well; and, to his mind, if they wanted to make the Forest an open recreation ground for the people of London, they would support the proposed extension of the line to High Beech. Much had been said about the attendant evils at Chingford around the hotel which had already been ercted there; but surely that was an argument for carrying the line further, and having another terminus, so that all the people might not be compelled to congregate at the same spot. As far as the land was concerned which it was proposed to take, it was very low, damp and muddy. The extension of the line would be carried on an embankment, and, as the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton) told them, over arches across this part of the Forest—a part of the

Forest where Sunday School children could not at present be allowed to stray at liberty, and where they were unable to get a view of the scenery. If they wanted a magnificent view, it was necessary that they should go to the top of High Beech Hill, further on. The railway would not go to the top of that hill, but only to the foot, whence through a woody part of the Forest there would be an easy access to the hill, and to the view that was to be obtained from it, and which, in his opinion, would provide these Sunday School children with a much more liberal education than could be got now from any school board. He believed the opposition came from a certain number of scientific gentlemen. He remembered reading of a noble Lord, a well-known and scientific entomologist, who was travelling in the Western States of America, and on arriving at Salt Lake City, *The Salt Lake Clarion* inserted a paragraph stating that—

> "They were happy to announce that they had in their midst that scientific and well-known aristocratic bug-hunter, Lord Walsingham."

Well, he believed it was the scientific and aristocratic bug-hunters who were opposing the extension of this line. The number of school children and clergymen in the East End of London who were in favour of the proposed extension was very great. He thought that the whole of the East End should have access to High Beech; and believing, as he did, that this railway would give free access, he should vote for the Bill.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he did not intend to be deterred by the awful threat which the hon. Member for the City of London (Mr. Alderman Lawrence) held out towards the Members for the Tower Hamlets if they chose to differ from him on this question; and he would say candidly at once that he could not support the Bill. He had arrived at that decision with some amount of difficulty, because there was a good deal to be said in favour of those who desired to obtain free access to all parts of Epping Forest, and for whose use it was intended. But if there was one thing more than another that he had found among the people of the Tower Hamlets it was a feeling of jealousy with reference to Epping Forest. There was great jealousy and fear lest those important open spaces might be interfered with or tampered with in any way. If they were to admit, as an argument, that this was a beautiful spot, and that a railway station ought to be set down at every beautiful spot in Epping Forest, it was pretty evident that Epping Forest would, sooner or later, become honeycombed with railroads. It was perfectly true that this beautiful spot at High Beech was a mile and a-half distant from any railway station. [Lord Claud Hamilton: Two miles.] His noble Friend stated two miles; but he (Mr. Ritchie) thought a mile and a-half was nearer the mark. Although that might be true, yet this was also true—that throughout the greater portion of the mile and a-half which persons bound to High Beech had to traverse they passed through portions of the Forest; therefore, it was out of the question to say that people were prevented from enjoying the Forest on account of this distance of a mile and a-half. As he had stated just now, he had not arrived at the conclusion to vote against the Bill without some kind of hesitation; but when he pictured in his mind's eye a great ugly embankment reared in the midst of this beautiful Forest, he could not but think the proposed additional station in proximity to the Forest would be very dearly bought if it involved the ruin of one of its most pleasant aspects. There was another thing which guided him in his vote. He could not but think that if a railway was necessary or desirable to this part of the Forest, it could be constructed without encroaching upon the Forest at all. If the Great Eastern Railway Company would consent to incur some additional expenditure, he ventured to assert that a station could be brought within measurable distance of High Beech without trenching on the Forest at all. Therefore, for these reasons, he had come to the conclusion that the interests of his constituents would be best served by maintaining the integrity of the Forest; and he would, therefore, vote against the Bill.

Mr. W. H. JAMES said, he did not rise for the purpose of entering into the controversy which had been raised between the Corporation of London and their opponents. He regretted that the speech of his hon. Friend who moved the rejection of the Bill (Mr. Bryce) had not been postponed until the end of the debate, rather than having been delivered at the commencement of it. A considerable number of Members had entered the House since that speech was delivered, and he was afraid they had not heard the full merits of the arguments against the Bill. He regretted that the Bill should be discussed entirely from the view of Epping Forest. The hon. Member who last spoke asked why High Beech could not be reached by some other route without going through the Forest at all? The answer to that question was very simple—namely, that if they went through common land they had not got to pay for it. He thought that that fact lay at the root of this question, and also at the bottom of all the encroachments which were continually being made upon those common lands, which his right hon. Friend the Postmaster General had, in previous Parliaments, laboured so assiduously to preserve. Upon that general ground of policy, without entering further into the merits of the Bill, because he had no desire to deprive the people of the East End of London, or the Sunday School children, of the full opportunity of enjoying Epping Forest, he hoped that the Bill would be rejected by a majority sufficiently large, not only to throw it out on the present occasion, but also to prevent its being brought in again at a future time. He certainly thought that Parliament should adopt the principle, wherever it was possible, of requiring Railway Companies to go over private land, which they could obtain by paying for it, rather than permitting them to obtain possession of common land without payment.

Mr. CAINE said, that he had taken some pains in order to collect the opinion, on this subject, of the Bands of Hope, to which special reference had been made by the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton); and the result of his inquiries was that he could not find that any manager or secretary of these institutions wished to have this railway extended to High Beech. He only found one who was in favour of the extension of the railway; while all the rest said—"Whatever you do, do not let us have another Chingford at High Beech, but let us be free from the contamination of the public-house." The matter was simply this—that the Great Eastern Railway Company desired to save the pockets of their shareholders at the expense of the people of London. He sincerely trusted that the House would reject the Bill by a very large majority.

Sir ANDREW LUSK wished to say one or two words on behalf of his constituents. There were a very large number of persons who lived in the North part of London, and they had wives and families, for whom he was anxious to plead. There were 5,530 acres of land in Epping Forest, and they desired to get there; whereas the House, judging from the tone of some hon. Members, seemed anxious to say—"We won't allow you to get there." That was what the whole thing amounted to. The people of London wanted to get to Epping Forest; but the opponents of this Bill told them they must go there by road, by fly, or by van. They might just as well tell the poor man, who was starving from hunger, and had not a penny in his pocket, to go to the "London Tavern" and get a good dinner. It would be all very well, if the poor inhabitants were able to follow this advice; but they had no money to invest in flys and vans. Still, they wanted to go to the Forest, and to take their wives and children with them. At present, they found it impossible; and the House appeared to be anxious to deprive them of the facilities which they ought to have, and which they demanded, not as a favour, but as a right. It had already been stated that it was these poor people who paid the money, by a small tax on corn, for preserving the Forest. Then, why, if they were called upon to find the money for maintaining the Forest, should they not have the power to go there and enjoy themselves? It was very hard indeed to say that they should not go to the best parts of the Forest, because certain gentlemen who lived there did not want them. It was absurd to talk about this line cutting off part of the Forest. They might just as well say that a bridge over the Serpentine would cut off part of Hyde Park. In both cases, instead of cutting any portion off, it would be of great advantage. High Beech was the best part of the Forest; it afforded the best views and the most picturesque scenery of the whole district; and yet it was two miles from the nearest station at Chingford.

How were women and children to walk two miles there and two miles back? How would hon. Members like it themselves, if they were compelled to try it? And why should these people be called upon to undertake a four miles walk, when there was not the slightest necessity for it? He was pleading on behalf of his constituents. He did not care one whit for the City of London, or for the Railway Company; but he cared a great deal for the interests of his constituents, and he asked that those interests should be studied, rather than the fancies and cruelties of the collectors of butterflies and blackbeetles. All that he asked, as a Representative of a Metropolitan constituency, was that the Bill, which was brought in for the benefit of the people of London, should be fully investigated by a Committee upstairs. If they did that, the promoters would endeavour to show good cause why the House ought, in justice to the public, to pass this Bill.

Mr. WADDY wished to say that he was one of the constituents of the hon. Baronet, and had a wife and family; but he did not agree with him at all.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON said, he should like to say a word in reply to some of the remarks which had fallen from hon. Members who had opposed the Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER; The noble Lord is not entitled to reply.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 82; Noes 230: Majority 148.—(Div. List No. 31.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON wished to address the Chair upon a point of Order. When he had risen to reply to the various statements which had been made, the Speaker called him to Order, and intimated that he was not entitled to reply. He now wished to know whether he had been out of Order in rising to speak upon the Amendment?

Mr. SPEAKER: The noble Lord moved the second reading of the Bill, and upon that Motion he was not entitled to reply. But the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) moved an Amendment, and it was by inadvertance I ruled that the noble Lord was out of Order when he rose to address the House on that Amendment. If my attention had been directed to the fact that an Amendment had been moved since the noble Lord addressed the House, I should have corrected it at once.

Words *added*.

Main Question, as amended, put.

Resolved, That this House, while expressing no opinion as to the propriety of making a Railway to High Beech, disapproves of any scheme which involves the taking for the purposes of a Railway of any part of the surface of Epping Forest, which, by 'The Epping Forest Act, 1878,' was directed to be 'kept at all times unenclosed and unbuilt on as an open space for the enjoyment of the public.'

PARLIAMENT—NEW STANDING ORDER.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH moved the following new Standing Order, to follow Standing Order 145:—

"In the case of any Bill relating to a Railway, Tramway, Canal, Dock, Harbour, Navigation, Pier, or Port, seeking powers to levy tolls, rates, or duties in excess of those already authorised for that undertaking, or usually authorised in previous years for like undertakings, the Bill shall not be reported by the Committee until a Report from the Board of Trade on the powers so sought has been laid before the Committee; and the Committee shall report specially to the House in what manner the recommendations or observations in the Report of the Board of Trade, and also in what manner the Clauses of the Bill relating to the powers so sought, have been dealt with by the Committee."

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY wished the right hon. Gentleman to inform him if this Standing Order would apply to unopposed Bills?

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, the Standing Order, if passed, would be included among other Standing Orders, and would form part of a group that would be equally applicable to opposed and unopposed Bills.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY asked if unopposed Bills were not submitted to the Chairman of Ways and Means?

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH: Yes; and two other Members of the House, and all such Bills will come under the new Standing Order.

Motion *agreed to*.

Resolution to be a Standing Order of the House.

QUESTIONS.

SPAIN—EXPULSION OF CERTAIN CUBAN REFUGEES FROM GIBRALTAR.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What steps the Government have taken to procure the release of the Cuban Refugees by the Spanish Government; when the Papers which have been laid upon the Table upon this subject will be in the hands of Members; and, whether they will contain the last answer of the Spanish Government? The right hon. Gentleman said, that since putting his Question on the Paper, the Papers had been laid on the Table; and, therefore, it became unnecessary to ask the latter portion of the Question.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Papers were distributed to hon. Members on Saturday. The answer of the Spanish Government was received this morning, and will be laid on the Table immediately. Its purport is contained in the telegram from Her Majesty's Minister at Madrid, which terminates the Correspondence already laid.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN asked whether there was any official information as to where General Maceo was confined; and whether or not he was subjected to harsh treatment?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, the only information they possessed was that General Maceo had been transferred from Ceuta to Pampeluna. They were in communication with the Minister at Madrid on the subject, but had not yet received an official reply.

INDIA (ECCLESIASTICAL DEPARTMENT)—ECCLESIASTICAL ARRANGEMENTS.

Mr. BAXTER asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If a Despatch has been received from the Governor General in Council proposing important alterations in the existing ecclesiastical arrangements in India; if Her Majesty's Government have arrived at any decision on the subject; and, if Papers relating to it will be laid before Parliament?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: The Secretary of State being still in communication with the Government of India on the subject referred to by my right hon. Friend, I regret that it is not possible at present to lay any Papers before Parliament.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—SPIKE ISLAND.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What steps it is proposed to take on the First Report of the Royal Commission on Irish Prisons with regard to Spike Island?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Government hope to be able to close Spike Island Prison within the time named in the Report; and to enable them to do so they are making every effort to have suitable arrangements completed in sufficient time for the accommodation of the convicts elsewhere.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CO. FERMANAGH.

Mr. T. A. DICKSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that in the county of Fermanagh there is not a Methodist, Catholic, or Presbyterian magistrate; and, if so, will the Government direct the attention of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland to this grievance, that it may be remedied?

Mr. O'DONNELL asked, Whether the whole of the Protestant population numbered only 37,000, whilst the Roman Catholic population exceeded 47,000; whether there were only 1,700 Presbyterians, and less than 5,000 Methodists; whether special regard to the appointment of magistrates would be paid to the preponderance of the Catholic population?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The religious persuasions of gentlemen holding the Commission of the Peace is not anywhere officially recorded; but I believe that it is not a fact that there is no magistrate in the county of Fermanagh belonging to the persuasions named in the Question. The Methodist and Presbyterian Bodies are represented—it is true only to a very small extent—among the local Justices, while the Resident Magistrate is a Roman Catholic. I shall be glad to draw the Lord Chancellor's attention to the Question which has been put to me. In reply to the Question of the hon. Member for Dungarvan, I shall be glad to lay the facts before the Lord Chancellor and call his attention to the subject.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—THE COMMISSION ON GRIEVANCES.

Mr. PLUNKET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the result of the labours of the Commission appointed to inquire into the grievances complained of by the Royal Irish Constabulary will be made known?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The recommendations of the Commission have long been known to the Government, and have been already fully considered by them; but the evidence given before the Commission, which is very voluminous, is not yet completely before the Government. Every effort is being made to hasten its production, and as soon as it is received no time will be lost in coming to and announcing a decision. A communication in this sense has already been made to the Force.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: In what way has the communication been made to the Force?

Mr. TREVELYAN: If I recollect aright, a letter was addressed to Colonel Bruce, and I fancy it was made known to the Force by the Inspector General.

LAW AND POLICE (SCOTLAND)—JUVENILE OFFENDERS.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the remarks of Sheriff Spital, of Wick, in sentencing a boy named Miller to receive twelve stripes for throwing stones at a fisherman; whether it is true that in order to have the whipping administered, it was necessary to send the boy close on 290 miles by rail; whether his attention was not recently called to a similar case by the honourable Member for Forfarshire; and, whether he would suggest to sheriffs some alternative form of punishment which would not add to the sentence the pain of an eight hours' journey in a third class carriage after a smart scourging.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): I have noticed the case to which my hon. Friend refers. The law requires that the punishment of whipping must be inflicted in a prison. The Government, carrying out the determination of their Predecessors, some time ago discontinued the prison at Wick, where serious crime is happily very rare. The substituted Government prisons are Aberdeen, Kirkwall, and Dingwall, to the last of which, I believe, the boy was sent. It may, perhaps, be half the distance from Wick mentioned in the Question. If there was a local prison in Wick, legalized for short sentences, it would suffice for nearly all the requirements of the county; and not only the inconvenience referred to in the Question, but other inconveniences of a more serious character would be avoided. The old prison, which the Secretary of State has intimated his readiness to legalize, is admirably suited for the purpose; but, unfortunately, the local authorities have not thought proper to apply for a legalizing order, and in the present state of the law there is no compulsion upon them to do so.

LAW AND JUSTICE (INDIA)—COURTS OF LAW—MR. JUSTICE NORRIS.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If it is true, as stated in the "Hindoo Patriot," that Mr. Justice Norris has issued orders that "no Native shall be admitted to his Court with Native shoes on;" whether any authority exists for forcing Natives to appear barefoot in British Courts of Justice; and, if he will take any steps in the matter?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: Taking off the Indian shoe upon entering a Court or private room is among Natives much the same thing as taking off the hat is among Englishmen, and British Courts of Justice in India can insist upon being treated with customary courtesy and respect. If Mr. Justice Norris has issued any orders on this subject, they would not be reported home.

INDIA—THE SALEM RIOTS.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If it is the case that the supreme Government have ordered a Report upon the causes of the riots at Salem between Hindoos and Mohammedans; and, if so, what precautions will be taken to secure a Report free from the influence of the European authorities during whose jurisdiction and administration the riots occurred; and, if he will lay the Report upon the Table?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: The India Office is not aware that the Government of India have issued any Report on the riots at Salem; but a Report will be asked for.

INDIA—PROCEDURE AS TO GIVING PUBLICITY TO OFFICIAL RETURNS AND PAPERS.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, What steps are to be taken to secure the public knowledge of Government Proceedings, Reports, and Returns in India?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: I am not aware that the Government of India intend to alter their present practice as to official publications; but they have under consideration proposals for giving greater publicity to legislative measures.

IRELAND—EXTRA POLICE TAX AT LATTERA, CO. TIPPERARY.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that the only outrages alleged to have been committed in the parish of Lattera, county Tipperary, for the past twelvemonths, were the firing of shots into a house, without loss of life, early in April last year, and some alleged threats to the occupants of the same house in September last, for which two farmers were imprisoned for a fortnight; why the cost of an extra police force has been imposed upon Lattera; whether it is the case that the police force for whose support the people of Lattera have to pay do not even live in Lattera; and, whether he will cause the parish of Lattera to be relieved of the tax for extra police under these circumstances?

Mr. TREVELYAN: There have been other outrages in the parish of Lattera besides those mentioned in this Question. The farmers whose house was fired into in April are still subjected to a system of "Boycotting." Their house was a second time attacked in October, and so lately as January last threatening notices were posted in the vicinity, and there is apprehension of further outrage. It is for these reasons that the extra police are required. It is true that they do not actually live in the parish of Lattera; but they are exclusively employed therein, and are accommodated in the barracks in the immediate vicinity of the parish. If this plan were not adopted, it would be necessary to erect a hut, and a much heavier cost would fall on the parish.

LAW AND POLICE—PEMBROKE COLLEGE, OXFORD—ASSAULT BY STUDENTS.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to an assault recently perpetrated by Students of Pembroke College, Oxford, upon a Catholic priest who was spending the evening in the college in the rooms of some private friends; whether the account given in the "Oxford Times" of March 3rd is substantially correct, namely, that

> "undergraduate members of the college . . . provided themselves with screws and other appliances"

for screwing up the door of the chambers where the clergyman was a guest, and

> "then the men assembled beneath the windows and indulged in rough music for a couple of hours or more. Finally the Dons interfered, the door was bodily wrenched away and the priest was liberated. No sooner did he appear in the quad, with a messenger and the porter on either side, and two Dons before, and two behind to guard him, than he was pelted with oranges, apples, and other missiles, surrounded, hustled, hooted, seized, his hat knocked off, and literally kicked out of the college, his hat being thrown after him;"

and, what steps have been taken or will be taken in reference to these proceedings?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have no cognizance of these matters. The proper course for the hon. Member to pursue is to apply to the College authorities or to the local police.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked if he was to understand that violent assaults upon Her Majesty's subjects within Oxford Colleges were outside the domain of the Common Law? He should repeat the Question to-morrow.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: It is no use repeating the Question, for I shall be unable to give the hon. Member any other answer. The custodians of the peace are the local authorities, and the Home Office has no authority whatever in the matter.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—THE ASHBURNHAM MSS. — PROPOSED PURCHASE BY THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

Mr. CARBUTT asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the Government intend to buy the Ashburnham

Manuscripts; whether the price stated in the Press, viz. £160,000, is the correct price; and, whether, if that is correct, he will give an opportunity to the House to express an opinion on the matter before committing the country to so considerable an expense?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to state that Lord Ashburnham has offered to the British Museum what are known as the "four Collections" of the Ashburnham Manuscripts for £160,000. The Trustees have this offer under consideration; and if they should recommend its acceptance, in whole or in part, to Her Majesty's Government, the subject will receive the most careful attention of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister and myself. Should it be proposed to purchase any considerable part of this Collection, we shall only agree that it be paid for out of moneys to be voted by Parliament, so that the House will retain its full liberty to vote or not the necessary funds.

LAW AND POLICE—THE WANDSWORTH POLICE COURT.

MR. BULWER asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the wretched condition of the Police Court at Wandsworth, as described by the Chief Commissioner of Police at page 46 of the Appendix to his Annual Report for the year 1881; whether he has received a joint letter, dated in the month of November 1882, and addressed to him by the magistrates attached to the Courts of Hammersmith and Wandsworth, calling his attention to the unfit state of those Courts, and reciting and confirming the Report of the Chief Commissioner of Police so far as it refers to those Courts; and, whether he is prepared to take any, and, if so, what steps to provide a proper Court at Wandsworth, and to improve the condition of the Court at Hammersmith?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Yes, Sir; it is quite true that those Police Courts are in a most unsatisfactory state, and I am anxious to put them on a different footing. But there is a financial question involved in this matter, and that is who is to pay for them. There has been already a good deal of jealousy incurred owing to the Imperial funds being used for this purpose, while local Police Courts are maintained out of local rates. For the present, therefore, the matter is in abeyance.

ARMY PAY DEPARTMENT—REGIMENTAL QUARTERMASTERS.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked, Whether regimental quartermasters are denied the privilege enjoyed by other officers of the Army of becoming candidates for the Army Pay Department; and, if so, what is the reason why this important and deserving class of officers are precluded from obtaining appointments for which the nature of their duties renders them peculiarly qualified?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER: Yes, Sir; Regimental Quartermasters are not eligible for appointment to the Army Pay Department. That Department was formed in 1878, the qualifications for appointment to it being the holding the substantive rank of Captain in the Regular Forces; and the main reason of the restriction was to provide a means whereby Captains who would become subject to compulsory retirement on completing 20 years' service, or on attaining the age of 40, might be enabled to remain in the Service by joining the Pay Department. If the Pay Department were thrown open to Quartermasters it could hardly be limited to them, and such extension would practically defeat the object of the original restriction. While Captains are compulsorily retired at 40, Quartermasters are not subject to retirement until they attain the age of 55.

WOOLWICH ARSENAL—EXTRA PAY.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, seeing that the storeholders and foremen of the Control Department in the Arsenal and Dockyard at Woolwich have, on the average, given three hundred hours' extra time each, sometimes working all night, in packing and shipping stores for the Egyptian Campaign, for which extra work they have received no remuneration, they will not be allowed gratuities on the same scale as those which have been allowed to the Troops engaged in the Campaign?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: There is no analogy between the duties of a soldier in a campaign and those of a storeholder or foreman at the Royal

Arsenal; therefore, the grant of a gratuity to the former cannot form any ground for giving a similar gratuity to the latter. The question has been fully considered by the War Office, and it has been decided that the gratuity cannot be given. At the same time, Her Majesty's Government fully acknowledges the service rendered on this emergency by the storeholders and foremen in the zealous discharge of their duty.

THE BANKRUPTCY BILL—OFFICIAL RECEIVERS.

Mr. E. STANHOPE asked the President of the Board of Trade, What is the total number of official receivers which he estimates will have to be appointed under section 61 of the Bankruptcy Bill; what is his estimate of the additional staff which will be required in the office of the Board of Trade under the Bill; and, whether the new system will involve any additional charge upon the Imperial Exchequer?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: The total number of Official Receivers will be 60 —that is about the same number as there are Registrars at the present moment; but they will not necessarily be new officials, for powers are taken under the Bill to appoint Registrars and High Bailiffs if necessary. The additional number of clerks required in the Office of the Controller and at the Board of Trade will be about 30 or 40; but it is not expected that these changes will involve any additional charge upon the Exchequer.

ARMY—THE ARMY PAY DEPARTMENT.

Mr. WHITLEY asked, Whether it is true that of the Army Pay Department in the Egyptian Campaign, numbering over thirty Officers, only one has received any acknowledgment of his services, whereas other departments have been widely recognised; and, if so, what reason there is for thus passing over a department which has been officially acknowledged to have well performed its responsible duties?

Sir ARTHUR HAYTER: The duties of officers of the Pay Department are rarely such as to call for the display of those qualities which are rewarded by honorary distinctions in time of active service. They do not, as a rule, necessitate officers going under fire. As a matter of fact, Lord Wolseley only recommended Colonel Olivey, the Chief Paymaster, for a distinction, whose services were specially arduous, and he received a Companionship of the Bath; but he expressed his satisfaction in despatches at the way in which the officers of the Department performed their duties in Egypt, and they will all receive the war medal and the Egyptian Star.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS—THE EMIGRANT SHIP "OXFORD."

Sir HENRY PEEK asked the President of the Board of Trade, If his attention has been drawn to the ship "Oxford," which sailed from Plymouth on the 25th January 1883 for New Zealand with 400 emigrants, but, having been dismasted in the Bay of Biscay, was towed into Cardiff about the 16th February to refit; whether it is true the emigrants have been sent to the depôt at Devonport to await the refitting of the said ship "Oxford," and are there so crowded that three or four are compelled to sleep in one bed; whether the report that several cases of typhus fever have occurred among the emigrants is true; and, whether an allowance of 1*s.* 6*d.* per day is made to such emigrants as can lodge with their friends at Plymouth; and, if so, have such allowances been paid without deductions to such emigrants as applied; and, if not, if he would explain who is responsible for such matters, and to whom can the emigrants apply for redress?

Mr. PULESTON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether any report has reached him of the condition of the passengers of the ship "Oxford," who were sent back to the depôt in Devonport, where it is reported sickness has broken out among the emigrants owing to overcrowding and want of proper accommodation and attention?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: My attention has been called to this case, and I find that the exact number of emigrants was 302, and not 400, as stated. I am informed that typhoid fever, not typhus, broke out at Cardiff, and that one of the emigrants and two seamen were detained in consequence, while the other emigrants were brought to Plymouth. Of these, 57 returned to their homes, and some went into lodgings at Plymouth, only about 20 going into the depôt. There had been two cases in the hospital, and some cases not fatal amongst passengers lodging in the town, and not in the depôt, so that it did not appear that the disease was consequent upon insufficient accommodation or overcrowding in connection with the depôt. He was informed there were 776 separate berths in the depôt, and these were only occupied by 90 persons. Only one complaint of overcrowding has been received, and it is being investigated. The emigrants are entitled to their 1*s.* 6*d.* a-day; and if anyone does not receive it, he can at any moment apply to the Board of Trade officer on the subject.

In reply to Mr. MACLIVER,

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, the Government had no control over the depôt, which was a private venture; but he did not understand there was any complaint that could lie against the manager of the depôt in connection with this particular case.

In reply to Mr. PULESTON,

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, he was informed there was a scarcity of water on board, owing to the breakdown of one of the condensers; and he thought the doctor who was inquiring into the case was of opinion that the typhoid fever might have broken out in consequence of the use of impure water.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS—COLLISIONS AT SEA.

GENERAL OWEN WILLIAMS asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, in view of the recent disastrous collisions at sea during thick fogs, any alteration of the existing Law is in contemplation; and, if not, whether he will take into consideration the advisability of introducing a measure which will insure that, in cases of loss of life or property occasioned by steam vessels running at undue speed in thick or foggy weather, the commanders of such vessels shall be subjected to greater penalties than can at present be imposed?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Under the existing law, steam vessels are required to have both a steam whistle and a fog horn; they must go at a moderate speed, and sound their whistles frequently. Any master neglecting these rules is liable to prosecution, and any collision caused by such neglect is considered to occur by the wilful neglect of such master.

In reply to a further Question from General OWEN WILLIAMS,

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said: I do not think any case for the alteration of the existing laws has been made out.

PUBLIC HEALTH—UNSOUND MEAT—THE "ORIENT."

MR. RITCHIE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is a fact that a large quantity of meat returned from Egypt in the steamship "Orient," as being unsound, was, on its arrival in this Country, offered for sale in the London market, under the authority of the War Department; whether such meat was seized and destroyed by order of the Medical Officer of Health for the Port of London; and, whether he has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House any Correspondence which has taken place between the War Office and the Port of London Sanitary Authority on the subject?

MR. BRAND: The *Orient* took out 75 tons of frozen meat for the troops in her cold chamber, which was drawn upon up to the 6th of September, the day of her leaving Ismailia for England. At that time between 30 and 40 tons of meat were left on board, which came home. This meat was placed in a cold chamber in the Victoria Docks on discharge of the *Orient*, and a well-known firm of butchers, accustomed to deal in frozen meats, was instructed to take steps for the disposal of such as was fit for food. That firm was distinctly ordered by the Director of Contracts not to sell any of the meat that was tainted, or open to the suspicion of being tainted. Unfortunately, two samples of the meat were sent to Holborn, one of which was condemned by the District Inspector, and the other passed as sound. The whole of the meat in the cold chamber was then seized and condemned by the City Sanitary Authority. There are no reasons for laying the Correspondence on the Table.

MR. RITCHIE: Will the right hon. Gentleman say why it was that such instructions were given?

MR. BRAND: We knew that some portions of the meat were tainted.

MR. RITCHIE: I beg to give Notice that I shall move for the production of the Correspondence.

CRIMINAL LAW — CONVICTION FOR ANNOUNCING A RELIGIOUS SERVICE.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (for Mr. W. S. ALLEN) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the conviction of a Wesleyan local preacher by the magistrates at Tunstall, on the 15th of February, for ringing a bell in the streets of the town, and announcing that a religious service would be held in the Wesleyan Chapel; and, whether the conviction was in accordance with the Law; and, if so, whether he will take steps to remedy a state of things oppressive to Nonconformists?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that inquiries were being made on the subject; but as yet he did not know the result of those inquiries.

THE COMMISSIONERS FOR PATENTS— THE LAW OF COPYRIGHT.

MR. ANDERSON asked Mr. Attorney General, If he is aware that the Patents Commissioners have refused to grant copyright for a design that was both "new and original," on the ground that it was not also "ornamental;" and, if the obligation imposed in the Statute is only that it should be "new and original," and that being "ornamental" is a mere matter of opinion, on which the Patents Commissioners are not required to give any decision?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, that it was the fact that the copyrights had been refused on the ground that the designs were not ornamental. That had been the practice ever since the Master of the Rolls had decided on appeal that the Commissioners could not register a design which was not ornamental.

TREATY OF BERLIN—ARTICLE 23— THE EUROPEAN PROVINCES OF TURKEY.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether anything whatever is being done towards giving practical effect to the 23rd Article of the Treaty of Berlin, by establishing the autonomous administration of the various provinces of European Turkey as there stipulated, especially in Macedonia and Old Servia, where so many lamentable disturbances and oppressions are taking place?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: My hon. Friend is aware that I have a personal interest in the subject to which he alludes; but I regret to say that, notwithstanding the urgent appeals of Her Majesty's Government, the Porte has hitherto done nothing towards carrying out its obligations to put in force the Organic Statute drawn up by the European Commission under the Article in question.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Will the noble Lord lay on the Table the appeals that have been made to the Porte?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I shall require notice of the Question.

INDIA (INDORE)—THE SALVATIONISTS.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If it is true that Sir Lepel Griffin has issued the following order:—

> "Should the Salvationists express an intention to visit Indore, or any other Native State under this Agency, with public demonstrations or processions, with or without music, the leader is to be informed that I will not tolerate in Central India these degrading burlesques of the religion of the Ruling Power; and if any demonstration, marching, or procession, is attempted, they will be at once arrested and removed to British territory;"

whether Indore is an independent Native State, and what authority is possessed by Sir Lepel Griffin to forbid the toleration of religious beliefs and ceremonies; and, what steps he proposes to take with reference to the matter?

MR. J. K. CROSS: No information upon the subject has been received at the India Office. The Government of India have power to control the actions of Europeans in Indore, which is a Native State, in subordinate relations to that Government.

LAW AND POLICE (METROPOLIS) — CASE OF WILLIAM LOAKES, A CAB-DRIVER.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the case of William Loakes, a cab-driver, at the Southwark Police Court, as reported in the "Times" of Feb. 2, 1883, and to the state of the Law commented on by the magistrate which, while it allows cabdrivers no opportunity of selecting their passengers, but compels them to take whoever hires them, without any voucher as to respectability or means, frequently precludes them from obtaining redress when defrauded of their fare; and, whether he will take any steps to remedy the evil?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am quite aware that hardship occasionally occurs from these cases. It is the result of the Summary Jurisdiction Act, which forbids a warrant to be issued for a civil debt. That is a recent Statute passed with humane objects; and the difficulty is that it is impossible to pick out one case, and say it shall be an exception to the rule, which is applicable to all other cases.

SETTLED LAND ACT, 1882—THE RULES.

Mr. BLAKE asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether he is aware that the Rules for working "The Settled Land Act, 1882," which came into operation in Ireland on the 1st of January last, have not yet been issued, and that, consequently, persons desirous of taking advantage of the provisions of that Act have been hitherto debarred from doing so, to their serious inconvenience and expense; and, whether he can state when these Rules are likely to be issued, and who is responsible for the delay?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter), in reply, said, that the Rules under the Settled Land Act had not yet been issued, as the Judges, under whose consideration they had been, had been out of town. They would be presented immediately on their return.

SOUTH AFRICA—DISTRIBUTION OF THE FORCE.

Lord JOHN MANNERS asked the Secretary of State for War, What is the disposition of Her Majesty's Troops in South Africa, and what force is available for securing, if necessary, the due observance of the territorial arrangements of the Convention with the Transvaal?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The distribution of Her Majesty's Forces in South Africa is as follows:—At the Cape, 1,015; in Natal, 1,560; in Zululand, 430; and on the way out, 94; making a total of 3,099. The whole Force is available for any duty it may be called upon to undertake.

MADAGASCAR—ARRIVAL OF A FRENCH SQUADRON.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the reports in the "Standard" newspaper of the 9th of March, as to the arrival of a French squadron at Madagascar, and the consequent excitement and Military preparations for resistance among the Natives, and the danger to the European and Christian population, are accurate; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government will despatch British war vessels to that island to protect British interests and commerce, and will protest against aggression on the part of the French Republic?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government has, as yet, received no information as to the arrival of a French Squadron at Madagascar; but it has no reason to doubt the substantial accuracy of the intelligence. Her Majesty's ship *Dryad* is now at Tamatave. The course pursued by Her Majesty's Government will be shown in the Paper, which will be in the hands of hon. Members before Easter. I may add that a copy of the French Yellow Book, which contains some interesting information on the question, has for some days been deposited in the Library.

TREATY OF BERLIN—ARTICLES 52, 54, 55—THE DANUBIAN CONFERENCE.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If the Danubian Conference has closed its sittings; and, if he can furnish the House with any information as to the decisions arrived at?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, the Conference on the Navigation of the Danube brought its labours to a termination on Saturday. As the House is aware, the Conference met in order to give effect to the stipulations of Articles 52, 54, and 55, of the Treaty of Berlin, which are themselves a continuation of those Articles of the Treaties of 1856 and 1871, under which the principle of the freedom of navigation of the great rivers of Europe, adopted in the Final Act of the

Congress of Vienna, was applied to the Danube, and a European Commission, consisting of the Delegates of the Great Powers, was appointed to superintend the management of the river from Galatz to the sea. At Berlin, a seat on this Commission was accorded to Roumania also; because, under the other Articles of that Treaty, the seat of the Commission had become Roumanian territory, and her special interests in the navigation had been greatly increased. At the present Conference, Great Britain was accordingly willing to have given the privilege of a vote to Roumania, and to Servia also, as an interested party; but the Treaty of Berlin having expressly stipulated that the questions which came before the Conference were to be decided by the Powers Signatory of that Treaty, the two States in question were invited to attend the Conference, with a consultative voice only. Servia accepted this invitation. Bulgaria, under the terms of the Treaty of Berlin, was represented by the Plenipotentiary of Turkey; but her Delegates were accorded the right of hearing the proceedings, and the condition was made that the Turkish Plenipotentiary should make any communication, whether verbal or in writing, which they might wish to convey to the Conference. The three specific points to which the Conference directed its attention were—

"1. The extension of the jurisdiction of the European Commission from Galatz to Ibraila.

"2. The confirmation of the regulations drawn up by the European Commission, under Article 55 of the Berlin Treaty, for the control, by a Mixed Commission, of the river from Galatz or Ibraila, as the case might be, to the Iron Gates.

"3. The prolongation of the powers of the European Commission."

The decisions arrived at have been embodied in a Treaty of nine Articles, which are to the following effect:—

"Article 1. The jurisdiction of the European Commission of the Danube is extended from Galatz to Ibraila.

"Article 2. The powers of the European Commission are prolonged for a period of twenty-one years, dating from April 24, 1883. At the expiration of the said period the powers of the said Commission shall continue in force by tacit prolongation ("tacite réconduction") for successive terms of three years, unless one of the high contracting parties should notify, one year before the expiration of one of these terms of three years, the intention of proposing modifications in the constitution or in the powers of the Commission.

"Article 3. The European Commission shall exercise no effective control over those portions of the Kilia branch of which both banks belong to one of the riverain States of that branch.

"Article 4. With regard to that portion of the Kilia branch which flows between Russian and Roumanian territory, and in order to insure uniformity in the management of the Lower Danube, the regulations in force on the Sulina branch shall be applied under the superintendence of the Russian and Roumanian Delegates of the European Commission.

"Article 5. In case Russia or Roumania should undertake works in the Kilia branch, either in the part which divides their respective territories, or that which flows exclusively within the territories of either of them, the competent authority shall communicate the plans of these works to the European Commission, with the sole view of establishing that they do not interfere in any way with the navigable state of the other branches. The works which have already been carried out at the Tchatal of Ismail remain at the charge and under the control of the European Commission of the Danube. Should there be a difference of opinion between the Russian or Roumanian authorities and the European Commission respecting the plans of works to be undertaken in the Kilia branch, or a difference of opinion in that Commission respecting any extension that it might be advisable to make in the works at the Tchatal of Ismail, the case shall be submitted to the Powers direct.

"Article 6. It is understood that there shall be no restriction upon the right of Russia to levy tolls intended to cover the expenses of the works undertaken by her. Nevertheless, with the view of providing a safeguard for the reciprocal interests of the navigation on the Sulina branch and on the Kilia branch, the Russian Government will put the Governments represented in the European Commission in possession of the regulations respecting the tolls which they may think it advisable to introduce, so as to insure an understanding on the subject.

"Article 7. The regulations for navigation, river police, and superintendence drawn up on the 2nd June, 1882, by the European Commission, assisted by the Delegates of Servia and Bulgaria, are adopted in the form annexed to the present Treaty, and declared applicable to that part of the Danube which is situated between the Iron Gates and Ibraila.

"Article 8. All the Treaties, Conventions, Acts, and arrangements relating to the Danube and its mouths are maintained in all such of their provisions as are not abrogated or modified by the preceding stipulations.

"Article 9. The present Treaty shall be ratified, and the ratifications exchanged at London, within the space of six months, or sooner if possible."

By a Protocol, declared to be of equal force with the Treaty, the rights of the agents of the European Commission to circulate freely for the purposes of information, on the Kilia branch, is expressly maintained. The Plenipotentiaries also unanimously agreed that they accepted the 5th Article as meaning that the tolls should not come into operation till accepted by the Powers. The Conference further amended the regulations for the navigation of the river between the Iron Gates and Ibraila, in regard to three important points, as to which objections had been made to the original regulations by Roumania and Bulgaria—namely, the method of nominating the Sub-Inspectors of the river; the manner in which the stream was to be set out for the purposes of management; and the rotation in which the European Representative is to be sent by the European Commission to sit on the Mixed Commission. Austria-Hungary, being permanently represented on the latter, consents to abandon her right to the double representation which she otherwise would have had. I may remind the House that previously to the assembly of the Conference she had already abandoned the right she had advanced to a casting vote. These, Sir, were the decisions of the Conference. The President (Earl Granville) has been requested to convey them to the Governments of the Riverain States, and to invite their adhesion. The ratifications of the Treaty have been purposely delayed in order to give a full opportunity to the Riverain States to make themselves parties to the present settlement, and the President of the Conference has been given power by his Colleagues to summon the Conference again for a further meeting, if necessary, with the above object. I propose to lay Papers before the House at an early date; and I believe it will be the opinion of hon. Members, when they read them, that a settlement has been arrived at favourable to the interests of British commerce, and in harmony with the requirements of the case and with the public law of Europe.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS: Does it include a Protocol of the proceedings at the Conference?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Certainly.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—JUDICIAL RENTS—RETURNS.

Mr. PARNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the return of judicial rents fixed by the Land Commission during the months of September, October, and November, which was laid upon the Table of the House on the 2nd of December, will be printed and distributed amongst Members?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I am informed that the printer promises to have these Returns ready for circulation towards the end of the present week.

Mr. PARNELL: Is there any explanation for this prolonged delay, and why will they not be presented before Wednesday next, when the Motion with regard to the Land Act Amendment Bill will come on for discussion?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I think the Government are hardly responsible in this matter. The Returns for the months of September and October are long since ready for presentation; but those for November are not ready. I am willing to communicate with the Land Commissioners, to ascertain what was the cause of the delay.

Mr. PARNELL: I was under the impression that the Returns were laid on the Table in December last; but I am now informed by the Librarian that they were with regard to the two months mentioned, September and October. I would wish to ask, could we have the Table between this and Wednesday?

[No reply was given.]

EGYPT (ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION)—BRITISH OFFICERS.

Mr. M'COAN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he can state how many British Officers have been engaged, with the sanction of Her Majesty's Government, for service in the Egyptian Army and Gendarmerie; and, what are their respective rates of pay, as compared with Native Officers of similar rank?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Twenty-seven British officers have been engaged for service in the Egyptian Army, and 35 of British and other European nationalities for service in the gendarmerie and police. I am unable to inform my hon. Friend of the exact proportion between the rates of pay for European and Native officers; but the pay, as finally settled for British officers, does not differ materially from the scale suggested in the inclosure in Sir Edward Malet's despatch of October 31 (Egypt No. 2, 1883, p. 7). With regard to the gendarmerie and police, full information as to the rates of pay, both for Europeans and Natives, is contained in a despatch from Lord Dufferin, which will be included in the Papers which, I hope, will be in the hands of hon. Members before the Recess.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT—SEC. 31—LOANS.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, in view of the difficulties which, in the opinion of the Treasury, prevent the issue of joint loans under the 31st section of the Land Law Act to tenants valued under £10, the valuation required by a rule of the Treasury could be reduced to £5, and the minimum amount of each loan to £20, instead of £50, at which it now stands?

MR. COURTNEY: I think my hon. and learned Friend and the House generally will agree with me that it is necessary to secure the due application of loans to tenants. Having regard to this consideration the Government have come to the conclusion that no Government Department, however constituted, could administer the numerous and minute transactions which would arise if the limits proposed in the Question were adopted. We have, however, seen our way to a modification of the rule, which will allow loans to be made in certain cases where the valuation is as low as £7 a-year, provided always that the security is sufficient. I may mention that applications for these loans are being received at the rate of more than 120 a week, and that of these Connaught supplies its full share.

Subsequently,

MR. COURTNEY said, he wished to explain that the reduction of the conditions of loans to tenants, by which tenants of £7 valuation were eligible, must be regarded as experimental.

MR. PARNELL: I wish to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, where a tenant is in occupation of one or more holdings coming up to the valuation of £10, will he consider the desirability of permitting such a tenant to borrow in respect of the improvements of one of these holdings?

MR. COURTNEY: I will have that question considered.

INDIA—GOLD MINING COMPANIES—GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If his attention has been called to the article in last week's financial journal "Money," which states that a number of gold mining enterprises that have resulted disastrously for the public were promoted by Indian officials; and, what steps he intends to take in the matter, and when the Papers on the subject will be circulated among Members?

MR. J. K. CROSS: I have seen the article referred to in the Question; but we have no information beyond that contained in the Papers presented to Parliament on the Motion of the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), which will be in the hands of hon. Members in a few days. I am not aware that it is the intention of the Government to take any further steps in the matter.

INDIA—MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL—NON-OFFICIAL EUROPEAN MEMBERS.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Who is the European unofficial member of the Madras Legislative Council, and to what commercial firm does he belong?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The non-official additional members of the Council of the Governor of Madras, who are not Natives of India, are Mr. Coleman and Mr. Alexander Mackenzie. The latter gentleman is a partner of the firm of Arbuthnot and Co.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION) — MISSION OF THE LATE PROFESSOR PALMER.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If his attention has been called to the letter of Mr. Blunt in the "Times" of the 10th instant, in reference to his recent explanation of the objects of Professor Palmer's mission; whether, in particular, his attention has been called to Mr. Blunt's statement that the private diaries of Professor Palmer and Captain Gill prove—

1. "That Mr. Palmer's mission, as intrusted to him by Lord Northbrook in June, was one of wide purport, wholly unconnected with the purchase of camels or the hiring of transport:

2. "That it had for its ultimate, if not its immediate, object the bribing of certain Bedouin tribes:

3. "That Mr. Palmer did in fact promise money with this object:

4. "That he travelled, not as an Englishman, but disguised and under an assumed name:

5. "That, on the 6th of August, he received from Captain Gill, at Suez, £20,000 in gold, distinctly for the Bedouins; and

6. "That the purchase of camels was an afterthought, connected only with his last journey, and only accidentally with his mission:"

and, what steps he intends to take in the matter?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, my attention has been called to Mr. Blunt's letter in *The Times*, and to his statement that certain facts are proved by the private diaries of Professor Palmer and Captain Gill. As to the facts of the case, Sir, the explanation which I recently gave to the House is true in every particular. Mr. Palmer's mission certainly extended beyond the purchase of camels and hiring of transports, inasmuch as its object was that he should ascertain the disposition of the Bedouins, and use his well-known influence with them in order to conciliate them and obtain their support for the protection of the Canal should necessity arise. No money was given to him for the "bribing of the tribes," nor was he authorized to promise it. I am not aware that anyone has ever asserted that Mr. Palmer travelled as an Englishman; he wore the dress he had previously worn among the Bedouins, and went by the name he was usually known by among them, so that there was no concealment in the matter. He was not instructed on his journey from Gaza to Suez to hire any camels; when, however, he left Suez on the subsequent journey, which ended so disastrously, he had instructions to procure camels, and received £3,000 for the purpose, as I explained on a former occasion. With regard to the assertion that he received from Captain Gill at Suez £20,000 in gold for the Bedouins, there is no truth in it. Neither Captain Gill nor Mr. Palmer received any such sum for this or any other purpose. I stated the other day that Sir William Hewett, the Admiral at Suez, had asked for money to meet the general expenses of his command, and especially to prepare for the Indian Contingent, which was soon to arrive. A sum of £20,000 was sent to him—£10,000 from Sir Beauchamp Seymour and £10,000 from Admiral Hoskins—for the general purposes of the service. The money was sent by the Canal in a picket boat under the charge of a Naval officer, who would deliver it to Sir William Hewett. It is possible that Captain Gill, on his journey from Ismailia to Suez, may have travelled as a passenger on this boat; but, if so—and this is pure conjecture—he had nothing whatever to do with the money or its destination. I cannot too strongly assert that the sending of the money in question had nothing whatever to do with Professor Palmer's mission, beyond the fact that £3,000 was subsequently given to him by Sir William Hewett for the hire of camels. I may add that I have had the advantage to-day of conferring with Lord Alcester and Sir Anthony Hoskins, who confirm in every detail the statement I have now repeated to the House. I think it right to say, in concluding my reply, that I have Mrs. Palmer's authority for stating that her late husband's journal is not public property; that she has not authorized the public use of any part of it; and that whatever is known of it by Mr. Blunt was made known to him on the express condition that it should not be made public.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked whether, in view of the grave importance and the seriousness of the charges, the hon. Gentleman would consult with the Government as to the advisability of procuring the publication of such portions of the diaries of Professor Palmer and Captain Gill as related to the mission of those gentlemen, which ended so disastrously for them?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have stated to the House, on the authority of the only persons who could have furnished this sum of money, that they did not furnish it. I have repeated that several times, so that I do not think I have anything to add.

POLICE (METROPOLIS)—REMOVAL OF INJURED HORSES.

Mr. LONG asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can take any steps to give the police power to interfere in the cases of horses suffering from injuries received from accidents in the streets, and prevent them having to lie in pain, often for several hours, before the knacker arrives to destroy them?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, in the opinion of the Chief

Commissioner, the police had not, as a rule, sufficient special knowledge to enable them to undertake those duties; but instructions would be given that care would be taken to have such animals despatched as soon as possible, and carcases moved.

HARBOUR ACCOUNTS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the President of the Board of Trade, When the undermentioned Papers and Accounts, which, under various Acts of Parliament, should have been already presented to Parliament, will be laid upon the Table:—Ramsgate Harbour, Annual Statement; British White Herring Fishery Report, and Piers and Quays (Scotland) Annual Account; Shoreham Harbour Account, and the Piers and Harbours (Great Britain and Ireland) Account?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, the Board of Trade, as far as he could find, was responsible for only one of the Papers mentioned—that relating to the Ramsgate Harbour; and in this case it had been usual to present the Papers in July or August in each year. He was endeavouring to secure an earlier publication.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT—MEDALS FOR FEMALE NURSES.

Dr. FARQUHARSON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the female nurses employed during the recent military operations in Egypt will receive the medal for the campaign?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The medal for the Campaign in Egypt is granted only to those who served in Egypt between the 16th of July and the 14th of September, 1882. The female nurses of the Army Medical Department who served in Egypt during that period have received the medal.

NAVY—ROYAL NAVAL ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS.

Sir JOHN JENKINS asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether any decision has been taken by the Admiralty as to the future organization of the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers as to the supply of guns and boats for drills, and as to the payment of a capitation grant to duly qualified men?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN asked the hon. Member to wait for an answer until Thursday, when the Navy Estimates would be introduced.

DOMINION OF CANADA—EMIGRATION OF PAUPER CHILDREN TO CANADA.

Sir JOHN HAY asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he has received information that the Government of the Dominion of Canada has arranged for a special registration and inspection of the infant and young children immigrants from this Country at the ports of arrival; and, if he will give directions that a nominal record of such children be kept by the officers employed under the Board of Trade in this Country in the Emigration Department, so that the locality of these children may be more readily traced by parents and guardians interested in their welfare?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, the Canadian Government proposed to make arrangements for the annual inspection of pauper children sent to Canada by the Boards of Guardians in this country. If these arrangements were carried out, in the opinion of the Canadian authorities, there would be no difficulty in tracing the whereabouts of every child.

EAST INDIA—CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (NATIVE JURISDICTION OVER BRITISH SUBJECTS).

Mr. ONSLOW asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been called to the alarming statements regarding the universal feeling of Europeans and Eurasians in India against the Criminal Procedure Bill, which has been introduced in India with the sanction of the late Secretary of State for India; and, whether he would not consider it most advisable, in order to maintain the growing good feeling between the Natives and Europeans which has been so conspicuous of late years, to telegraph at once to the Viceroy to withdraw the Bill?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Without entering into a discussion of the exact description given by this Question, or writing to confirm it, we are aware that there has been dissatisfaction in India, and the attention of the Government has been called to it; but we do not think it our duty to instruct the Viceroy to withdraw the Bill. The Papers relating to the Bill will be laid on the Table, and no further steps in regard to it will be taken in due course until November, so that there will be ample time for the consideration of the merits of the question.

Mr. ONSLOW: In consequence of the view expressed by the people of India, will not the Prime Minister urge upon the Viceroy to come to a decision before November? Does he not consider it a very grave and serious matter to keep this sore open until November?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Her Majesty's Government will give their best attention to the Question of the hon. Member; but certainly we could not give a pledge of that kind to the hon. Member, nor do I see on the face of the case how I can give any other answer to the hon. Member.

Mr. ONSLOW: Before Easter I shall repeat the Question.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1870—INTERPRETATION BY THE COURT OF APPEAL.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the following statement made by Mr. Justice O'Hagan on the subject of the Land Law Act and its interpretation by the Court of Appeal—

> "I declare it would baffle any human intellect to know what is now to be deemed an unreasonable or unfair covenant, having regard to the Act of 1870. It has been held by the Court of Appeal that a covenant absolutely debarring a tenant, on any pretence, from making improvements is not unfair;"

and, whether he is prepared to introduce a measure for the purpose of amending the Act?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The Question of the hon. Member purports to be an extract from a Judgment or judicial Opinion delivered by Mr. Justice O'Hagan, and substantially the Opinion conveyed in the former part of that extract, down to the full stop, is accurate. It is not the basis of an Opinion; it is what is called at *obiter dictum*, but it does not convey a judicial Opinion. With regard to the latter part of the extract, that is not quite so. It is incomplete, and does not convey his Opinion. With regard to the last part of the Question, as the Bill stands immediately for second reading in relation to the Amendment of the Land Act on Wednesday next, I had better postpose until that day any reference to the subject.

MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND AGRICULTURE.

Mr. MONK asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is now prepared to make any announcement to the House in reference to the appointment of a Minister of Commerce and Agriculture?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir. I am not at all surprised at the Question of my hon. Friend. The House will remember that Her Majesty's Government were prepared, in the early part of last Session, to make a proposal to the House, in redemption of the pledge given by them at a former time, that separate arrangements would be made in the organization of the Government for the affairs of agriculture, apart from the affairs of trade, and the functions of the Committee for Education of the Privy Council. The Mission of Lord Spencer to Ireland, under very special circumstances, with regard to which it was not possible at first to say whether it would be of a provisional character or endure for a considerable time, threw into a state of suspense the whole arrangements. But that provisional state of things is at an end. Lord Spencer now holds the Viceroyalty of Ireland in the same way as any other Viceroy, as far as the duration of his Office is concerned. That being so, it will be the duty of the Government to submit a proposal when the proper time comes—that is to say, before the House is asked to vote any of the salaries connected with the present establishments that are involved in the question. Of course, I will take care that the particulars of the plan of the Government are fully stated to the House in a convenient manner, so that the House may be in a position to judge when they come to the consideration of these Votes.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Am I to understand that Lord Spencer will no longer continue to hold the Office of Lord President of the Council?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I think, certainly, it will be our duty to make other arrangements for the holding of that Office, which, down to the present time, has been in Lord Spencer's hands.

Mr. R. H. PAGET: May I ask whether it is the intention of the Government to ask for a Vote in the course of this year for these salaries?

MR. GLADSTONE: We shall ask the House this year to provide the salaries under the new arrangements. Full notice will be given to the House with respect to the new arrangement of salaries.

SOUTH AFRICA—AFFAIRS IN THE TRANSVAAL.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is now able to announce to the House the course which Her Majesty's Government intend to pursue with respect to the Transvaal?

MR. GLADSTONE: In answer to this Question, what I have to say is this. We have at the present time upon the Votes an important Motion to be proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), in relation to the policy pursued, and to be pursued, on the Western Frontier of the Transvaal. We have considered our course with regard to that Motion, and shall be fully prepared to state it to-morrow, when the debate comes on. Besides that Motion, there is a general Motion to be proposed by the right hon. Gentleman himself (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), embracing, perhaps, the subject-matter of the hon. and learned Gentleman's Motion, and likewise the general subject. When the right hon. Gentleman places on the Notice Paper the terms of his Motion, it will then be our duty, in like manner, to give it our best consideration, and we shall be prepared to state our views to the House upon it; but, certainly, I am not prepared to make any statement at the present moment, even if I had Notice, with regard to a Motion of the character and tendency and terms of which I know nothing.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: My Question is in reference to the policy which the Government intend to pursue; but, of course, I do not press it at present after the answer of the right hon. Gentleman. At the commencement of the Session I gave Notice of my intention to move a Resolution on the general subject, and the terms of it are as follows:—

> "That the policy adopted by Her Majesty's Government in the Transvaal has failed to secure the observance of the obligations undertaken by the Boers in the Convention of 1881, and to provide for the due discharge of the responsibilities of this country with regard to the Native tribes."

I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will afford me facilities for the discussion of the Motion on an early day after Easter? I will repeat the Question to-morrow, if it will be more convenient. With regard to the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, it appears to me that as that Motion relates to one part of this question, and occupies but the second place on the Notice Paper, it is quite impossible that either a sufficient discussion could be had or a satisfactory decision arrived at to-morrow on the whole question of the policy in the Transvaal.

MR. GLADSTONE: Of course, it is not for me to enter into the question as between the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues round him and hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, who have different Motions under their charge on this question, which do not appear to be in perfect concert with one another. I have no concern with that matter; but my duty is to look to the regularity of Business in the House; and I am bound to say that, until I see what progress we make in the debate to-morrow night, which I suppose will come on, I shall not be able to make any declaration on the subject of the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. RITCHIE, after the statement of the Prime Minister, wished to ask the hon. and learned Member for Chatham whether, in the circumstances, he would proceed with his Motion?

MR. GORST: I have had no Notice whatever of this Question; but if my hon. Friend will repeat it to-morrow I shall be happy to give him an answer.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask the Prime Minister, Whether there is any intention of proceeding this evening with the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill? I will also ask the President of the Board of Trade if he has any intention of going on with his Motion relating to the Channel Tunnel? I should, at the same time, like to know on what day a Vote on Account will be taken?

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the President of the Board of Trade, if he had any intention of proceeding with the Bankruptcy Bill before Easter?

Mr. WADDY asked after what hour the Court of Criminal Appeal Bill and the Criminal Code (Indictable Offences Procedure) Bill would not be taken?

Mr. GLADSTONE: In answer to the last Question, we will not proceed with them after 12 o'clock. With regard to the Motion of my right hon. Friend on the Channel Tunnel, it is desirable that that Motion should be made, if it is possible to get through Supply in sufficient time; but as there is an Amendment, it cannot be made after half-past 12. The House wished to hear, and I promised to give, an explanation as soon as the Supplemental Estimates were passed, with regard to the course of Business during the time that remained before the Easter Recess, and the probable date of that Recess. With respect to the course of Business, our desire is to take the Army Vote to-night, and the Navy Vote on Thursday; and, if it should be possible, to take also on Thursday a Vote on Account. I draw a distinction between a first Vote on Account and any other Vote on Account, because, under the existing circumstances of our financial arrangements, a first Vote on Account is material, and an absolute necessity, and may be regarded as formal. We are very desirous to go forward with the second reading of Bills which are to be referred, under the arrangements understood by the House, to the new Standing Committees. With regard to the Recess, the case stands thus. If we sit until Thursday of next week, the time at the disposal of the Government will be Monday evening, and I will not say Thursday evening, because I think there will be great objection to sitting on that evening. We should be bound to consider the convenience of the House, so as—in the extreme case—to sit only on Thursday morning. That will be the case as far as the Government are concerned. If the House were to adjourn on Tuesday, the course usually taken has been that the Sitting on Tuesday should be a Morning Sitting, and, if a Morning Sitting, available for Government Business. The question, therefore, is between adjourning on Tuesday or on Thursday, and that is a question rather for the House than the Government to consider, because it makes no practical difference as regards the prosecution of the Business of the Government. But, unless we have reason to believe otherwise, we should be inclined to assume that an adjournment on Tuesday would be the course more acceptable to the House. The day to which we should propose to adjourn would be the Thursday following Easter Sunday.

In reply to Mr. Dixon-Hartland,

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, that he was not without hopes that he should be able to proceed with the Bankruptcy Bill before Easter.

Mr. ONSLOW asked whether the Prime Minister would guarantee that the Parliamentary Oaths Act (1866) Amendment Bill would not be taken on the first day after the Easter Recess?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he would guarantee that. That request was a reasonable one. The Bill in question should be the first Order of the Day when it was taken for second reading.

Mr. RITCHIE asked the Prime Minister when the Bill for the better Government of London would be introduced?

Mr. GLADSTONE: We will give due notice to the House, and, in the present state of Business, that is the only pledge I can give.

PARLIAMENT — PUBLIC BUSINESS — VOTES ON ACCOUNT—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he wished to call attention to a point of Order, which arose out of the statement which the Prime Minister had just made in reference to the order of Business. The right hon. Gentleman said he proposed, if possible, to take a Vote of Credit on Thursday, and the Question he (Mr. O'Connor) wished to put to the Speaker was—Whether the proposal to go into Committee for the purpose of taking a Vote on Account would preclude any hon. Member from opposing the Motion to leave the Chair either on Thursday or on that day week?

Mr. SPEAKER: If a Vote on Account should be proposed, either on Monday or Thursday, I should consider that, in pursuance of the Standing Order with regard to Supply, I should be bound to leave the Chair at once.

SUPPLY—ARMY ESTIMATES—IRRELEVANCE OF AMENDMENTS.

Mr. SPEAKER: Before the House passes to the Order of the Day, I think it is right I should state that the Amendments, on going into Committee on the Army Estimates, which stand in the names of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), and the hon. and learned Member for Rye (Mr. Inderwick), cannot properly be moved, on the ground that they are not relative to the class of Votes about to be considered.

Dr. CAMERON: On the point of Order, may I ask if I can raise the subject of my Notice when we get into Committee of Supply?

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not for the Speaker to say what will be either in or out of Order in the Committee of Supply.

Dr. CAMERON: Then I beg to give Notice that, on the first available opportunity, I will bring the matter before the House.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—ARMY ESTIMATES, 1883-4.

DEPARTMENTAL STATEMENT.

Supply—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The Statement which it is my duty to make in moving the 1st Vote will differ considerably from the Statements which have recently been made by my right hon. Friend my Predecessor in Office, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. It has been the duty of my right hon. Friend to explain to the House the nature and scope of very considerable changes which it has been his duty to introduce into the organization of the Army, and to state to the Committee the progress which has been made in solving a great many of the problems which have presented themselves relating to Army organization. The Committee will recollect that not long after the Statement of my right hon. Friend, in March last, the energies of the whole of the War Department were concentrated for several months upon the military operations which have taken place in Egypt, and their attention continued to be absorbed in those affairs until the close of the year. It was only in December that I assumed the Office I now have the honour to hold; and at that time the officials of the War Office, both political and permanent, were anxious to obtain some repose—the political officials after the labours of the Autumn Session, and the permanent officials of the War Department after the heavy labours thrown on them in connection with the Egyptian Expedition. There has, therefore, been very little time for me to devote my attention to any considerable changes in Army organization; and probably there are many matters to which hon. Members may desire to call attention connected with the subject with which I have been able to make myself only imperfectly acquainted. My present duty, consequently, is to lay before the Committee, as clearly as I can, a view of the present condition of the Army, and to detail, I hope at no great length, but as well as I am able, the present state and condition of the Army, and to state what has been accomplished with regard to it since my right hon. Friend made his Statement last year. Turning to the Estimates which have been laid before the Committee, and especially with reference to the Vote I am about to move, as to the number of men, hon. Members will observe, with reference to this Vote, that there is an apparent increase in the number of men asked for of 4,727 over that voted last year. A portion of this increase is accounted for by the fact that the permanent staff of the Yeomanry Cavalry and of the Infantry Volunteers is now included in this Vote for the first time. When that permanent staff consisted of pensioners it was not available for general service, and therefore it was not borne upon this Vote; but as it is now available for general service, it has been thought right to show the whole numbers in Vote A. The greater part of the non-commissioned officers now form part of the ordinary Army Establishment, and are available for general service. Of the remainder of the increase 2,600 men are accounted for by the re-arrangement of the lower Establishments of Infantry battalions, which it would be more convenient I should refer to by-and-bye. That leaves only 385 men to be accounted for. A considerable portion of the remainder is accounted for by a re-arrangement of Establishments of no great importance. The only increase of any considerable magnitude to which I need call the attention of the Committee is the proposed increase in the *cadres* of the Commissariat and Transport Corps. It was found in making the arrangements for the Expedition to Egypt that considerable difficulty existed in providing for even a small amount of transport for the despatch of the advanced portion of the Army Corps, and of providing regimental transport. My right hon. Friend who preceded me proposed to make some effort to remedy this state of affairs; and it is now proposed to retain some 500 animals, horses and mules—a portion of those purchased out of the Egyptian Vote of Credit—as a permanent addition to the Commissariat and Transport Departments in this country. It is intended to minimize, as much as possible, the cost of this addition to our Transport Service by employing these animals in duties at the large military stations, and also, to a certain extent, at the Naval Dockyards, thus effecting a saving in the cost of hired transport in those establishments. It is further proposed to add to the *cadres* of the Transport Corps officers and non-commissioned officers sufficient for six additional companies, employing a certain number of men from the regiments first for service to be trained and temporarily employed as drivers. This proposal is in accordance with the plan proposed by the Departmental Committee which was appointed by my right hon. Friend to consider this question, and this is the plan which it is now proposed to provide for in the Estimates for the present year. But I have to state to the Committee that considerable objection has been taken to this plan by the military authorities. In the first place, they strongly object to the absorption in temporary services of so large a number of men as 500 in the new Transport Service, and they also greatly prefer a system of regimental transport in time of peace. They undertake to perform the same work by means of a system of regimental transport as the Transport Corps has undertaken to perform, and before the matter can be finally settled I have a great desire to weigh thoroughly the advantages of the two schemes which have been put forward; and, therefore, I feel myself under the necessity of appointing another Committee, composed of military as well as departmental officers, to consider the two schemes, and to see whether that which finds favour in the eyes of the military authorities can be adopted without entailing any greater expense than that put forward by the Departmental Committee. The proposal which will be embraced in the Estimates in regard to this matter is, therefore, not a final one. The Committee will observe that the financial result upon these Estimates shows an increase of £148,000 over those of last year. That amount is almost exactly the amount of the addition caused by providing for the training of the Irish Militia. There are, however, slight variations on both sides of the account, the net result of which, I regret to say, shows a larger increase of public expenditure than the figures I have just mentioned would indicate. The transport arrangements are estimated to cost £23,000 gross, or £9,000 net, the difference between the two sums being met by an estimated saving of £14,000 in hired transport. Of this, however, £8,000 would be a saving on the Navy Vote; so that the arrangements in respect of this matter show an increase of charge on the Army Votes of £17,000. But, on the other hand, the Navy Votes have assumed a very much larger charge. They will in future provide gun-carriages and fittings, electrical and torpedo stores, which have hitherto been provided from the Army Votes; the Army, on the other hand, only taking on themselves from the Admiralty the charge for boats for submarine mining. The net result of these transfers is that the Navy demand is reduced by £115,000, as compared with the corresponding demand last year. That was, however, £247,000 in excess of that for the previous year; and the transfer to which I have referred leaves the Navy charge about £500,000. That is the charge for ordnance and other stores, which is always stated in these Estimates. It is contended, I believe, by the War Department that the Navy charges should considerably exceed this amount; but that is not a matter which I will go into at present. There is, however, I am sorry to say, no reduction whatever on the total charge upon the Exchequer. The £115,000 to which I have just alluded will have to be met from the Navy Votes; and the amount that should have been saved on the Army Votes will, within £20,000, have to be taken for various purposes that have to be provided for. The principal of these are—the supply of prismatic powder for large guns, the store of which, owing to recent experiments, has been kept extremely low; an increase for the small arms ammunition, for the purpose of allowing a larger amount of ammunition to be used in practice than hitherto, for providing torpedo vessels, and for accoutrements, the pattern of which has been recently decided upon. Another item in aid of these Estimates is the contribution of India towards the non-effective charges. This question has been for some time under the consideration of the Treasury, the India Office, and the War Office. In past years it has been the practice to apply in aid of Revenue the capitalized value of the pensions chargeable to India, as the Indian Government preferred to make payment in that form. It has now been decided that the Army Estimates shall have credit for the estimated charge for the pensions for the year. The sum taken last year was considerably short of the charge. The Estimates now have been corrected, and an additional sum of £130,000 is credited to the Army on this account. I may here mention, although it does not largely affect the Vote, that provision has been made to meet the cases of several classes of officers which have been recently brought under the consideration of the War Department, and as to which representations have been made—namely, on behalf of the officers of the Pay Department, the Veterinary Department, and the Quartermaster Sergeant's. In all these cases warrants have been prepared for the sanction of the Treasury, and provision has been made for them in these Estimates. My hon. Friend the Financial Secretary will, if necessary, explain the details of what it is proposed to do; and I hope it will be found that the proposals to be made to the Treasury will meet the just claims of these classes of officers, and be in every way satisfactory. The remaining increases of expenditure to which it is necessary to refer are increases over which the War Department have practically no control; they are the unavoidable results of the development of the organization which has been sanctioned by Parliament, and of the warrants which have also been sanctioned in recent years. The growth of the Reserve costs £48,000; for additional Deferred Pay £20,000 has to be provided; and the increases spread over the whole of the Army Departments on account of Leap Year amount to about £31,000.

I come now to the condition of the Army. The Committee will observe that the Inspector General of Recruiting has pointed out in his Report, which is before the House, that in the last year—1882—the waste of the Army has exceeded the increase. This has been due partly to exceptional causes. A very large number of men enlisted in 1870 under the Act of 1867, and these men completed their period of service last year. The normal causes of decrease—namely, deaths, desertions, discharge by purchase, invaliding—remain either stationary, or show a slight improvement. This subject, although I do not wish to go into any details upon it, is so important that there are one or two facts to which it may be desirable to call the attention of the Committee. Looking to the future of the Army, the most important point to be considered is the rate of waste among the young soldiers in the first years of their service. I am happy to say that that waste is not progressing, but that there is a remarkable improvement in this respect. In 1878 the waste of men enlisted in that and two previous years was 270 per 1,000; in 1881, the waste of men in that and two previous years was 208 per 1,000; in 1882, the last year for which we have received a Return, the waste was 146 per 1,000; showing an improvement of 124 per 1,000, or a reduction of nearly one-half of the waste that prevailed in 1878 among our youngest soldiers. It will thus be seen that the improvement which took place between 1878 and 1881 has been continued up to 1882, and that the waste last year was only 146 per 1,000. Coming to recruiting, the Report shows that the numbers have fallen off as compared with the last few years; but the diminution has been entirely confined to the Infantry. Last year we recruited for the Infantry 15,279 men, as compared with 17,581 in 1880, and 19,175 in 1881. The causes to which this falling off is to be attributed are in part the improvement in trade, in part the greater care now taken in enlisting, and the greater strictness of the medical examination. But there are other causes which made last year a somewhat peculiar one. There is no doubt that the mobilization of 10,000 men of the Reserve had a tendency to check recruiting; because the withdrawal of 10,000 from industrial occupations of course provided a considerable amount of employment for that class of men who would otherwise have been the class to come forward and enlist for the Army. Then, also, the suspension of transfers from the ranks to the Reserve during the last six months of the year put a stop to what is, perhaps, the best advertisement of the Army—that is to say, the return of the men entering the Reserve with their deferred pay, which would amount, in some cases, to £18, and which is naturally a considerable inducement to other men to enlist with the prospect of obtaining the same advantage. But there is no doubt that the main cause of the falling-off in recruiting in the past year was the decision taken early last year to raise the lowest standard of age for the recruits. My right hon. Friend raised the limit of age from 18 to 19 years, or to what is termed the physical equivalent of 19; so that no soldier should go out to India, or enter on foreign service, until he had reached 20, and has had one year's service. There is no doubt that this decision has caused a considerable loss in recruits. The age between 18 and 19 is an age at which many young men have not decided upon their permanent and future employment; and many young men are willing to enlist at that time, who, when they are rejected, seek some other form of employment, and, perhaps, will never come forward again for enlistment into the Army. On looking at these two circumstances—the abnormal drain which the Army is undergoing, and the difficulty which has been found in recruiting—the Inspector General has recommended that greater latitude should be given to recruiting officers and medical officers with regard to the age at which recruits may be taken. It is not proposed to revert altogether to a lower standard of age; but these officers, having acquired very considerable experience and being thoroughly to be relied on, may be allowed to have some greater latitude in this respect than that which they now possess, so that they shall not be compelled to reject recruits who appear in all respects likely to make valuable and useful soldiers, even if they do not at the moment of enlistment satisfy the conditions of having reached the age of 19, or its exact physical equivalent. If this measure should not succeed, it will become necessary to consider whether we should not go back to the age of 18; but that would be a retrograde step, and one which I should be most unwilling to take unless the necessity for it is most clearly proved. I do not think we can be satisfied that the recruiting capacity of the country has been fully developed. Under the old system of bounty, no attempt was made to work recruiting systematically or scientifically. Bounty has now been discarded altogether, and the present system is a vast machine for obtaining the services of men throughout the country who may be available for the Army. The country is divided into districts under the officers commanding regimental districts. These districts are again sub-divided under non-commissioned officers. No attempt is made to entrap men under any false pretence into the Service; but, on the other hand, every effort is made to make known the advantages and the terms of service widely throughout the country, so that every man who is in a position to offer his services to the country shall know the terms on which he is able to do so, and what are the inducements held out to him. Under this system a great deal—in fact, I may say almost everything—depends on the thorough organization of the system; and although, no doubt, very great progress has been made, there is some reason to doubt whether the officers commanding regimental districts are even yet fully aware how much depends upon the thorough organization and efficiency of the recruiting arrangements of their district. The attention of general officers and of commanding officers of districts will be called anew to this point; and by the adoption of a system of confidential Reports by general officers on officers commanding regimental districts, it is hoped that greater efficiency and greater emulation among them will prevail.

My right hon. Friend last year explained the measures he had taken in order to remedy the defect which had shown itself in former wars of no great magnitude, such as the war in South Africa. That defect was the difficulty of placing a small force in the field without sending out immature or untrained men, or without resorting to the objectionable system of transfer from battalions at home. With the object of remedying this defect, my right hon. Friend added 3,000 men to the Establishment of the Infantry, and raised the 12 battalions first on the roster for foreign service from 720 to 950. These, with the Brigade of Guards and the six battalions in the Mediterranean garrisons, will form the Infantry of an Army Corps, which will be ready to be despatched, almost at a day's notice, in the event of war. It was estimated that each battalion would give a strength of 800 men, after rejecting all men under 20 and under one year's service. My right hon. Friend explained that this increase from 720 to 950 was necessarily effected by adding a very large number of recruits. He also said that in March there would be a larger number of young soldiers than was desirable. That, however, was a condition of things that would improve every month. In July, time was still required to harden these battalions into a condition to take the field without assistance from the Reserve. But when the Expedition had to be sent to Egypt, although the method had been in operation so short a time, it was only necessary to draft 600 Reserve men for the Home battalions and 900 men for those from Malta and Gibraltar, to bring up the strength of each battalion to 800 men ready to take the field.

The Committee may like to have some information with regard to the Reserve men called out in July. The Reserves then called out were the Reserves of a year and a-half—that is to say, men who had joined the Reserve in the year 1881, and during the first half of 1882. The Reserves of those years should have furnished 11,649. There presented themselves 11,032, or 94 per cent. Ninety-six per cent were satisfactorily accounted for, so that there were only 4 per cent unaccounted for. After deducting those unfit for service, there remained 10.582 who actually joined the Colours. One thousand five hundred joined the Home and Mediterranean battalions; 2,200 were sent out to form depôts; and 2,200 were absorbed in the formation of second depôts, which were prepared, but not sent out. There volunteered for the Army Hospital Corps and the Transport Corps 460, leaving available for the establishment of a third Division, if it were necessary to send it out, 3,340 men. There still remained available of Reserve men not called out, 17,000 of the First Class Army Reserve, and 27,000 of the Militia Reserve. The Committee may wish to know what measures were taken on the demobilization of the Reserve. The course has been adopted of discharging the men on furlough, with 1*s.* a-day for pay and 6*d.* a-day for ration allowance, six weeks before demobilization, so that they, while looking out for fresh employment, may not be left destitute until they can obtain it, but may be able to return home with some money in their pockets. They were discharged, as I say, on a furlough for six weeks, receiving 1*s.* a-day and 6*d.* a-day for ration allowance. The amount the men receive on discharge is actually about £4 3*s.*, made up in the following way:—Deferred pay, 2*d.* a-day; 123 days, £1; furlough pay, six weeks, 1*s.* 6*d.* a-day, £3 3*s.*; in addition to a gratuity of £2, which will be received by those men who actually served in Egypt. The separation allowances of the families of the men on service were also increased, and those allowances were supplemented in cases where it was desired by the men by stoppages from their pay; and I believe considerable satisfaction has been caused by the increased allowances in this respect. A scheme is also under consideration for placing at the disposal of the Commissioners of the Patriotic Fund certain moneys which will enable them to grant pensions to the widows and children of men who lose their lives in or by the Service. Before I leave the Reserves, I will state to the Committee the actual and prospective numbers of the Reserve. The growth of the Reserve has, of course, been affected by the war. On the 1st of January, 1882, it stood at 24,085; during the latter half of the year, of course, the flow of men into the Reserve was altogether checked, and it stood on the 31st of January, 1883, at 19,687. There were, however, at that time about 6,000 men on furlough who were not reckoned as serving in the Reserve, so that the actual number of men in the Reserve at present is probably 25,687. It is calculated to reach, in the course of this year, 31,000. Provision has been made in the present Estimates for a Supplemental Reserve—that is to say, for a Reserve composed of men who have completed their service in the Army Reserve, and who, if they choose, may volunteer for four years more, at 4*d.* a-day with their usual pay. That Reserve will only be called out after all the other Reserves have been called out. It is, of course, uncertain how many men will avail themselves of this privilege; but provision has been made for enrolling 2,500 men. Thus it may be stated that under the present system, when it has arrived at a fair condition of working order, it will be, in the first place, possible to despatch an Army Corps, or any less body of men, with great rapidity, and without calling in any degree upon the Reserve; and, in the second place, for larger and more protracted operations there will be a Reserve which is already of respectable dimensions, which is increasing, and which is capable of being increased. This Reserve is not only available to a very large percentage of its normal strength, but it is also well drilled and efficient. Some progress has, therefore, been made in rendering our Army capable of satisfying what, undoubtedly, is the first requirement of an Army—namely, the providing for active service at a short notice a body of efficient, well-drilled men. But our Army has a great deal to do besides this. It has to provide trained drafts for an Army, roughly speaking, of 60,000 men in India, and for a force of 25,000 men in the Colonies. It also has to provide the garrisons at home, and, at present, a force of 27,000 men in Ireland; and it cannot be denied that for an Army whose organization is now directed to the formation of an efficient Army Reserve the strain is somewhat severe. At present, as I have already pointed out, it is exposed to an abnormal drain by losing a large number of men who enlisted under the old system, and, at the same time, by beginning to feel the full force of the annual loss arising from the short-service system. The drain which has always been caused by desertion, by premature invaliding, and discharge for misconduct, and other causes, has, although checked, not yet been arrested, as I am in hope it will be. When recruiting has been placed upon a fully organized system, and when the Army is able to compete on perfectly fair terms with other employers of labour, this drain may be expected greatly to diminish. The consequence of these circumstances which I have described is that there is undoubtedly, at the present moment, a difficulty in providing drafts for the Army in India; and that, the battalions at home containing a considerable number of young recruits, not only is the labour imposed upon officers and non-commissioned officers engaged in training them very severe, but there is a difficulty in performing the ordinary garrison duty which they are called upon to perform. The remedy for this difficulty is, in the first place, one which I have already referred to—that is to say, a thorough organization of the recruiting system. Next, the experience gained of the effect of short service shows that some re-arrangement of the Infantry battalions is necessary, in order to avoid the excessive depletion of the ordinary Establishment, consequent upon sending drafts to India. Last year the lowest Establishment voted was 450 rank and file for each battalion; but after sending the drafts to India the actual numbers were much smaller than those voted by Parliament. The only mode of obviating this defect is to allow a corresponding excess for some months before the drafts are sent out; but it is not considered right to exceed the numbers voted by Parliament even temporarily; and, therefore, the proposal now made is to increase the Establishment of the battalions to 520 rank and file—that is to say, they will be permitted to recruit up to that number for a certain number of months before the drafts are sent out. As I have explained, when the drafts are sent out the numbers will fall by a corresponding amount below the Establishment, and the average Establishment will thus remain the same as that last year sanctioned by Parliament—namely, 450. No additional cost will be entailed by this proposal; while under this arrangement the regiments will be able to recruit at a time which is most convenient to them, being allowed to be above their Establishment previous to the drafts being sent to India, and, as must necessarily follow, below their Establishment during the remainder of the year.

It would be convenient that I should here refer to the arrangements for Cavalry organization and the providing of drafts for Cavalry regiments in India. Last year Papers were laid upon the Table of the House which contained a scheme that had been prepared by a Committee appointed by the War Office. Considerable objections were entertained to the proposals of that Committee; and, in addition to this, a number of other schemes of organization were put forward. It is thought better, therefore, to postpone for a time, at all events, the adoption of any large scheme of reorganization of Cavalry, and to adopt a plan which will enable us to meet the present necessity of furnishing a sufficient number of drafts for the Cavalry regiments in India. The plan consists in this—all recruits will be enlisted at the depôts for Cavalry regiments in India generally, and sent to such regiments as may require them, care being taken to appoint them, as far as possible, to regiments of their own selection. Under the present system the depôt is encumbered with a number of men invalided from India. This will no longer be permitted; but all invalids and men found unfit for duty on arrival will be immediately discharged to pension, while those who are considered fit for further service will be drafted into the Reserve. Under this arrangement, the Cavalry depôt will only have on its strength the permanent training staff and the recruits. An addition of 90 men to the depôts will be made, to which limit they will be allowed to recruit before sending the drafts to India. Care will be taken that the average numbers of Cavalry at home voted by Parliament will not be exceeded. It is considered that this arrangement will enable the Cavalry depôt to send out as many recruits as may be required by the regiments of Cavalry in India; and it has been pointed out that the difficulties which were experienced in sending out Cavalry to Egypt may be met by sending out Cavalry regiments of three instead of four squadrons, one squadron being left at home. The Cavalry brigades would then consist of four instead of three regiments each.

The Militia have now been entirely armed with Martini-Henry rifles, and the only other matter in connection with that branch to which I need refer is as to the system of drilling recruits adopted last year. Under that system the recruits of regiments whose head-quarters are at a regimental depôt went through their preliminary drill at once, and instead of receiving 10*s*. on enrolment, as formerly, received £1 after the preliminary drill, and £1 after the first training, the extra 10*s*. being given as compensation for the double break in their employment. Recruits for regiments, the head-quarters of which are detached from depôts, were to be drilled as before. The advantages of the new system were considered to be that it would encourage recruiting by enabling recruits to drill at a time of the year most convenient to themselves, and, at the same time, would obviate the loss caused by men who fraudulently enlisted taking 10*s*. on enrolment, and not appearing for the purpose of training. In some respects the system has been successful; but commanding officers have complained that they have lost recruits, and the advantages which resulted from the preliminary drill. It has, therefore, been decided to give all recruits the option either of being drilled at once on enlistment, or of going through the preliminary drill immediately before the training. It is not intended to go back to the system of giving 10*s*. on enrolment; but a recruit will now receive one day's pay on enlistment, and £1 10*s*. after the preliminary drill and training, or £1 after the drill, and the second £1 after the training, if separate. The Irish Militia will this year cost £146,000. With regard to the Volunteers, I think it is not necessary to say anything now, except that the Force remains in a state of high efficiency, and that a very considerable number—I believe 500—officers have passed their examination in tactics, and that a very small percentage of those who entered for the examinations have failed, while I believe the number who are preparing for examination has greatly increased. Any other remarks which it may be necessary to make in connection with this branch of the Forces I will reserve until the Vote for the Volunteer Service is reached.

The Egyptian Expedition has called attention to a number of points, and besides those to which I have already referred there have been complaints as to deficiencies alleged to exist in the medical arrangements. Before leaving Office my right hon. Friend enlarged the scope of the Committee which had already been appointed, under the Presidency of Sir Evelyn Wood, to inquire into the organization of the Army Hospital Corps, as tested in the South African Campaign. The Committee continued its labours under the Presidency of Lord Morley, its object being not to inquire into the conduct of individuals, but to investigate the defects and shortcomings of the present system. A full and searching inquiry has been made by the Committee, who have examined a large number of witnesses;

and having completed that branch of their labours they are now considering their Report, which will, before very long, be presented; and in the meantime, therefore, I do not think it is desirable to enter upon any discussion of the points which have been the subject of their deliberations. It may, however, be of some interest to the Committee to know what are the actual facts with regard to the mortality in the Egyptian Campaign. From July the 19th to October the 9th, nearly three months, the average daily strength of the Force in Egypt was 13,048; the admissions to hospital were 378 wounded, and 7,212 cases of illness and accident, making a total of 7,590. The deaths which occurred were 93, of which 82 were of men killed in action, and 11 of men who died in consequence of wounds—that is to say, about 3 per cent of those admitted to hospitals for wounds died. The deaths from illness were 74, or 1 per cent of the admissions to hospital under that head. Five men died in consequence of accidents; and out of a total of 4,110 invalids, 37 deaths took place on the passage to England and from Malta. I have not as yet been able to ascertain the number of deaths which have since occurred. The small percentage of those who died from wounds or illness will, I think, remove a great deal of the misapprehension which exists as to the supposed defects in the hospital arrangements.

Some action has also been taken on the Report of another Committee, appointed to inquire into the subject of Musketry Instruction. They have made a great number of recommendations, amongst others that there should be a very considerable increase of ammunition for both troops and Militia attending trainings. This recommendation has been so far adopted, that an increase of the present allowance will be made to the extent, generally speaking, of 50 per cent; and it may be possible to sanction a further increase, as recommended by the Committee, when certain economies which the Committee have suggested have been carried into effect. The Committee recommend that the musketry instruction of the troops should be carried out under the adjutant and company officers; but the question of further increase is, at the same time, dependent upon the existing ranges being improved and extended, so as to afford area for the additional musketry instruction recommended by the Committee. The Committee state in their Report that—

> "They are aware that, in carrying out their recommendations, a considerable addition to the present range accommodation will be necessary, especially for the Militia. For the second part of the annual course, the present range accommodation is neither sufficient, nor, from the nature of the ground on which the ranges are (generally speaking) laid out, altogether adapted for the purpose."

The Report of the Committee will shortly be laid on the Table, and I shall have a better opportunity of explaining how far we have been able to adopt their proposals, and how far it is thought necessary to postpone their adoption. Another Committee was appointed by my right hon. Friend to inquire into the question of the colour of service uniforms. That Committee has reported; and, as I believe was stated by me the other day, there is no objection to their Report being laid on the Table of the House. I may inform the Committee that they have reported against the red colour, on the ground both of its visibility and unserviceability, and that they recommend a grey or Khakee colour, between which it is difficult to choose. The actual recommendation was in favour of a certain shade of grey; but there is, I believe very little to chose, on the point of visibility, between the two colours, and the only reason why preference was given to grey was the difficulty of applying Khakee dye, which is not a durable colour, to serge. That difficulty, however, I understand, has been overcome, and an experimental beginning will be made in carrying out the recommendation of the Committee. It is, however, a matter in which sentimental considerations are, to a certain extent, involved, and it is by no means certain that either officers or men would willingly change even the service uniform from the colour of red, to which they have been so long accustomed, and which has so many honourable associations belonging to it. The Khakee colour has been for a considerable time used by about one-third of the British Army when serving in India. I believe it is popular with the Army there, and that no feeling exists against it. However, I do not think it at all desirable to force this change upon the Army. The course which we propose to adopt is to issue a certain amount of clothing of the new colour as an experiment. I have omitted to state that the Committee do not recommend any change to be made in the colour of the full-dress uniform. What they recommend is that an undress suit of Khakee colour shall be issued as the service uniform of the Army. We therefore propose to issue to the troops at certain stations abroad an undress uniform of the new colour, and, at the same time, to issue a similar uniform to certain battalions at home, if the commanding officers are willing to try the experiment. It will then be found whether there is any objection to the adoption of the uniform; and if no objection is found to exist, then I think there will be no obstacle in the way of its adoption in the Service.

It will probably not be thought desirable that I should attempt now to enter into details upon the question of ordnance, especially with regard to heavy guns. The subject is so important that it would, I think, be better to reserve discussion on that question until we come to the Vote itself, when I shall be prepared to speak in greater detail. But it may be desirable to state one or two facts in connection with this branch. During the last few years, as the Committee will be aware, the increasing length and size of the guns has caused a complete change of system. The great weight and enormous charges of the new guns now required have caused the War Department to consider the question of constructing guns wholly of steel, and the Ordnance Committee have recommended that the manufacture of wrought iron guns be discontinued, and that all guns in future be made of steel. That, I need hardly say, is a very serious recommendation, the cost, I believe, of constructing large guns substantially of steel being about double that of a gun of steel and wrought iron. The requirements of the Navy had, of course, to be considered in the first place. The great length of the new guns has made it necessary for the War Department to consider the question of substituting the breech-loading for the muzzle-loading system. The Committee on Ordnance began their experiments in 1879 with breech-loading 6-inch guns, and those experiments were so far satisfactory that in the next year, 1880-1, and the following years a very considerable number of breech-loading guns of that type have been manufactured and used in the Navy. In 1880-1, 14 such guns were provided; in 1881-2, 103; in 1882-3, 59; in 1883-4, 63, making in all 239. The guns manufactured in the two latter years are entirely of steel. The Committee also recommended in 1879 that a more powerful type of guns should be introduced, and experiments were carried out with guns varying from 8-inch and 11½-tons to 12-inch and 43-tons. During the years 1881-2 and 1882-3, 18 9·2-inch 18-ton guns have been ordered and are in process of manufacture, and will be ready for the Navy as soon as the ships for which they are intended are in a position to receive them. At the same time, 4 land service and 11 marine service steel guns of large construction have been taken in hand; they are of 12-inch calibre and 43-tons weight. These guns are now being made, even those of the larger size being constructed wholly of steel. These guns have penetration, at 1,000 yards, of 22·2-inches of iron, and answer the description given of them by my right hon. Friend the present Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, last year, when he said they would pierce anything afloat, except the small band of armour round the centre of a ship, as to which it was extremely doubtful whether it would ever be hit in action at all. The new guns, however, which will be put in hand in the next financial year, to the extent of six for land and three for sea service, will be of steel. Then a still larger construction of guns will be put in hand—namely, 13·5-inch 61-ton guns. These will be of steel, and are progressing *pari passu* with the ships for which they are intended, the *Rodney* and the *Howe.* [Sir JOHN HAY: How many guns?] Four are ordered.

The Committee may like to know, although I do not intend to go into any detail, the figures relating to the Force which was despatched from this country to Egypt. On the 20th of July, definite orders were given for the despatch of troops. The first troops embarked on the 30th of July, and the last on August 11. From the 30th of July to August 11, a period of 12 days, 13,486 men were despatched from this country. At the same time, an additional 10,912 men were sent to Egypt from the Mediterranean, making altogether 24,358 men. That was done within 12 days, or 22 days from the time the order was given. During the same time two months' supplies for a Force estimated at 24,000 troops and 10,000 animals was provided and shipped. In addition, each transport carried on board 14 days' shore rations for men, and 15 days' forage for horses, so that, on landing at any point, they would for a time be independent of local supplies. At the same time, this Department, acting for the Admiralty, foraged the whole of the transports, shipping about 4,700 tons of forage, besides supplying 4,500 tons for the Indian Contingent. Looking to the climate and season of operations, an unusually large supply of medical comforts was shipped, and also disinfectants to meet all possible requirements. No difficulties were experienced in providing supplies. Everything the Force required was with it at Alexandria and Ismailia. On this Expedition regiments embarked for the first time with their transport complete, and with horse-boats on board for landing them. Another of our difficulties in former wars has been the provision of reliable drivers for auxiliary transport—that is, the transport from the base to the advance depôt, or other point outside the fighting zone, where the organized military transport takes up the duty. Transport animals more or less efficient can always be procured in time; but drivers are difficult to get at all; and are generally unreliable. On this occasion a corps of 250 drivers was formed at Malta, and another of 500 drivers, under Native and English officers, was drawn from India; 658 mules, complete with drivers who had seen service in Natal, were drawn from that country, and many drivers were engaged with the mules purchased in Italy and in Turkey. The total number of animals purchased was 8,102; of these, 5,642 were mules procured chiefly in Spain, Italy, Turkey, Greece, Cyprus, and North America. We relied, to a great degree, for the auxiliary transport required on first landing, on mules and drivers to be procured from Turkey; but unfortunate complications arose about their exportation, which gave rise to unexpected delays. The difficulty was met by shipments from Malta and Cyprus. The total tonnage of supplies alone shipped from this country was 21,298 tons in 42 transports. The total tonnage of supplies, stores, and equipment, approximated 50,000 tons, in about 70 transports. Credit has already been given to the Admiralty, with which, of course, the War Office has to work in making these arrangements; and I am happy to say that owing to the arrangements that were made, and the good feeling which existed between the two Departments, the War Office was efficiently and cordially supported by the Admiralty in every way.

It is unnecessary for me to take up the time of the Committee any longer. I have only to thank the Committee for the patience with which they have listened to the Statement I have had to lay before them. I am very far from desiring to exaggerate the results which were accomplished by the Army, or by the War Department in regard to the Egyptian Expedition; but I think it will be some satisfaction to the Committee that on this occasion, at all events, we have been able to present to Parliament a Statement not only of what we hope to be able to perform in the future, by means of the new organization, but to give some account of the actual results of the trial of that organization. I am very far from saying that the re-organization of our Army leaves nothing to be desired; but, at all events, it has been submitted to a practical, although I will not say a very severe, test. Some of the gloomy anticipations which were formed respecting the short-service men and the Reserve men have been proved to be unfounded. So far as the system has been tried it has worked well; and I think we have every reason to be satisfied with the result of the changes of organization which have been made, as tested, at all events, by the Egyptian Campaign. At all events, I am sure it will be a great satisfaction to all of us, whether we approve or disapprove of the recent changes, to acknowledge, as everyone must be willing to do, that in the courage and devotion to the Public Service which animate all ranks of the Army there has been no diminution among our young soldiers. I beg to move the Vote for the Men.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 137,632, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884."—(*The Marquess of Hartington.*)

Colonel STANLEY: Sir, although it has not fallen to the noble Lord to propose Estimates which have in themselves anything that is very new or very startling, I think everyone who has listened to the able speech of the noble Lord will feel that he has discharged his task with that ability which has characterized all his other statements, and with a knowledge of and intimacy with all the details, which, on these subjects—subjects, as they are, of such great practical importance—have evidently been such as to produce a speech of considerable interest. The difficulty which the noble Lord seemed from the very first to be aware of is that it has fallen to his lot to put to the test various changes which have taken place during the last few years in the organization of the Army, of which it was impossible, however carefully they might be considered, to foresee the effect, until the test of actual service was applied to them. I think, therefore, although the noble Lord spoke with due reserve upon certain questions, especially that of recruiting, he is, on the whole, to be congratulated on having shown that the principles, at least, upon which Army re-organization during the last few years has been proceeding have not in themselves been such as to lead to any doubt or distrust of those principles. With regard, however, to recruiting, I wish the noble Lord had been able to give a more satisfactory assurance. I fancy that in the speech of the noble Lord, and quite as much in the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting, there seems to be a lurking feeling of doubt as to whether even the causes assigned exhaust all the difficulties which stand in the way of the formation of the Reserve; and I hope the noble Lord, if he does not find that the growth of the Reserve corresponds with his expectations, will not hold himself fettered, either by what has been done in the present or by his immediate Predecessor, from making proposals, if they should become necessary, which may lead to the formation of a truly efficient Reserve. I think, however, that it is matter for congratulation that some of the doubts which were expressed about the effect of short service, and especially in regard to men coming up from the Reserve when called upon to rejoin the Colours, have been undoubtedly disproved, so far as we can tell, on the only two occasions upon which they have been tested. I have not the figures by me, but I think that within an appreciable distance only 4 per cent of the men were unaccounted for when the Reserves were mobilized in 1878; and it is satisfactory, at least, to notice that the mobilization of the Force in that year did not have that effect which some apprehended—namely, that the men having once come up, there would be greater difficulty in mobilization in the future. So far as we can see, the figure is now stationary, and shows that the Reserve men are fully alive to their engagements. But now the question which the noble Lord touched upon in regard to the difficulty of recruiting is of such a formidable nature that I hope I may be allowed to press for a little further information upon that point. I do not quite gather whether the noble Lord thinks that the decrease in the recruiting is to be principally accounted for by the considerations he had referred to, and which are veiled with more detail in the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting; but it seems to me to bear very materially on the question that the noble Lord, as I understand him, proposes to increase the Establishment of the battalions which are on the lowest Establishment, by the addition, for part of the year, at all events, of 70 men per battalion. It is, perhaps, one of the most difficult questions of Army organization how to so adjust the Establishments within the numbers always voted by Parliament as to render the regiments which are first on the roster for foreign service as efficient as you can possibly make them, while, on the other hand, you do not unduly create the necessity of a large transfer from the battalions on the lowest Establishment, because, as I have always understood, not only amongst the men, but among the officers and non-commissioned officers, nothing tends more to promote indifference or even dislike to the Service than the constantly recurring necessity of parting with good men as soon as they have been made efficient, and getting new men whom in turn they have to bring forward. No doubt in the course of time the lesson will have been learnt, and the Army will understand the necessities of the case; but the home battalions must be the nurseries, to some extent, of those abroad. It is only in that way that the limited numbers voted by Parliament can be dealt with for the best defence of this great Empire, especially when so large a number of men—some 60,000 men—have to be kept abroad under the conditions of tropical service. I do not know whether I understood the noble Lord rightly that there was some doubt in his own mind as to whether, however desirable it may have been in itself, we have not, considering the circumstances of the country, gone rather too far in exacting the physical test as the equivalent of age which was laid down by my right hon. Friend his Predecessor in Office. I do not know whether the noble Lord intends merely to give discretionary power to regimental officers to take men who do not comply with these tests, or whether, under some general Circular, he will relax the general conditions of the Service. There is another point connected with the re-adjustment of the battalions at the lowest strength which I think it would be well to have explained to the Committee. As I understand, the noble Lord intends to take power to increase the battalions at the lowest strength from 450 to 520 men. Is that to be understood as being an increase of these battalions without taking extra men from the Establishments of the regiments at the highest strength? If so I think it would be well if we could be informed how the money voted is to be brought to correspond with so large an increase of numbers; because, as has always been well-known to those interested in these matters you are always, owing to the fluctuating necessities of the Indian Service, placed in one of two difficulties—either you must have a larger number than you intend to take, or if you vote only the full number of men you must have a larger sum than you know you will actually require, unless you discount the Vote and make allowance for a less number of men than you have asked Parliament to give you power for. I hope the difficulties which are found in keeping up the Army to its full Establishment are only of an abnormal character and will soon disappear. That deferred pay which the noble Lord has recognized as being one of the best recommendations of the Army, when introduced by my noble Friend Lord Cranbrook, had the effect of bringing the Forces, which were much below the standard strength, up to the Establishment, and at one time to a point considerably in excess of the Establishment. It is to be borne in mind, moreover, that not only is there the positive objection to the small battalions being so much below their strength on general grounds, but that it tends to make the Army more unpopular, inasmuch as the turns of duty come round much more frequently, the work is more severe, and what would ordinarily be done very easily has to be done under pressure and sometimes with considerable difficulty. I do not know whether the noble Lord or any of his Colleagues will be able to tell us what has been the minimum number of "nights in bed" for the men on duty, because it is in that way that we shall best see whether the practical effect is such as to be, in all probability, to produce a bad state of things, physically and mentally, in the Army. I am glad to hear that the noble Lord intends to postpone, until there is further information, any idea of re-organizing the Cavalry. At the same time, I hope he will not lose sight of the fact that the efforts which were made during the last year were such as to cause a good deal of heart-burning and dissatisfaction, when men had to be taken in large numbers to other regiments to fill up the ranks of the Cavalry. The noble Lord said, as I understood, that it was proposed in future to send a regiment of Cavalry abroad in three squadrons instead of four. But are we to understand that these three are to be only each of the present strength, and the fourth is to be at home, or that the numbers are to be divided into three squadrons? Surely that would not advance us much on the path of diminishing the peace establishment. The fourth squadron might remain at home; but I think the noble Lord will require to considerably investigate that point before he can accept the fourth squadron as being able to send men and horses out prepared, as they should be, to the other three squadrons, which might be in the field. I agree that it is far better, as the noble Lord suggests, that any discussion on the various medical questions should be postponed until the Report of the Committee on the Medical Service has been presented to Parliament; and I have no doubt, on the other hand, that the noble Lord will agree to take the Medical Vote at such a time as may afford us, having regard to the great interest which is naturally taken in this question, due and sufficient time for discussion. In the same way I understand that the Secretary of State wishes to postpone the discussion on guns until the Vote comes forward; but I hope that if it is understood that we are not to enter in detail into questions which we might have to consider—on ordnance both for field and sea and also for garrison—the Vote will be taken not in the month of August, and that it will also be taken at such an hour of the night as to enable a discussion to take place such as that important question fully justifies. There are questions which I should very much like to ask, but which I feel at this hour, in consideration of all the other questions to be dealt with in the course of the evening, cannot well be put; but I hope we may have an understanding that the subject, if postponed, will be postponed to a reasonable hour on some future day. There is another point on which I do not know whether I understand the noble Lord rightly. As to the Indian pensions, hitherto the capitalized value has been taken; but this year I understand the actual value of the pensions is paid by India. The noble Lord referred to a payment of £135,000, which was taken in addition and beyond the capitalized amount which would be repayable to the Revenue of this country in the present year. I conclude this was taken in accordance with precedent, and that it was taken in diminution of the Vote, and that it will be shown in the Appropriation Account in the ordinary way. The noble Lord has told us that it is intended to increase the transport staff. I am glad to hear that the noble Lord intends to refer the first proposals back to a Committee, who will examine the question whether it would be better to expand the system of regimental transport, or to deal with the increase of the transport staff rather by additions to the Transport Corps itself. There are, no doubt, sound and good arguments to be used for either proposal; but I am quite certain, from what I have heard on the subject, that the general feeling of the Army would be rather inclined to a nucleus, though it might be a small one, of a regimental transport than to an expansion of the Transport Corps itself. The noble Lord may be a little sanguine as to the saving he anticipates in the transport at home; but, at all events, the amount which was taken seemed to fully justify the experiment. A question was asked the other night about a Railway Corps, and I understood the noble Lord to say, in reply, that he proposed to make a commencement of such a Corps, and that he would make some statement in respect to the matter in introducing the Estimates. No doubt, that amongst the many matters he had to deal with this one had escaped the notice of the noble Lord. Any information which the noble Lord can give upon a subject of such great interest will be received with much satisfaction by the Committee. As to the question of shooting in the Army, I am glad no difficulty stands in the way of General Lysons's Report. I believe there was some difficulty found in giving that Report last year; but, possibly, the circumstances are not now the same. With regard to a part of the Report, I believe it was an open secret that the Committee had exceeded their powers. Certainly, any information that can be given with respect to the shooting in the Army will be of very considerable value. I hope the noble Lord will be disposed to consider whether the shooting practice can be made to embrace firing at moving objects; because there is a great and growing feeling amongst those concerned in rifle instruction in the Army that the present system of target-shooting, though contributing to the accuracy of the hand and eye, does not enable a man to handle a rifle in accordance with the conditions under which he would be expected to use it upon active service. The question of ranges, I fear, will prove to be one of the most formidable difficulties which the Secretary of State for War will find before him, when he comes to deal with rifle practice upon an extended scale. There is no doubt that, while, on the one hand, the open spaces available for rifle practice are being gradually appropriated, and rendered unavailable for shooting purposes, on other hand, the power of the weapon now used is so very materially increased that many ranges, perfectly safe two years ago, have now to be disused. I cannot help thinking, therefore, that it would be a far-sighted policy on the part of those concerned in this matter to see whether they cannot, instead of frittering money away—I use the word in no offensive sense — upon a large number of comparatively small and ineffectual ranges, concentrate the rifle practice at certain stations where they can get a large extent of ground; and where, also, they can get a greater variety of conditions under which rifle practice can be carried on. As to the working dress of the Army, the noble Lord spoke with what is only due caution. It has long been recognized that the scarlet colour of the ordinary dress, both in visibility and in durability, is not equal to many other colours which may be proposed; still, it is one to which the Service is deeply attached by old connection, and by sentiment; and, though it may seem a small matter, sentiment is of some importance in a voluntary Service. If it were found that because they wore a grey dress, or from some other cause, the men of the Army were liable to be laughed at and ridiculed, I fear it would have a very detrimental effect upon recruiting. While, on the one hand, that is the case, while it is well to recognize the fact, it is, of course, on the other hand, undoubtedly true that many of the proudest achievements of the Army are those which have been won by troops who have been dressed in the Khakee. If a distinction could be plainly kept up between the working and the ordinary dress, a great deal of the feeling of sentiment would be overcome. I hope the noble Lord will introduce the change with great care; that when it is introduced every effort will be made by those in authority to induce the change to be cordially taken up by all ranks, from the highest to the lowest; that the grounds of such a change may be well defined; and that no feeling of just sentiment which may be entertained for the time in regard to the red coat may be set at nought, or in the least degree slighted. Of course, changes just as great have been made, owing to the necessity of the case, in other Armies as well as our own. The Austrian Army was not less proud of their white coat in past days than we have been of the red; but I believe that stern necessity drove the Austrians to a change. Though a change in dress may be a difficult one to carry out, still it is one to be dealt with on the lines of common sense. I have only one more question to ask, and that has reference to an observation made by the noble Lord. I suppose the amount received for the capitation was taken in diminution of the Estimates; that was shown upon the face of the Papers. I presume, therefore, that the increases, which have now reached the figure of £148,000, would have been still larger if it had not been for the capitation allowances which had been taken from the Egyptian Government, and which will come in aid of the Vote. I imagine there are precedents—in fact, I think there are several for charging the whole of the capitation rate against Vote 1. I only notice this case because it is not well to let any of the points go by when figures are introduced year by year which make it difficult to compare the actual figures of one year with the same items in the previous Estimates. I hope the noble Lord will approach the great questions which he has to consider in the same spirit in which he has spoken of them to-night; for it seems to the Committee that while, on the one hand, the noble Lord recognizes that there is much in organization which remains to be completed and perfected, on the other hand his experience satisfies him that in the main the principles on which organization has been extended are working fairly, and, on the whole, efficiently. It is not fair to make, as some would do, a comparison between the circumstances under which the Estimates of foreign countries are put before their Parliaments, and the circumstances under which the Estimates are put before the English Parliament. We have difficulties peculiar to the organization of our Service; and at any moment emergencies may arise which would compel us, in the interest of common sense, to disregard the most elaborate scheme, and to act as we best could under the circumstances of the moment. It is all very well to draw up arrangements on paper by which battalions succeed one another, by which they generally increase in strength, by which they are brought forward until they form the first corps of the Service; but it is never wise in our Service to disregard the possibility of battalions of weaker strength being required. I hope that if there is any room for a re-adjustment of the numbers an endeavour will be made to avoid, as far as possible, the fluctuations between very high numbers and very low numbers which now exists. No doubt a great deal of the present state of things is due to the Indian Service; and I trust the noble Lord, who can bring to bear special knowledge of the subject, will not lose any opportunity of pressing on the Indian Government to be very careful in the adjustment or re-adjustment of the numbers of the force they require to be sent out to India so as to obviate, as far as possible, the expansions of one moment and the contractions of another moment which the necessities of the Indian Service have sometimes required, but which have been very inconvenient to the Service at home. The question is one, I know, of difficulty; but still it is one which bears by no means remotely upon the Establishments of the Army and the difficulty of transport of men from one battalion to another, and as such I hope the noble Lord will very carefully consider it. If time permitted, I would like to ask other questions with regard to the Establishment of officers, and with regard to the Establishment of general officers. These questions may, however, be conveniently postponed until the Effective Vote is brought up. There is only one thing I will say in conclusion, and that is with reference to promotion in the Brigade of Guards. I have not had the opportunity of going as carefully into the figures as I would like to do; but it has been urged that at the present moment, when the Establishments generally have been placed upon a certain scale, the Brigade of Guards has been left on a different footing. It is represented that the Establishment of officers in the Guards is such as to press unduly hard upon the younger officers in the matter of promotion, and to render it extremely likely that a larger number of officers in the Guards than in other regiments will have to be retired under the Warrant of 1881. If so, the subject is one which is worthy of the attention of the noble Lord, and I am sure all my hon. Friends acquainted with the circumstances will be ready to give the noble Lord such information as might lie at their command. I will not press for an answer now, but I trust the noble Marquess will give consideration to what is shown to press very hardly upon a very hard-working class of officers who are always willing and able to take their share of the hardships of active service when the opportunity offers, and who of late have, fortunately for themselves, had some opportunities of putting what they have always endeavoured to teach into practice. I do not wish to trespass further upon the time of the Committee. I only repeat that we have heard from the noble Lord a most interesting statement; and I hope that, being, as it is, of a practical nature, it will be dealt with by the Committee in a practical spirit, with a view to the general welfare and progress of the Army.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR said, he thought it would be just as well that the people of England should know that while they were here to vote for the Army this large sum of money, there were present in the House of Commons, at an important part of the speech of the noble Marquess, only 22 Members, and during the time the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the late Secretary of State for War (Colonel Stanley) was delivering his sensible remarks there were only 13 Members in their places. It would be just as well that they should at once, without debate, take the Vote of £17,000,000 for the Army in one lump sum—it would shorten their proceedings and save time, and enable the Government to try and carry through useful measures. At all events, whenever he went to his constituents he should not fail to recommend to them that, judging by the bad attendance, the only instruction they should give to their Member was that they should vote whatever the Minister of a Department required for the service of the year. He was struck by a remark made by the noble Marquess to the effect that this year's Estimates were only £148,000 in excess of some previous Estimate; and he (General Sir George Balfour) was very glad indeed to hear that sum mentioned, because he felt wholly unable to make out that amount by comparing the figures of the present Estimates with the Estimates of former years. This inability to make a comparison was owing to changes which had been made in the compilation of the Accounts; and also, he must say, to a want of clearness in drawing up the statement of those changes. The changes had been brought about by allowing the whole of the receipts which formerly went from the Army Chest to the Civil Chest, and thereby to swell the receipts of the Miscellaneous Civil Estimates, to be taken as an aid in diminution of the military expenditure. The change which had been made was one he had been very much in favour of when he was in the War Office 12 years ago, when he saw much that was objectionable in the then arbitrary mode followed by the Treasury in insisting on accrediting moneys realized by the sale of Army-purchased stores to the Civil Estimates. He had failed to see why the receipts of the Civil Estimates should be swelled at the expense of the military, seeing that the stores so sold had been paid for by Army funds. But he must say that this change, as a system, was now open to the gravest abuse. He sincerely deprecated the mode in which the receipts were at present accounted for, and he was perfectly certain that some day some scandal or other would arise of an objectionable nature. Well, the noble Marquess had said that the present Estimates were in excess of some former Estimates to the extent of £148,000. He (General Sir George Balfour), however, would call attention to the fact that no less than £144,000—a new and an unexpected item —was accredited to the Army in diminution of charge in this year's Estimate, as a contribution from the Egyptian Government, and that that sum, therefore, ought to be added to the £148,000 in order to show the excess over the previous year's Estimate. Further, the whole sum accredited to the Army on account of contributions from the Colonies was £205,000, making, with the Egyptian contribution, £349,000. Now, comparing that sum accredited to the Army Estimates with the sum accredited in 1882-3, they would find that in that year the sum was only £4,416; therefore, they had no less than £345,000 accredited to the Army Estimates to diminish the apparent charge for 1883-4 more than was accredited in 1882-3. This comparison showed that the present Estimates were wholly erroneous and calculated to deceive. They were wanting in that clearness and fulness which was necessary to enable Members of Parliament to see at one glance the state of the finances. He might also mention that no less than £130,000 extra had this year been paid by India, and was credited this year to the Army Estimates, in diminution of the charge beyond the sum credited in the year 1882-3. In that year the charge paid by India amounted to £1,100,000; but this year it amounted to £1,230,000. But these sums, which were taken in diminution of this year's Estimates, were not all the sums which were so taken. He would mention those credits in the Votes which were liable to the greatest possible abuse—namely, Votes 10, 11, and 12, and were what were called the Store Votes. £414,000 was put down as accredited to Vote 11, against 183,881 in 1881-2. There was nearly £300,000 also accredited to the Army Estimates this year in diminution of charges which were not so accredited two years ago. Then, again, in Vote 12, the enormous sum of £367,846 was accredited, against only £232,000 in the previous year.

The CHAIRMAN: I must observe that the hon. and gallant Member is now discussing Votes which are not before the Committee. The Votes to which he is referring will come on later.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR said, he thought he was in Order in referring to these items under the Vote of £17,000,000.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. and gallant Member is incorrect—the Vote is for the number of men; but he is discussing Vote No. 12.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR said, he mentioned these items because the noble Marquess had stated that the Estimates were £148,000 in excess of the previous Estimates. It would be impossible for them to discuss the Estimates if they were not allowed, where they could do so, to show that erroneous statements had been made.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he rose to a point of Order. He wished to point out that heretofore it had always been ruled that on the first Vote any subject in the Votes might be raised, whether it was pertinent to the number of men or not. The subjects the hon. and gallant Member was referring to had been traversed by the noble Marquess; therefore, he maintained, they could be discussed by the Committee. It was open to them, on this Vote, to speak of guns, dynamite, rum, or anything which came up in the Estimates.

The CHAIRMAN: That is no doubt the case, so far as my experience goes. The general policy of the Army Estimates may be discussed in the Vote for men; but the hon. and gallant Member is discussing a specific Vote. He refers particularly to Vote 12, which is not before us; therefore, in my opinion, he is not in Order in discussing items in that Vote until the Vote itself is before the Committee.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR said, the reason he had referred to a particular Vote was not because he desired to discuss it, but to challenge investigation. His contention was that the Votes were put before the Committee in a manner in which it was impossible for a Member of Parliament to compare the expenditure of one year with that of previous years. He was able to take a particular item, and show the erroneous character of the statement that the Estimates were nearly £148,000 in excess of previous years. However, he had now done with these figures, and he would not further discuss the Chairman's ruling. The noble Marquess had said that £115,000 had been taken from the Army Estimates, on account of the Navy having undertaken to provide their own guns; but he (General Sir George Balfour) would point out that as the torpedoes had also been taken away by the Navy, the charge for them should be taken from the Army Estimates and put upon the Navy Estimates. The noble Marquess had given them some interesting information connected with recruiting, which was one of the most important things to which they could devote attention. The War Office had been exerting itself very much to keep the Army up to its proper numerical strength; but, by the last year's Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting, he was sorry to see that they had fallen short of 3,000 or 4,000 men. The remarks of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the late Secretary of State for War on this subject were well worthy of attention. He (General Sir George Balfour) had long wished to see a more national system adopted in connection with recruiting in the Army. The present condition of the Army, owing to the abolition of flogging and its improved system of management and short service, was such that it gave a favourable opportunity for forcing the question of a national system of recruiting upon the attention of the country. We had in Great Britain no fewer than 556,000 farmers holding land; and he could not but think that, in the interests of the people and of the country, something should be done to enable them to keep up the recruiting system. They only wanted every 20 of these farmers to provide one recruit, yielding nearly 30,000; and there could be no doubt if they could get that number of recruits from the agricultural population, the Army would be well supplied with good men. He might also mention what he had often heard stated—namely, that the best system of recruiting ever suggested was that of Mr. Cobbett, to be found in either the 11th or 12th Vol. of *The Register*. He had often thought it would be a good thing to reprint, and then to discuss, William Cobbett's proposal, without mentioning the name of the writer, in order by that means to prevent any ill-feeling which might arise in the minds of the Tories. He would, therefore, recommend the War Department to print the proposal and circulate it generally throughout the country. If they did that, he was sure they would find it receive pretty general approval. The noble Marquess gave them some interesting information as to the Establishment of the Army; but he (General Sir George Balfour) was sorry he did not give them more information as to the way the Establishment was maintained in Effectives. They had heard alarming rumours from India that the Army there was 5,000 men below its fixed strength, and he did not know whether that was true. The Returns in the Library showed that the number of men was not below the Establishment; but his view was that those Returns were unsatisfactory in regard to the period they covered, because the monthly Returns, from which the strength was taken, were several months old. When the Returns that he had moved for, covering certain months in the year, made up from all Returns of the same dates, and giving the whole of the corps in India, were furnished, he had no doubt that the House would be able to form a better idea of the state of the Army in India; and he would urge the War Office to hurry on the preparation of that Return. The large diminution in the number of men in England, owing to the number deficient from bad recruiting, and the probability of a diminution in India, if it were true, was a matter of the gravest importance. He would here mention what he had often and often referred to before, that one of the greatest evils we suffered under when the Indian Mutiny broke out was our having in India far fewer men than the Establishment required to be kept up. The great disaster which then occurred might have been averted if the large number of men which had been struck off the Home Army Vote on the 1st of January, 1857, had been sent out to India, instead of leaving the Indian Government to face the Mutiny with a diminished number of men. He had always been jealous of any reduction of the War Office allowing any falling-off in the fixed or established number of men for service in India; and he was glad to see that, since the *Times* newspaper, at his own instigation, took up the subject 10 years ago, the Indian Establishment had been kept fairly complete. According to the Returns which the Financial Secretary to the Treasury had just shown him, it appeared that the whole strength of the fixed Establishment in the Colonies was 26,024 men; but the actual number of Effectives on service was only 22,178, or 4,000 below the Establishment. That was a very wrong thing, and the Committee ought to have some explanation from the Government as to how that falling-off had been allowed to take place. The attention of the War Office should be especially turned to the matter, although he was aware that, in the present divided state of the Department, it would be difficult for the Secretary of State to realize the fact that the deficiency existed. With regard to another matter—that which he had often desired to see, and which he had often advocated, and which, by the way, now that the Estimates were being brought to a state of perfection, it would be easy to do—was a proper division of the charges made for the Army, under the several branches of Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery, and Engineers, so as to show the cost of them. At present the Estimates were now drawn up so as to bring together the whole of the charges for one particular expenditure. This had been, to a large extent, well done. Provisions, for instance, had all been brought together; the charges for ammunition and clothing also brought together; so that it was easy now to see what the expenditure was for the whole of the Service; and what was now wanted was a statement of the separate cost of the several arms. But he could not enter more fully into these items, owing to the Chairman's ruling. On another point, he should like to have some information as to the number of courts martial which had been held in Egypt. The subject was one very interesting to those Members of Parliament who were military men, and who desired to know how flogging, which was recently abolished, had been compensated for. It would be very instructive to have a Return from the Judge Advocate General detailing the number of courts martial which had been held during the Egyptian Campaign, with the punishments, if any, inflicted in each case. There was one omission in the noble Marquess's speech, and that was as to changes in the formation of the Infantry and Cavalry. He was sorry to hear that an addition was to be made to the Cavalry Depôt at Canterbury. It was wholly unnecessary and uncalled for. But as it was mainly supported by contributions from India, it was, of course, easy to get the assent of the Treasury. He was in hopes of hearing that the squadron formation, which the late Lord Hampton ordered, but which the Liberal Government unwisely cancelled, would have been restored; and he (Sir George Balfour) could only advise that, with regard to the Cavalry, each regiment should consist of three effective squadrons, with a depôt, and that each squadron should consist of 120 or 140 men, and the troop system should be abolished altogether. And, as respected the Infantry, either the number of 141 battalions should be diminished to 100, or that each battalion should consist of six companies. As to the changes effected in regard to naval gun-carriages, he felt that the Navy would benefit by having to look after their own guns as well as carriages; and when the question came up on Vote 12 he should not fail to make some remarks upon it.

Sir JOHN HAY said, he wished to point out that a discrepancy existed in the amount for warlike stores between the statement on page 4, which was £549,100, and that which occurred later on—namely, £528,176; and he hoped some explanation of it would be furnished to the Committee. He observed that the Navy were to be left to make their own gun carriages; and, on referring to the Navy Estimates, he found the amount for this put down at £120,480. In the Army Estimates it was put down at £115,000, so that in the transit from one Office to the other it increased by £5,000; but this was a matter which could not be explained until Thursday evening. He believed the proposed change, by which the Navy would in future make their own gun carriages, was very desirable; but he could not agree with the hon. and gallant Gentleman in the suggestion that it would be also desirable that the shot and shell and guns should be made by two different Departments. If the Fleet were to come out of action to refit at Gibraltar or Malta, and could not draw for the same pattern of shot and shell for their guns as the forts had, we should lose the great advantage we had always derived from depôts of the kind; and, therefore, he hoped the Government would not go further in the direction of having separate patterns of guns, shot, and shell for military and naval service. He believed it would be better to revive a third Department—the Ordnance Department—by which the manufacture should be carried out under the supervision of the House. The Ordnance Department was abolished during the Crimean War, when the cost of manufacturing ordnance was comparatively slight; but now the supply was so costly that a Department to manufacture both for the Army and Navy would be advantageous to both Services and the House. There was a difference between deciding what was required for the Service and what expenditure was necessary; and the very item he had just pointed to showed how difficult it was for the House to avoid such an increase as that to which he had ventured to call attention. The noble Marquess desired that the details of the Vote for Guns should not be discussed at present; and it would, therefore, be uncourteous on his part to attempt to do so; but he reminded the noble Marquess that the Navy Estimates would be brought forward on Thursday, and unless they were then in possession of some details, however small they might be, with reference to the guns, the Committee would be unable to discuss the question as to what guns would be necessary for the ships about to be built and fitted out. He wished to bring before the notice of the Committee the enormous provision which the French Government were making this year for guns. According to the French Estimates, he found they had increased the manufacture of warlike stores and guns from 6,890,000 francs to above 19,000,000 francs, an increase of 12,000,000 francs. When they looked at the fact that, at the present moment, the French were creating an enormous iron-clad Fleet, for they had laid down 19 new vessels against the four we were completing, and had increased their Naval Estimates by nearly £2,700,000, it was time for them to see whether they were making sufficient provision in the matter of ships, and whether they were doing all that was necessary for the maintenance of the Navy in the matter of artillery also. It was true that the provision made in the French Estimates was not sufficient to push on all these works very rapidly; but the Committee must remember that the French Budget of this year was very nearly double our own—£117,000,000 sterling—and that, at the same time, they were bringing out a loan of 800,000,000 francs—equal to £32,000,000 — in addition to the Budget. He confessed that if he were a Frenchman he should like to destroy the military power of Germany and the naval power of England; but as an Englishman he wished to keep up that naval power, and when he saw such preparations being made within such a short distance of our shores, he felt it was necessary for the Government to consider well whether the provision now being made was sufficient for the national defence. He was aware that a question had been raised with regard to four 61-ton guns which were, of course, very expensive; and he was also aware that the French Government had decided not to make guns of over 38 tons; but the Italians were making guns of 100 tons weight. If these guns were worth anything, we ought to have more than four 61-ton guns; if they were not the right guns to have on account of their size, then we ought to have a greater number of smaller guns. The four 61-ton guns did not represent anything like the preparation being made by the Italian Government, who were having 16 100-ton guns constructed. He was glad to hear that the Government were stepping forward in the direction of breech-loading and steel-manufactured guns, and he had been in hope that the noble Lord would have said something on the subject of projectiles, which were very costly, and not always most successful. It was quite true that the practice at Alexandria was not to be condemned, but the number of shells which did not burst was very considerable; and it was quite evident that for operations of that kind, either the description of shell provided, or the mode of charging them, was not that which gave the best results; but as there was no Representative of the Admiralty at that moment on the Treasury Bench, he would wait until Thursday next to enlarge upon that point. With reference to the question he had ventured to address to the noble

Marquess on the subject of the extraordinary discrepancy in three items in this Vote, and one in the Navy Estimates, he trusted the Committee would receive a satisfactory explanation. He would only detain the Committee for a moment to express the hope that hon. Members would look for themselves into the French Estimates which were before them, and they would find how enormous was the increase in the Expenditure of that country. The great object of France was to make herself the foremost country in Europe. He trusted we should not allow her to become so, as far as the sea was concerned.

Colonel ALEXANDER said, the close of a successful war was not altogether a favourable opportunity for criticizing the condition of the Army. Nothing succeeded like success, and it might certainly be said of it that it also covered a multitude of defects. Without disparaging the efforts of anyone who took part in the Egyptian Campaign, where all, from the Commander-in-Chief to the private soldier, nobly did their duty, he thought they had enough to arrest their attention that evening in the alarming deficiency in the number of recruits as shown by the Report of the Inspector General. Not 18 months had elapsed since Sir John Adye said, at the Guildhall, that we had now got almost more recruits than we knew what to do with; and, although the events of last year might have been supposed to kindle the martial ardour of the population, as was the case in 1870 at the outbreak of the Franco-German War, when the immediate announcement of hostilities was expected; although the late war had been too short to admit of anyone becoming tired of it, and although honours and decorations had been bestowed on all who took part in it with no niggard or sparing hand, they were, nevertheless, confronted with this alarming deficiency in the number of recruits. The Inspector General said we had been getting men since the 1st of January at the rate of 330 per week; but in order to make up the deficiency of last year, as well as to meet the requirements of the present year, we ought to enlist, on an average, weekly all the year round, 440 recruits. Thus there was the very large deficiency shown of 110 recruits per week. To begin with, the present condition, so far as regarded recruiting, of the Brigade of Guards, he found so recently as the 24th of February,—that was to say, little more than a fortnight ago—was as follows. The Grenadier Guards were 240, the Coldstream Guards 224, and the Scots Guards no less than 335 men below their Establishment, making a total deficiency as regarded the Brigade of Guards to the extent of 849 men. And, as the number composing a battalion amounted to 744 rank and file, it followed that the number of men wanted to complete the Establishment of the Brigade of Guards was actually 110 men more than the strength of a battalion. That appeared to him to be a very serious state of things; and he thought, so far as the Brigade of Guards was concerned, he could, to a certain extent, account for that deficiency of recruits. Before the year 1881, the Guards were allowed to manage their own recruiting, and he ventured to say that they managed it extremely well. Now, however, they were dependent for their recruits upon the regimental districts from which recruits were sent to the Guards in London. The examination by the medical officer for the Brigade of Guards was extremely strict, and the test was extremely severe, so much so that many recruits sent from the regimental districts were rejected, and the consequence was that the recruiting sergeants in the regimental districts relaxed their efforts, to a certain extent, to obtain recruits for the Brigade of Guards —he did not blame them for doing so— and devoted their energies, for the most part, to obtain recruits for the Line. Certain steps had been taken to remedy this serious deficiency in the Guards; the levy money had been raised from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.*, while certain special recruiters had been allotted to each regiment of the Brigade. But as this had not succeeded in arresting the alarming decrease in the number of recruits, he hoped the noble Marquess would consider whether it would not be advisable to revert to the former state of things, and allow the Guards once more to manage their own recruiting. With regard to the difficulty of obtaining recruits for the Infantry generally, although he had no doubt the reasons assigned by the Inspector General in his history tended to check the enlistment of recruits, he thought there was another cause which, to a certain extent, accounted for the unwillingness of many men to enlist, and that was their great dislike to enlist for what was known as general service. When a man meant to enlist, he had, as a rule, a fancy for some particular regiment, either because he had friends in that regiment, or it might be because his father had served in it. Such men did not relish the idea of passing to another regiment unconnected with such pleasant associations. This was an element of uncertainty, which made recruiting at present, to a certain extent, unpopular. It was to be anticipated that the step, which he ventured to consider a wise one, taken by the late Secretary of State for War, in raising the general standard of age from 18 to the physical equivalent of 19 years, would, no doubt, for the time being, prejudice the Service as far as the enlistment of recruits was concerned, and he did not think that the right hon. Gentleman must expect otherwise. But that he took the step advisedly, and with a full sense of its importance, the improvement resulting from it conclusively proved. On the 13th of March last year the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I confess I should have liked to raise, as we almost might have done, the minimum age from 19 to 19½; and I hope we may be able, before long, to raise it to 20 years. That I look upon as one of the most important of all reforms."—(3 *Hansard*, [267] 841.)

At the present time the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War found it impossible to effect that reform, and he did not think they could blame him for refusing to attempt it; at least, they might thank him for not taking what he might call, and what the noble Marquess himself had ventured to call, a retrograde step, by admitting once more recruits at the age of 18. He had been afraid, almost, that the noble Marquess was going to do so, because it was foreshadowed in an article of *The Times;* and he generally found that what *The Times* foreshadowed with regard to the Army turned out to be perfectly correct. The noble Lord had consoled them for the inefficiency of recruits taken at the age of 18 by saying that the inefficiency would very soon disappear; but as they did not allow a man to go on foreign service until he had completed his 20th year, it followed that one-third of the Colour service expired before the so-called inefficiency would disappear; and, as they frequently allowed a man, after the completion of three years' service with the Colours, to convert the remainder of his Colour service into Reserve service, such a man passed away permanently from the Colours just as he obtained his majority, and, in fact, just when he ceased to be a boy, and had developed into a man. No doubt, by reducing the limit again to the age of 18 years, they would obtain a larger number of recruits; but they would, at the same time, increase the proportion of men invalided in the first year of their service; and, in the event of war, they might expect the recurrence of the lamentable events of the Zulu War, as recounted by the witnesses before Lord Airey's Committee. The question was now not so much between long and short service as it was between the enlistment of men and the enlistment of boys. Some day or other the country would find out that it did not answer to enlist boys; that it was, in fact, a mere question of terms; and that, if they wanted a good article, they must go into the market and give the market price for it; in other words, they must do as Sir Lintorn Simmons recommended this month in *The Nineteenth Century,* when he said—

> "You must increase the attractions of the Service by increasing, at the same time, the deferred pay of the soldier."

There was only one alternative, and that was, some form of compulsory service. They must pay for the Army either in purse or person. The alternative was, no doubt, an unpleasant one; but, sooner or later, he was afraid they would have to face it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, there was a very notable omission from the speech of the noble Marquess—namely, any reference to the bloated numbers and enormous expense of the Army which was being thrust on the country. Up to that time the discussion had been confined to hon. and gallant Members who had dealt with the subject as Army experts. Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen seemed to revel either in fighting, or the preparations for fighting, and the laying of increased burdens on the people; but he would rather approach the question from the taxpayers' standpoint, and in that sense he desired to say a few words on the subject before the Committee. In doing so, he could wish he had a more sympathetic House to which to appeal; but, unfortunately, when he remembered the fact that there were nearly 200 officers or ex-officers in the House, he felt that any appeal he could make on the common-place ground of the heavy burdens put upon the shoulders of the people, or the extravagant nature of the Estimates, would not meet with a very hearty response. And yet they had of late heard a great deal on the subject of distress amongst the agricultural interest. He wished there were a number of tenant farmers in the House, so that, having to bear the burden of taxation, they could express their feelings with regard to the present state of the Army Estimates; but there were only half-a-dozen farmers as against 200 landlords. However, although the Motion he was about to make might meet with little or no sympathy in the House, he believed it would receive more out-of-doors. He proposed that the Vote should be reduced by 5,000 men, and it was his intention to take the opinion of the Committee upon that reduction. He wished to call attention to the fact that, at the present time, when we were at peace with all the world, there was an enormous excess over the number of men voted by the late Conservative Government in the midst of their foreign complications. But he desired to give the noble Marquess credit for a reduction on last year's Estimates in respect of the Force at home. Still, the present Vote, in contrast with that of last year, including the Supplementary Vote of £10,000, showed an increase of 4,727 in the number of men upon the original Estimate; and this fact he considered worthy of the attention of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House. He believed it would not be questioned that the general taxation of the country was felt to be burdensome, and, at the same time, that its expenditure was felt to be extravagant. While this was a matter of dissatisfaction to the taxpayer, it must be remembered that agriculture for many years had been in a state of depression, and that there were many evidences of widespread distress and impoverishment amongst the agricultural interest. But this depression was not confined to agriculture, and it had been keenly felt for some years in manufactures and commerce. The working classes happily had not suffered, in consequence, to anything like the degree they had on previous occasions; and they ought to be especially thankful that Free Trade was in operation, because what our own soil refused to yield was made up for us by foreign countries. There were over 1,000,000 paupers in this country at the present moment, and that was a matter of the deepest concern to every enlightened Englishman; but not only had we this 1,000,000 paupers continually on our hands, but it might be estimated that we had 1,000,000 families in Great Britain and Ireland who were always on the verge of pauperism, struggling day by day to save themselves from becoming dependent on the alms of the public. He was afraid that unless a stand was made by the economists in that House, and those who had made professions in favour of retrenchment and reform, there was little hope of any check or finality in regard to the increased military expenditure of this country. It was manifest that with our more complicated civilization the Civil Service charges could not be reduced, and could not be really kept at a standstill, but must almost inevitably increase. He would like to ask any man who had the welfare of the country at heart whether he would like to see a check put upon judicious expenditure on education? The only other source from which he anticipated any reduction to compensate for the increase which was going on was the spread of education, which might lead to a reduction of the present charges in prisons and pauperism. He submitted that the present was a very inconvenient time to maintain an excessively large standing Army, which seemed to cost per man more and more every year. The British soldier was now costing over £120—a most staggering fact—according to the number of men on the Establishment. Let any working man consider what was the significance of this luxury. The cost of a single soldier would pay the rents, rates, taxes, and schoolpence of a dozen working men in this country; and he, for one, did not hesitate to say that it was the duty, at any rate, of the Liberal Party to struggle might and main against the increase of this military system in England, in order that our influence in other directions might be more beneficially exercised. He came next to another point, which, of course, could not be addressed to Gentlemen on the other side, but must be of some significance to all on this side of the House, from the Prime Minister to the humblest Member of the Liberal Party. Nothing was plainer than that from Mid Lothian to the smallest borough in the country, every Liberal pledged himself, at the last General Election, to retrenchment and economy if a Liberal majority was returned and a Liberal Government came in. Do not let hon. Gentlemen on the other side, however, make a mistake. Hon. Members on the Liberal side had been discreetly and necessarily silent for two years, for they saw that the present Government had been occupied in paying off the debts of their Predecessors; and it had taken two Sessions and an increase in the taxation of the country to enable the income of the country to meet the expenditure which had been left to them as a legacy by the previous Administration. But matters were now somewhat changed. The Conservative Party could not be altogether blamed for the Egyptian War. He should be sorry to say that there was not the widest distinction between the responsibility and almost the criminality of some of the undertakings of the last Government and the Egyptian Campaign; but he did not hesitate to say that, in his mind, there had been serious misgivings as to the necessity and wisdom of that undertaking. He would not now enter into the question whether that campaign might have been avoided or not; but the most successful military campaign left behind it a crop of troubles, anxiety, and expenditure. That war had cost us in round numbers £4,000,000 sterling. A small portion of that sum was to be fastened on the taxation of India; but the bulk of it would have to be paid for in an honest, straightforward manner out of the Budget for 1882-3. At the same time, the taxpayers of this country must take to heart the fact that, even with a Liberal Government in power, there was no absolute security against these great enterprizes, and the accumulation of increased burdens upon their shoulders, and that the time seemed far distant when even men with the noblest intentions and most honest purpose would enter on the government of this country resolved and able to pursue a policy of non-intervention, and of amelioration of the condition of the people at home. Now, he wished to point to a third matter, which he submitted was worthy the consideration of every Member of that House. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Sir John Hay) sought to stimulate the determination on the part of the Government—he supposed to spend more money in guns and ships, and all the material of war—by displaying a large Blue Book, which was understood to reveal the secrets of the French naval and military proceedings. Surely, the old dogma, that to insure peace we must be prepared for war, seemed now to be thoroughly exploded; because, if it were true, Europe at this moment ought to be in a state of profound repose and security. There never was a time when the armaments of Europe were so bloated and so enormous; and who would deny that there never was a moment before when less confidence existed between nations? There was an increase in every direction; and the result must be, he thought, to every Christian humiliating to the last degree. He hoped the Government and those who supported them in power would discourage in every possible way any rivalry of the Continental system of armaments now going on. What were the facts? According to *The Financial Reformer* for this year, the standing Armies of Europe numbered 3,860,045 men, and the standing Armies with Reserves 12,454,867. What was the expenditure? The total expenditure, including, of course, Great Britain, was £160,000,000 sterling; but that was not by any means the full amount of the burdens which the taxpayers of Europe—the down-trodden people of Europe—were bearing under the system of militaryism in France, in Germany, in Prussia, in Italy, and Great Britain, as things were now going. If there was no answer to be given which would afford a ray of hope we had better give ourselves up to fatalism at once, and spend the resources of the nation, and its science and skill, in increasing our military armaments, and prepare for the great conflict which must ultimately ensue. There was no such feeling on the Continent as security, or a sense of peace. Russia was watched by Germany, Austria, Italy, and France — all alike watching each other with the greatest jealousy, and with constant danger. But what was there also arising on the

Continent? What did the Socialism and Nihilism which we saw in Russia, Germany, France, and Spain mean? In his judgment, it was the result of militaryism and extravagant expenditure. It was the bursting out of the feeling of these down-trodden people, and a resolve that if things could not be mended in one way no step was too extravagant for them to take. He ventured to say—and he spoke with confidence—that the great majority of the people of this country would welcome the moderate reduction he proposed. He had made his proposal moderate, because he hoped that next year it would be possible to take another step in the same direction. It might be said that he forgot the obligations under which this country lay in having so much territory and so many Colonies; but he would say to those who were stimulating the war spirit in this country, and who desired renewed interference in the Transvaal, that no greater misfortune could occur for the honour and reputation and dignity of this country, than that we should again be inveigled into operations in South Africa. It surely could not be said that this country was in need of increased territory.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Chairman whether the hon. Gentleman was in Order in referring to the question of the Transvaal, seeing that there was already a Motion before the House on that subject?

The CHAIRMAN: I understood the hon. Member to be adducing reasons why he considered that the number of men to be voted should be reduced; and, in that case, his remarks are in Order.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, he would not trespass on the discussion which was coming on shortly. He only wished to say generally that our emigrants did not select our Colonies, but rather went to America, which had immense territories unoccupied; and it would be a great mistake to seek to augment territories which would be a constant source of danger and expense. Unfortunately, everything in this country tended towards a military spirit and a military system. He would take the case of our Royal Family. The Members of the Royal Family were not supposed to have equipped themselves for the duties of life until they had entered the Army or the Navy, and it was the same with all classes of society. Until the people of this country took the matter into their own hands, and changed the present system, which left it to the small majority that was interested in it, he was afraid we should be the victims of one delusion after another; and, in reality, there would not be much to choose between the policy which the Liberal Government were forced to accept when it came into Office, and the policy of those whom they followed.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 132,632, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1884."—(*Mr. Illingworth.*)

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he had listened with regret, and even with pain, to the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth); and, so far as he could understand the hon. Member's speech, he proposed to reduce the Vote for Men by 5,000, on three grounds. The first ground was the great depression throughout the country. He quite sympathized with the hon. Member in regard to the depression, which he knew affected all classes in the country; and he felt, quite as much as the hon. Member could feel, that anything that Parliament could do to reduce the Expenditure of the country, and to benefit the suffering people, ought to be done. But the question was whether reducing the number of men in the Army would effect that. The hon. Member had not stated in what branches of the Service he would make the reduction; he thought, however, he should be able to show that the Army was not, in reality, as efficient as, perhaps, the hon. Member thought it. The second ground which the hon. Member took—and it was not an unimportant ground—was the enormous Expenditure of the present Government; and he contrasted it—and not very fairly—with the Expenditure of the preceding Government. If the hon. Member would make the contrast fairly, putting out of sight all Party considerations, he would find that the Expenditure of the late Government would contrast most favourably with the present, for he would find that the Expenditure of the present Government had been going on by leaps and bounds, notwithstanding all their professions to the contrary. The third ground—and that a most remarkable ground—was that as before and up to the present moment there never were so many men under arms in Europe, this was the time when this Island—this nation, which had more possessions all over the world, and more scattered possessions, than any other nation—should decrease its Army by 5,000 men. Upon none of these grounds could he agree with the hon. Member, except the second; and, looking, as he did, to the efficiency of the Army, he would state as clearly as he could what he believed to be the present condition of that Army. He agreed with his hon. and gallant Friend on his left (Colonel Alexander), who had said it did not do to too closely scrutinize the Army at a moment when it had accomplished such brilliant achievements; but, at the same time, he thought that it was by such Expeditions that we were able to find out what were the failings of the Army, and how they ought to be remedied. He, for one, certainly thanked the Government for the way in which, when they had made up their minds to go to war, and even before they had absolutely determined to go to war, they set to work to prepare an Army to send to Egypt which would do credit to this country; and he would venture to say that the Army did do its duty, from the highest to the lowest, thoroughly and efficiently, and thoroughly deserved the credit which was accorded to it by the Queen and by Parliament, and, in contradiction to what the hon. Member for Bradford had said, by the whole nation. It was all very well to deny it; but there was nothing in the conduct of the Government of which the country had more approved, and nothing that had made the Government for the moment so strong, as the victory at Tel-el-Kebir, and the rapidity with which the Army had been despatched and had conducted itself in Egypt.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, he had not offered any opinion on the mere military exploits of the Army, for he had as much pride in the English Army as the hon. and gallant Baronet had.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he did not wish to cast any reflection on the hon. Member, who, he was sure, liked to see men do their duty wherever they were placed, and who, he knew, would agree that the Army did do its duty to the heart's content of the country. But, looking at that Army as it was, and looking at the lucid speech of the noble Marquess and the statements he had made, there were three defects in the Army as it was organized and sent to Egypt, which the noble Lord admitted while minimizing them. In the first place, he admitted that the transport and commissariat were not efficient or sufficient, though he hoped before long to place those branches of the Service in a more efficient state. He had no wish to cast any reflection on the noble and gallant General (Lord Wolseley), who commanded that Expedition; but he thought the man who could point with his finger to Tel-el-Kebir, and say that was where the fight should take place before the 15th of September, ought to have been able, with all the appliances at his command, to have had his transport, his commissariat, and his medical staff ready to act with the advanced guard of the Army. It was known to the authorities where the base of the operations was to be, and where the attack would commence; and, surely, when it was so well known where the troops would be, the gallant General ought to have been very careful of those precious lives which we had sent out. A little more trouble, and, perhaps, a little extra expense, would have done all that was necessary; and he would commend that consideration to the noble Marquess, because he had recently been Secretary of State for India, and the commissariat and transport of the Indian Contingent were admirable in every shape and way. The Armies in Afghanistan were never short of provisions and transport—notably the advance from Cabul to Candahar under General Sir Frederick Roberts; and had it not been for our Indian troops in Egypt many of our men would indeed have fared badly. The Indian troops had everything with them; and if the noble Lord would apply the system in India to the Army at home, he would, indeed, do good service. He gave the noble Lord the greatest credit for being independent, and for working without going to the permanent officials, whose only object was to cut down expense. If the noble Lord allowed himself to be led by them, he would take the wrong course, and would starve the Army at a critical moment. He would give, in a different way, an illustration of this. The present Postmaster General had done more to reform the Postal Service, and to show that he had the interests of the country at heart, than almost any of his Predecessors, by acting, after due inquiry, on his own opinion and of his own accord; and if the noble Lord would only do the same with regard to the Army, he would do well for the country, and earn great credit. But it had been said that the Army at Tel-el-Kebir was composed of nothing but young soldiers. He would not go into the despatches; but, looking at the Returns, he found that the total number of men was 10,652, and of those 9,504 were over the age of 21 years, and of those 6,187 were of 24 years of age and upwards; and, therefore, the men who fought at Tel-el-Kebir were well-seasoned soldiers—old soldiers who could do their duty under difficult circumstances, and men to whom alone the country could trust in the future. That Return did not include the Marines, as fine a body of old soldiers as ever existed. The noble Lord had said that he was going back, in a certain way, in the direction of 18 years; but, although at one time he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) thought it unwise to give up the 18 years' limit, he was convinced that, having given up 18 years, the Government ought not to go back to it again, for no man could go into a campaign like the Egyptian Campaign who was not 21 years of age or more. He did not think the noble Lord was quite accurate in his statement as to the numbers of men who were sent to Egypt, although he was quite sure the mistake was quite unintentional. The Report from the Horse Guards, dated March 10, showed that there embarked from this country 18,882 men of all ranks, and from the Mediterranean 7,555. Those were all more or less old soldiers. Then there embarked from India 5,863 men—making a total altogether of 32,303. The Reserves called out numbered 11,649, and of that number 4,363 embarked for Egypt; none went to the Mediterranean; 705 of all ranks proceeded to Cyprus, and subsequently to Egypt — altogether 33,303 men, including the 4,363 Reserve men, sent to Egypt. He wished to point out this. We had an Army at home and in the Colonies of 126,850 men. His hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Alexander) had said that the Foot Guards were 849 below their strength. If they took off from the Army 26,850 for the Colonies and for the under-strength of the Army, they had 100,000 men at home; and out of that 100,000 at home they were able to send only 18,882 to Egypt, having to call upon our Mediterranean Forces to go to Egypt, and having to call out our First Reserve. He was quite ready to admit that the First Army Corps was not so efficient as it might be, or probably would be in the future, yet to find that out of that enormous number of men we were only able to send 18,882 was certainly a most marvellous thing. It might so happen that there would be a complication in the East, when we could not move men from Gibraltar or Malta; and, in that case, where should we find a sufficient number of men to send out as a Division of the Army? He was also informed, on the best authority, that supposing we wanted to send out another Army Corps after our first two Divisions of the Army had been sent out, we should not be able to send out more than 25,000 out of the enormous Army we had at home, and after the enormous expenditure to which we went. They had some practical information on the subject; they had the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting, and they also had the Report of Lord Airey's Committee, which he commended to the attention of every economist on the other side of the House; they had also had, two years ago, a most interesting pamphlet from that gallant officer, Sir Lintorn Simmons, and they had in *The Nineteenth Century* a review of the present state of waste in the Army, and that review he also commended to every Member of the House. He commended it to their very careful consideration, because it had been thoroughly threshed out, it had been thoroughly thought out, and it had been compiled from the Army Returns that were presented to the House, and had been taken in part from the Report of Lord Airey's Committee. He ventured to extract, from the information above named, certain facts which would be useful to the House; but he must not forget to mention that they had, besides the Army and the First Class Reserves, the Militia Reserve, which consisted of 27,274 men. He was glad to hear the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) say that it was intended to allow an increased amount of ammunition to the Army. It was a fact to be regretted that our Reserves shot very badly; in short, our Regular Army, so far as reports from Egypt came, shot extremely badly. He would now ask how the Army sent out to Egypt was composed? The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) had talked about the Cavalry; he would presently go into that question. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was Secretary of State for War at the time the Egyptian Expedition was sent out, sent out four regiments to make up a brigade, instead of three whole regiments, each regiment being something like 200 men below its proper strength. It must be remembered that when they were diminishing the number of regiments at home they were diminishing their power of expansion; and they were, in reality, putting the country to far greater expense than if three regiments went out fully equipped and of their full complement. It must also be borne in mind that in the First Army Corps, which ought to be thoroughly efficient, and up to the mark in every respect, each regiment was always called upon to find men for its linked battalion. He would not go at length into that matter; but he must point out that last year the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Exchequer stated distinctly that nine-twentieths of the Army were under one year's service. He took the right hon. Gentleman's words down at the time, and he remembered the right hon. Gentleman saying that he hoped that in future that might be rather an exaggeration. The right hon. Gentleman, however, made that statement, and that was what the country had to look at — namely, that nine-twentieths of these men were under one year's service. After what they had seen and heard, could it be doubted that an Army of this kind was not an efficient Army to send into the field? But there was another thing which the Committee ought most carefully to consider. They had heard a great deal of the waste of the Army. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) went into this question; but he did so in a rather perfunctory manner. He simply pointed out what was shown by the Inspector General of Recruiting; but he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) would like to take the noble Marquess back to the statement made in the Report of Lord Airey's Committee concerning the real condition of the waste of the Army. In the first eight years after short service, there were 184,110 recruits enlisted; of these 123 per 1,000 disappeared before the end of the year in which they were enlisted; 240 per 1,000, or nearly one-fourth, disappeared before the end of the next year, with an average service of about eight months; and 290 per 1,000 before the end of the following year, with an average service of one year. Such was the waste of the British Army —290 per 1,000 from desertion and other causes, with an average service of one year. It was also stated that about 13 per 1,000 would have died, 39 per 1,000 would have been invalided, and 50 per 1,000 had purchased their discharge. He noticed that men fraudulently enlisted had been retained in the regiments into which they had enlisted upon the second occasion, and had not been sent back to the one from which they deserted. Such an arrangement might save expense; but he doubted whether it was to the interest of the Service that it should be carried out. The Annual Statement contained a series of facts that could not be disputed, and the noble Marquess instanced what he considered a more hopeful state of things in 1881-2; but if they looked at the year 1879 they would find that 25,927 recruits were enlisted, and that 6,641, or 256 per 1,000, had gone before the end of the year 1880; in 1880 there were 25,622 enlisted, and there were 6,125, or 239 per 1,000, who had left before the end of the year 1881; and in 1881 there were 26,258 enlisted, and during that year 3,449, or 131 per 1,000, had disappeared before the end of that year. What was the general result of this state of things? It was that the waste continued, and that desertion still existed upon an enormous scale. In eight years the cost of desertions to this country had been the enormous sum of £2,300,000. It might be taken that certainly one-fourth of the recruits who joined the Army were out of it before the end of the second year, having done no real service, and having cost the country £500,000, or about the sum proposed to be reduced in the Estimates by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) in cutting off 5,000 men. This waste he had mentioned went on in subsequent years, but at a less rapid rate; and the £500,000 he had mentioned was a fair estimate of the real cost to the country. There was just another series of figures that he thought it well to bring under the notice of the Committee. This was the only opportunity they had of placing clearly before the Committee and the country a statement of the waste of the Army, and he did not think it would be considered a waste of time. In the first six years of short service, from 1870 to 1875 inclusive, there were 122,281 recruits who joined the Army. At the date of the Return the period for which the men had enlisted had in no case expired; but of long-service men, 64,588 were enlisted, and only 28,800 were serving in January, 1882. Of short-service men there were 57,693 enlisted; but only 7,811 were still serving in the Army, and 22,662 had gone to the Reserve, showing a loss during that time to the Army and the country of 63,608 men, or 529 out of every 1,000 enlisted, and fully accounted for the small numbers in the First Class Army Reserve. Although the noble Marquess said it was not, this year was nearly as bad. The desertions this year were 4,143, though nearly half had been returned to the Army; 3,388 had purchased their discharge; and the total decrease to the Army this year had been 33,032. In 1881 the decrease was 26,258, so that the decrease this year was greater than the decrease of last year by 6,674. They all knew that next year things would be worse, and that there would be nearly 36,000 men required to make up the complement of the Army next year. The great problem was—How were they to get these men; and how was it that men deserted, and that such a large number purchased their discharge? Was the Army unpopular, or what was it that made men desert? Was it the uncertainty of the time they would remain; was it because of the conversations that went on in the barrack-room; or was it because of the unsettled state of the men's minds? He believed that they must not go back to 18 years of age; they must take men who were efficient, and they must be paid as much as was paid to other men in the country. It would be far wiser in the end to pay these men better, and have a better class of men, who would serve to the end of their term without deserting, and, consequently, without all this waste of the Army. The best way to encourage the men would be for the Secretary of State for War to pick out 25 per cent of the best men, who might be allowed to remain on long service, and get pensions, the same as non-commissioned officers did. What was wanted in the Army was the example of old soldiers, who would encourage young men, and show them what they had got to do and the advantages of the Service. They wanted efficient, able, steady, and well-disciplined men; and they would never have a well-disciplined Army unless they had a certain number of old soldiers in it. The question of Mounted Infantry had not been mentioned. Mounted Infantry did excellent service during the late war; and what he would suggest for the consideration of the noble Lord was that in every regiment in the First Army Corps—indeed in every regiment—30 of the best shots, and of the best character, should be picked out and drilled as Mounted Infantry; they should be taught to ride, and some old horses could easily be found for them, and an officer of each regiment who thoroughly understood the work and his duty should be appointed to command them. If this were done, it would be found that when an Army Corps went abroad each regiment would have 30 effective horsemen. He was as much opposed as any man in the House could be to Mounted Infantry becoming Cavalry. What was wanted was a distinct and detached corps from each regiment—men joined together for particular purposes, and serving under an officer with whom they had been accustomed to act. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would be one of the first to acknowledge that Mounted Infantry did good service in Egypt. Now, one word only about the Cavalry. He was delighted when he heard the noble Marquess say it was not intended to interfere with the Cavalry, because he had no hesitation in saying that if it were attempted to deal with the Cavalry in the way that it had been asserted the War Office intended to deal with it, the effect would be most mischievous to the country. As he understood it, the noble Marquess proposed that for the future each regiment in the First Army Corps should be composed of three squadrons, if on active service, and that the fourth squadron of the regiment should be the depôt squadron. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) would go further and say, increase the Indian regiments by one troop, and have, if necessary, two depôts, one at Canterbury, and another in the North. Let the squadrons at the depôts recruit for the regiments abroad, and then he was perfectly certain that the officers of the squadrons would take that interest which was not now taken in the depôt at Canterbury, because there were, at the present time, neither enough men nor horses belonging to each regiment to take up the time and attention of the officers. He was sorry it had been necessary for him to occupy so much of the time of the Committee. The waste in the Army was very great. We had the men on paper, and the country had not got the Army it ought to have. The present system had not been an absolute success; the Government knew it perfectly well. They knew it as well as the men in the Army. There was no use in disguising the fact, and this was the place and time to lay it bare. The recent Expedition to Egypt had shown what the country could do; but it had also shown the weaknesses of its Army. He implored the noble Marquess to consider how he could get in the Army a class of men who would remain, to consider how the Army could be made thoroughly efficient, and how, in future, instead of being able to send out only one Army Corps, we could send out a second, with thoroughly competent transport, commissiarat, and, above all, medical staffs. He hoped the noble Marquess would not forget that there should be at least one medical officer to every regiment, and that that officer should know every man in the regiment, and should know the constitution and character of every man. He had simply made these observations in the interest of the country and for the welfare of the Army.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE said, he did not propose to follow the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) in his criticisms; but he desired to express the hope that it might be a very long time before we should have to turn out again from this country with that well-equipped Army, of which his hon. and gallant Friend had been speaking. He also rose to say how surprised he was to find that there was still an increase in the Army Estimates, especially when we were told in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech that we were on good terms with all our neighbours. Our troops were returning home, and, so far as he could judge, they were not likely soon to require a large number of fighting men. The noble Lord had come but very lately into Office, and, no doubt, he had got his figures from his Predecessor; but what he asked of his noble Friend was that, before he had been another year in Office, he would look not only at the question of organization, or the proper construction of the Army, but also into the question of how far the large expenses of the Army, as well as those of the Navy, could be reduced in the interest of the taxpayers of the country. He was well aware that constant pressure was brought to bear upon anyone who occupied the place of Chief or Head of the Army from all the military men, not only in the House, but out of it, and that all the suggestions made were such as must necessarily involve great expense. But, since he had had the honour of a seat in the House of Commons, he had witnessed a large number of changes, and every one had been brought forward in the guise of cheapening the cost of the Army to the taxpayer; but, as a matter of fact, there had been a steady advance in the cost to the taxpayer. A few years ago Purchase in the Army was abolished, and then Parliament was told that the country would, under the new system, possess as efficient a body of officers, but at less expense; that the troops would be better handled by the new officers than by men who purchased their commissions. Then they had before them the questions of the localization of the Forces, short service, the creation of Volunteers and Reserves; and, instead of any one of these matters tending to the diminution of the cost of the Army to the country, they had added to the cost. We had a Force of something like 250,000 Volunteers. They, however, seemed to be of no account, though, as far as those who could not take a professional view could judge, many of them disported themselves as if they were efficient soldiers. He was well aware that the country had to provide for Indian exchanges and for other draws on the Army; but it was many years since we withdrew our troops from the Colonies. Those troops were brought home, and when it was said there were now 126,000 at home, there were, at least, 40,000 more than when he first entered the House. They would be told that whilst countries, generally, were in arms, it was unsafe for this country to be anything but very well armed; but that really brought them home to the question which of the Continental nations we were going to fight. One looked round to see whether it was Germany, or France, or Italy, we were about to fight; but he was at a loss to conceive which we should choose as our enemy. At the present moment, emigration was proceeding rapidly in the case of Germany, a country which had one of the largest and finest Armies in the world. In that country, however, penury was stalking about in the streets, people were destitute, and that Army, which was the pride of Germany, looked as if it was going to be its ruin. About this time last year he was in the South of Italy, and on all sides he heard complaints of the large expenses of the Army; the people who rejoiced in a united Italy were now complaining that they were worse off. There were certain aspects of the position of England which certainly did cause the Chancellor of the Exchequer, at any rate, to pause before he advocated a very large expenditure upon the Army. There was one matter which his hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) had not touched upon, and that was that they saw daily that there was going to be a very much less income from the Excise duties than hitherto. There was more temperance in the country, and, no doubt, that temperance would ultimately have a great effect on the poor rates. It would be a long time, however, before the real effect was felt, because the drunken habits of the people had left such a large number of persons to be maintained in the workhouses. He asked, where were we to save unless we were to reduce the expenditure upon the Army and Navy? Some hon. Gentlemen seemed to be rather surprised that there should be no saving in the Civil Service Estimates; but he failed to see how any great saving could be effected in this quarter. He agreed with everything the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) had said with regard to the position of trade. He knew of no branches, except one or two, of the trade of the country, which, during the last four or five years, had been reasonably profitable. Agriculture, wool and cotton, coal, and iron trades—all the leading staple trades of the country—were not in a position in which they would furnish a large amount in Income Tax, and the workpeople had not been earning such large wages as fomerly. When they looked at the condition of the country generally, when they looked at the probable position of the Revenue which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have to handle, they were by no means gratified at the prospect of these large Army charges. He appealed to his noble Friend (the Marquess of Hartington) to look most seriously to the items which came under his manipulation—namely, those of the Army with the view, if possible, of decreasing them. Not many years ago the late Prime Minister, Lord Beaconsfield, made a speech, in which he warned the country as to bloated armaments. We had had a large number of wars from time to time; but he thought that when we considered what the cost of those wars had been, and what were the results, we must come to the conclusion that they were all wars in which we had better never have engaged. Going no further back than the Crimea, we spent much blood and treasure; and, at the present moment, there was not a man living in the country who would vindicate the justice of that war. That war brought about, in all probability, the Indian Mutiny. We had had wars in Abyssinia and South Africa, and as to the Egyptian War there were many on both sides of the House who considered it might have been avoided. In Egypt we lost many men, and spent much money; but, practically, we had got nothing out of the war, save an increased burden upon the taxpayers of this country. He believed that the keeping up of a large Army was an incentive to war. When anyone had a tool in his hand he was always anxious to use it, and so it was with the Army—the Secretary of State for War and the Commander-in-Chief were always subject to the temptation of trying its efficiency, and thus too ready to use it. True economy pointed to the Army being brought down to the lowest possible figure consistent with the honour and safety of the country; and he should have great pleasure in supporting the Motion made by the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth).

Lord EUSTACE CECIL said, he must congratulate the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) upon his recent speech, and also upon his re-accession to the Office of Secretary of State for War after an absence of 16 or 17 years. He was afraid the noble Marquess would think him a little ironical if he were to wish him joy in his Office. He could not help thinking that if the noble Marquess compared the present state of the Army with that of 17 or 18 years ago he must be filled with regret; and he must hope that in some way or other something might happen which would give him a chance of finding himself in a comfortable post, where he could rest and be thankful. He feared, however, that was not likely to be his noble Friend's fate. When he looked back 18 years, and recollected what the state of the Army was then, he confessed he saw a great many changes, but not quite so many improvements. Eighteen years ago the Army had a great deal of *esprit de corps* in its regiments, and it was full of old soldiers. At the present time something like half the old regiments had been erased from *The Army List* and the Army was full of boys. There was no doubt that Lord Cardwell's scheme of Reserve had been a costly one; the abolition of Purchase had brought about a forced retirement of officers, while short service had forced the soldiers back into civil ranks. The result was that the Army, instead of being a great profession, as it was in former days for both officers and men, was now little more than a temporary occupation. Again, if the Committee looked to the state in which the forces now were, they would find that we were not able to send out an Army Corps of even 30,000 without having to trench very largely upon the Mediterranean garrisons and our Forces in India, and without having to call a very large number of Reserve men back to the ranks. And if they were to look for that which they had a right to expect—namely, an efficient Reserve, numbering, as Lord Cardwell told them 12 years ago, 80,000 men, they found that we had not got above 25,000 Reserve men upon whom to fall back. And, lastly, if the events of Europe should necessitate our sending out another Army Corps, he really did not know where we should find one; we should have to go into the highways and byways for men. There was nothing like efficiency in our transport and medical arrangements, or in our Cavalry organization; and they had heard over and over again this evening that which he was afraid was too true—namely, that a great many of our men could not hit a haystack, much less a Boer or an Egyptian. And then the noble Lord was obliged to come down to the House and to ask for the largest sum of money which had been asked for since the Crimean War. He (Lord Eustace Cecil) never recollected such large Estimates. At this moment they were asked to pay £15,640,000; and the question the Committee had to decide, after listening to all that had been said—and he was bound to say the subject had been treated most exhaustively on both sides of the House—was whether the country had got the worth of its money? He believed it had not, and that if at this moment, or within the next year, we were called upon to enter into a European war, we should find ourselves in a very dangerous and difficult position. Much had been said about the extravagence of the Estimates; but he did not think the real increase of the Estimates had been noticed. Seventeen years ago the Estimates amounted to £14,000,000. During the time of Lord Beaconsfield's Administration—he believed it was in 1876—the Army Estimates were £13,989,000; but in 1883, only seven years after, the country were called upon for the sum of £15,640,000, or, in round figures, the people were asked for £1,500,000 more. He did not mean to say that prices had not increased in many respects. He knew, from the experience he had had in the War Office, that prices had increased; but he maintained that an increase of more than £1,500,000 in something like six years was a great and stupendous fact. He knew that the Secretary of State for War was always able to explain away the cost of the Army; but he (Lord Eustace Cecil) had very great doubt, from the experience he had had, whether Army expenditure was not capable of retrenchment and reduction. Having said this with regard to the increase of the Estimates, it was very proper to inquire whether we had an efficient Army. He would put the question of efficiency in the same category as that of economy. He observed that hon. Gentlemen opposite dwelt, and very rightly so, upon the question of economy. He (Lord Eustace Cecil) had not a word to say against that; but hon. Gentlemen must recollect that this was a small Island at the head of a great Empire, and it was absolutely necessary, not only that we should have a sufficient force to keep that Empire together, but to engage in any war in which we ought to take part. He would not take the Committee into all the questions which had been dealt with by his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Walter B. Barttelot). The hon. and gallant Baronet referred to the various reforms that had been proposed at different times, and went at some length into the question of waste in the Army. He (Lord Eustace Cecil) confessed that when he read the Inspector General of Recruiting's Report, it seemed to him to have been written with an evident desire to please those who employed him. That Report was too optimistic. There was a great deal of interesting matter in it; but he could not see that the Inspector General of Recruiting was justified in saying, at the end of his Report, as he did—"That, notwithstanding the diminution of recruits, there is every reason to be satisfied." When they found that the recruiting had fallen off 3,890 in the Infantry alone, and when he said, as he did at the beginning of the Report, that whereas recruits had been coming in only something like 330 weekly, at least 440 would be required to make up what was necessary for the year, the present state of things was anything but satisfactory. How many more would be required next year it was almost impossible to predict. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) said that the recruiting capacity of the country was not yet developed. What the noble Marquess meant by that he did not quite know. Possibly the noble Marquess meant to say that recruiting was not sufficiently understood by the classes from whom we drew our recruits. He (Lord Eustace Cecil), however, could not conceive why, in this age of railways, telegraphs, cheap Press, and education, it should take so many years to prove to the people the great advantages of the Army. Language of the kind used by the noble Marquess was heard year after year. Hope dwelt eternally in the Secretary of State for War's breast. The country was always hoping that something would turn up, and that our position would improve; but the only thing that did improve was the size of the Estimates. He did not think that recruiting in this country could be expected, upon the voluntary system, to go beyond a certain point. It was clear that, for some reason or other, we had almost exhausted our resources, and that, unless we were prepared to pay very largely, we should not be able to obtain the number of men we required, even for the very moderate force we now kept up. There was no doubt that a man of 20 years of age was worth any sum of money we could offer him; and he (Lord Eustace Cecil) would go further, and say that it would be better to spend a greater sum of money yearly in obtaining a sufficient number of men of that age than to spend what was now proposed in what had been called, and called rightly, a retrogressive step—namely, in obtaining boys of 18 years of age, who were perfectly unqualified to do military duty for two or three years after their enlistment. But, supposing we could not get such men, what were we to do? That was a question which the House of Commons ought to decide, and, as far as possible, offer its advice to the Secretary of State for War. He (Lord Eustace Cecil) had his own opinion upon the subject, and had no wish to disguise it. We ought not to depend upon our White population alone, but we ought to extend the use, more than we did, of our coloured troops in tropical and semi-tropical services. He knew the question of the further employment of coloured troops was considered many years ago; but a great many things had happened since then, and he did not know why the question should not be considered again. He was of opinion that when we entered into the Egyptian Expedition, we ought, instead of sending 10,000 or 15,000 White troops and 5,000 or 6,000 Indians, to have sent 5,000 or 6,000 White troops and 10,000 or 15,000 Indians. His idea always had been that if we were at war on the Gold Coast, or at the Cape, or in Egypt, coloured troops should be made far more use of than they had hitherto been; that we should mix them as far as possible with White troops, always holding the White troops in reserve, and in a position that they might, if necessary, do the hard fighting. Again, he had never been able to understand why, in some of our Mediterranean garrisons, we should not have a certain number of coloured troops. There was a strong feeling expressed some years ago on the occasion of Lord Beaconsfield bringing several thousands of the Indian troops to Malta. Only last year they were brought to Egypt; and he could not see that there would be any difficulty in bringing them a little further. He was not, however, for one moment advocating, nor did he wish they should take part in any of our wars in Europe. He would confine them, as far as he could, to tropical and semi-tropical countries, because he felt convinced they would save the White troops immensely. In an article in *The Nineteenth Century*, Sir Lintorn Simmons recommended, as a remedy for the present state of things, that we should offer at least 4*d.* a-day more deferred pay. He (Lord Eustace Cecil) looked in vain to see whether the gallant General had made any calculation as to what would be the cost of such a proposal. If 4*d.* a-day more in deferred pay were offered to each soldier, it would amount, in the aggregate, to no less than £1,500,000 a-year; and he (Lord Eustace Cecil) could not conceive a Secretary of State for War coming down to the House and asking for so large an addition to our already very large Expenditure. He heard the other night, from the noble Marquess, a statement as to what was likely to happen with regard to big guns. That was a question it was impossible to deal with exhaustively at this time, and he hoped the noble Marquess would give the Committee an opportunity of discussing Vote 12 at some reasonable hour on a future day. The fact that guns were to be no longer to be made of wrought iron, but of steel, would produce not only a revolution so far as the guns themselves were concerned, but a revolution which would cost, at the very least, from £6,000,000 to £10,000,000. He remembered that the change made 10 or 15 years ago in our system of heavy ordnance cost an enormous sum of money; and it would be well for the Committee and the country to take into serious consideration the great expenditure suggested. The change would not be confined to big guns. The pattern of our rifles would have to be altered very shortly, and a rumour had got abroad that before very long some adaptation of the magazine gun would be introduced. Whether that was so he was not able to say; but if it was, as he suspected it was, we should then have the re-arming of the whole of our Infantry, and, in due time, the whole of the Militia and Volunteers to provide for. When he said that the Estimates had a tendency to increase, he thought he was fully justified in showing where the expenditure must take place in the future. Unfortunately, they could not put a stop to invention. It went on year after year, nation after nation adopted it, and England could not afford to be behind in the race. Having shown in what ways there was a tendency to increase the Estimates, he maintained there was all the more necessity that every effort should be made to keep down the expenditure in other respects, care always being taken that efficiency should be combined with economy. He was bound to confess that every reform in the Army he had witnessed, whether it was bad or good, had always cost money. In the case of short service, for instance, men were constantly being transferred from one regiment to another; their clothing had to be altered; it was found that deferred pay, besides a certain amount of pension, had to be given to non-commissioned officers and to a certain number of other men—these and other things contributed to make short service far more costly than long service. Whether the abolition of Purchase was right or wrong, it had proved to be one of the most costly reforms. The result of Liberal reforms during the last 18 years had been to load the country with a vast Debt and a vast Expenditure. He did not know that he could add anything to what had been said over and over again, and he was certainly not going to repeat on that occasion what had been said already in reference to the subject of Purchase. There were some figures with regard to enlistment of men which it would be well to bear in mind when it was proposed to return to a lower standard of age for the admission of recruits. He would impress on the noble Lord that every man, according to the Report of Lord Airey's Committee, enlisted at the age of 20 cost the country £57, as against £138, which was the cost of a recruit enlisted at the age of 18. And this he thought was another reason why men should be enlisted at 20 instead of 18 years of age—namely, that at 20 they got a finished article, so to speak, while at 18 they enlisted a boy who was of no use for the first two years of service. He thought the noble Lord, although he might not entirely agree with him, would admit that some of those principles which had been advocated with reference to this matter by able men on that side of the House should be adopted. He hoped, however, there would be no radical changes, but that what was done would be done quietly, after full consideration, and without further increase of expenditure. He was certain, whatever changes might be necessary, that there was no more extravagant method of spending money in Army reform than the radical revolutions brought about during the last 18 years.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he had always great sympathy with the political principles of hon. Gentlemen near him; but with regard to the present Motion before the Committee, he might, perhaps, explain his view of the matter by saying that he had some doubt as to which was the cart and which was the horse. He agreed that it was desirable that we should diminish our aggressive tendencies and also our Army; but the question was whether we ought not to diminish our aggressive tendencies first. Having regard to the experiences of last year, he had some hesitation in backing up his hon. Friend's Motion, although, in many other respects, he coincided with the views he had expressed. It seemed to him that the speech of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) was by no means of a sanguine description. The noble Lord had admitted that there were considerable difficulties and drawbacks existing with regard to our present military position; and it seemed to him that the only remedy suggested was one which did not commend itself to the sense of the House—namely, that we should go back to the enlistment of boys of 18, and not be very particular about the medical and other examinations in which the recruits had to pass before being admitted into the Army. This in the end would be much more expensive, and before the recruits were fit for the duties of soldiers they would have gone through a great portion of their time of service. For these reasons, he felt there were grave difficulties in the way of the plan indicated by the noble Lord. With regard to the Egyptian Campaign, he believed that the conduct of affairs reflected, in many respects, great credit upon those engaged both in the Department of the Army and in the Department of the Navy. Her Majesty's Government, having undertaken the trade of war, had carried it out with efficiency and extreme economy; the war bill had not been nearly so large as on many other occasions; and this fact, in his opinion, reflected great credit on the Government and the Commander of the Forces. Still, the equipment of the troops sent from this country contrasted very unfavourably with those sent from India. The Indian troops, coming to Egypt with their arrangements completed, marched at once into the field; and he believed that so efficient were those arrangements that they only lost one man otherwise than in battle throughout the Campaign. He denied that the transport arrangements in the Afghan War were efficient; they broke down as completely as possible at the beginning—but the small force sent from India to Egypt was admirably equipped, and suffered little in consequence as compared with the English force, for whom adequate provision was not made. It seemed likely that our recruiting would seriously fall off unless it could be stimulated by some judicious changes. The general result of the debate that evening appeared to be that there was need of some kind of reform with regard to this matter. As a matter of general policy, he agreed with what had fallen from the noble Lord opposite (Lord Eustace Cecil), that we might greatly reduce the strain upon our White troops by a more extensive employment of troops from India. From our own population alone we could not become a great Military Power; and, although the time might arrive when it would be considered prudent to cease to aspire to too great Possessions all over the world, as long as we held great Possessions abroad he thought we should do well to avail ourselves of the military resources of India. He was sorry to say, however, that, at the present time, the effective part of our Indian Army had been overworked, not only in Cyprus and other places, but in

Afghanistan, so much so that we could not at present deplete it of men. Nevertheless, he agreed with the noble Lord the Member for West Essex (Lord Eustace Cecil), that we could employ a certain portion of Indian troops abroad with the good result of relieving the strain upon our own men. Coming to the European Army. For many years he had suggested that we ought to have two distinct classes of soldiers, one class consisting of short-service men who were to serve at home, and the other of long-service men who would serve in India and our other distant Possessions. He admitted, indeed, that the late Secretary of State for War had gone a considerable way in the direction indicated of establishing two classes of soldiers, although, in his opinion, the right hon. Gentleman had not gone far enough. In order to obtain a large number of recruits and a more respectable class of men for the Army, his plan would be, in the first place, to enlist all soldiers for a moderate term of service, and at the end of the first year to send abroad those who were willing to go on a long term of service; these men should be permitted to serve as long as they were fit; the other class of men, who were unwilling to go abroad, should be allowed to remain for home service in the Reserve. He was of opinion that if the matter were placed on that footing, we should get a more efficient and, on the whole, a cheaper Army than could be obtained by the present system. In that view he had placed on the Paper the Motion which stood in his name.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER said, he could not support the proposal of the hon. Member opposite, because he thought that, instead of reducing the number of men, we ought, under the present circumstances, rather to increase it. He felt some hope, after studying the subject for many years past and from the statement of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, that as a certain portion of the work for the Navy was to be handed over from the War Department, the charge for which had hitherto appeared on these Estimates, that a sum of money might henceforward be devoted to the further increase of the number of men. He could not agree with the remarks made by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) with regard to a short period of service for the Home Forces and a long period of service for the troops employed abroad. He should in a few words devote himself simply to the question of supply for the Army; and, in the first place, he wished to touch briefly upon the subject of recruiting. They had been told that evening, and they had likewise learned from official documents, that the recruiting for the past year had not been satisfactory, and that there was something like a decrease of 4,500 men in this respect. He wished, therefore, to point out what he considered to be one of the reasons why that decrease had taken place. The military authorities during the past year had brought in a different system of payments to recruiting officers. Up to last year recruiting sergeants received a bounty for bringing in recruits of £1; but that had been abolished, and for the Guards the recruiting sergeant now received the sum of 5*s.*; for the Royal Artillery and Engineers 3*s.* 6*d.*; and for the Infantry 2*s.* 6*d.* for each recruit. It was not now worth the while of a sergeant of Volunteers or Militia to spend any money in endeavouring to get recruits, seeing that he had to pay a considerable sum before he could get the recruit accepted. There was one matter in the Report of the Inspector General to which he desired to call attention; it had been alluded to by the Secretary of State for War, and with regard to it he thought some explanation should be afforded to the Committee before the number of men was voted. In page 7 of the Inspector General's Report, allusion was made to the provisions with reference to the attestation of recruits in the Army Act of 1881, in which it was clearly laid down that a recruit before he was enlisted or attested must be brought before a medical officer and also before a justice of the peace. The Inspector General suggested, in consequence of the difficulty of getting recruits, that Section 94 of the Army Act of 1881 should be so far modified that commanding officers should be authorized to attest men within the district they commanded; and he added that this would be of great advantage to the Service as well as to the recruits themselves, because waiting at a police court was often very distastful to respectable men. He asked whether the authorities had any intention of following the suggestion of the Inspector General? He was aware that this point was the subject of discussion when the Army Discipline Bill of 1879 was passing through the House, and that it was then decided by the authorities at the War Office that it was not desirable, for good reasons, that the attestation of recruits should be left to commanders of regiments or of depôts. There was another reason why he thought recruiting had not been so successful as was to be desired. They must not, perhaps, take the past year as an example, because there had been a war or a campaign in Egypt, and that, of course, excited certain young men in our villages with military ardour; but he thought they must look back to this—that the great falling off in recruiting was attributable to the territorial system, which was not at all popular throughout the agricultural districts. He spoke with some experience, as one who lived in a large agricultural district where for many years past there had existed a great interest in everything connected with the Army, and where he had in consequence heard, seen, and learned a great deal that related to this subject. The system as it now existed almost forced men to enlist in the territorial regiments. But men had old prejudices and feelings that made them like to enlist in regiments which they themselves knew, or of which they had, perhaps, heard from their fathers. Within the last few weeks a circumstance had occurred from which he knew that the territorial regiment in his own county would suffer much in the matter of recruits. Two men, whom he himself saw, and who had not enlisted in territorial regiments, but in regiments of their own choice, came into a village; one of these was a gallant Hussar, clothed in crimson overalls; the other, who, however, was not a Highlander, wore the kilt and the hose, and both attracted great attention. There was no doubt in his mind that the crimson overalls, and the gallant soldier with the Afghan medal on his breast, who had marched to victory with Sir Frederick Roberts, would attract the men of the village who wanted to become soldiers to enlist, not in the territorial regiment, but in others. But there were further reasons why recruiting had become unpopular. There could be no doubt, from the statement contained in the Army Estimates that the number of men who had purchased their discharge during the past year amounted to over 3,000—there could be no doubt that something must be wrong in the present system of recruiting. This matter had been referred to by previous speakers, and therefore he would not dilate upon it; but there could be no doubt that during the past year £48,000 had been paid by men who, within one year, or less than one year, of their enlistment, had declined to remain soldiers any longer. Another question that he wished to touch upon was that relating to the rejection of men. He noticed in the Inspector General's Report that 272 men had been rejected for being illiterate, and 16 men had been objected to, and not passed, for not being able to write. But was it really a matter of any importance whether recruits for the Army were or were not illiterate—whether they could or could not write? Under the present system a man after he joined the Army was sent to school and to the gymnasium, and a great deal of his time was taken up in that way when he might have been much better occupied in learning the duties of a soldier. The commanding officers of regiments were almost prevented from instructing their officers and men in battalion drill, owing to the immense amount of time which was taken up by the school and the gymnasium. He trusted that the military authorities at the War Office would look most carefully into this matter. Another matter, which grew out of the remarks that had been made by the noble Lord the Secretary of State for War, was musketry instruction. He was very glad to hear from the noble Lord that the Government had granted an additional supply of money for the musketry instruction of young soldiers. There could be no doubt that, although we paid a large sum of money for the School of Musketry at Hythe, and for the musketry instructors of the various regiments, the work of musketry instruction had been most fearfully neglected for many years past. It was only necessary to look back to the Zulu War to find that men were sent out from these shores, for active service in the field in a foreign country, who had never gone through a course of musketry. So, again, in the Transvaal War we sent out some men who had only had what was called a short course of musketry, which really meant nothing at all; and in the Egyptian War, which happened only last year, he would not go so far as to say that some of the men who were sent out to Egypt had never fired a shot in their lives, but he would say this, and he said it without fear of contradiction from any right hon. or hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench, that a regiment was sent to the Mediterranean last year, when the Egyptian War was in prospect, which contained 399 men who had never fired a ball-cartridge. He did not bring this fact forward at the time from patriotic motives; but he thought it only right, as an old soldier, that he should now mention it, so that it might be known that men were sent to the Mediterranean, when the campaign was opened, who had never fired and never seen a ball-cartridge. He should be most happy to support the noble Lord in voting any sum of money that might be required for musketry instruction throughout the Army, for that, he thought, was a most prominent and a most important point. He would also like to know whether the first 12 battalions for foreign service at the present time were up to their full strength of 900 men each, because reports were flying about to the effect, not only that the first 12 battalions for foreign service were not up to their full strength, but that battalions which were second and third on the roster, following the first 12 battalions, were not up to their full strength? There was very great difficulty in making up the strength of the battalions which were now short of men. He did not wish to press for an answer on this point now; but perhaps on some other Vote and on some future occasion the Government would be able to give him a reply. The point was, however, one of the utmost importance; for when they had laid it down in the Regulations that the various regiments should be of a certain establishment, it was most requisite that those numbers should be maintained, because he believed it was the fact that when our Forces were sent out to Egypt last year there was a very great difficulty found in bringing the battalions up to their full strength, and the authorities were obliged to call on the Army Reserve. He need not remind hon. Members that when the Army Reserve was instituted, they were told that it would only be called out in case of a national danger, and no national danger existed when the war broke out last year. It was very important that some steps should be taken for keeping the various regiments up to their full strength without calling out the Army Reserve. There was one thing in connection with the troops which he ought to have mentioned before, and which he thought would have a beneficial effect in getting men to enlist, and that was that there should be an increase in the daily rations. A soldier now had a ration of three-quarters of a pound of meat per day, and a certain amount of bread. No doubt, the ration of meat for the dinner meal was quite sufficient; but if a breakfast ration could be added to the daily meat ration, he thought, from what he had heard, as one who mixed and heard a good deal among Army officers, that it would be most beneficial, and would be most thankfully received by the men in the Service. Hon. Members were aware that three-quarters of a pound of meat was not a very large meal when it was the only meal in the course of the day, and those of them who had households of their own and kept up establishments, knew perfectly well that their housemaids and their footmen would turn up their noses if they were only to be allowed to have three-quarters of a pound of meat per day. When hon. Members came to think that there were young men of 19 years of age coming into the Service, and that they might probably have to go back, as had been stated this evening, to a year less in point of age—to the age of 18 years—it was most important that these young men should be properly fed and properly fitted to undertake any campaign for which they might be called upon. Another matter in connection with the statement of the noble Lord concerned the transport. He believed it was the fact that somewhere about 10,000 mules were purchased for the Egyptian Campaign. They were purchased for a very large sum—costing, he believed, something like £30 each. The noble Lord had told them that it was proposed, or, at all events, it had been referred to a Committee, that somewhere about 500 of these animals should be retained for the purposes of service at home, and to form a nucleus in case of any future war. He (Sir Henry Fletcher) thought they ought to know what had become of the remainder. When he said 10,000 mules, he might be wrong in his figures; but, at all events, it was somewhere near that number, and he would like to know what had become of them, and what sum they fetched when they were sold. He believed that a great many of them were brought from South America, and from other parts of the world, and that a great many of them were afterwards brought to Woolwich and sold there for something like £8 each. On this point he thought they ought to have some information. He also wished to bring forward a question in connection with the establishment of general officers in the Army. The general officers' establishment was now a fixed establishment, and he believed he was accurate in stating that for some time past there had been some seven or eight vacancies in that fixed establishment; and he would like to know why those vacancies were not filled up, because it was most important to the senior colonels of the Army that they should be promoted to the rank of general without any unnecessary delay. There was now established a Rule, under which a colonel was placed on half-pay, or was prevented from taking further active service in the Army after a certain age, and if a colonel's promotion were delayed—and he believed he was right in saying that the promotion of several colonels had been delayed during the last few months — some explanation should be given of the reason for that delay. One other question he would like to put in connection with the colonels of the Army. He did not wish on this occasion to mention any names; but some few months ago, on the termination of the Egyptian War, promotion was given to various officers in the Army, and with regard to the colonels, one was promoted over the heads of some five or six others, and he thought he was right in saying distinguished colonels, who were senior to him. He wished to know whether that was to be established as a precedent—that an officer who did not serve in Egypt, and who, as they all knew, had nothing to do with Egypt, was to be promoted over the heads of his senior officers, and that these other officers were to be considered as shunted, and were to be passed over on future occasions? The officers he alluded to were men who had served their Queen and country for years and years; and most of them had been mentioned in despatches and had received distinguished rewards. They had been passed over on this occasion; and he must respectfully ask that some explanation should be given simply as to whether it was to be regarded as an established precedent that the senior colonels were to be passed over, and whether these distinguished colonels, who had been passed over on this occasion, would be prevented in the future from rising to the rank of major general? He thanked the Committee for listening to him so patiently; but, as one who had taken some interest for many years past in everything connected with the Service, he had felt bound to say so much. As he saw his right hon. and learned Friend the Judge Advocate General in his place, he would like to put to him one or two questions, and he did not ask his right hon. and learned Friend to answer them now; but, perhaps, when the Votes with which the questions were specially connected, came on, some answer would be given. His right hon. and learned Friend was aware that he (Sir Henry Fletcher) took a great deal of interest last year in the question of fraudulent enlistment in the Army. He would like to know whether fraudulent enlistment had decreased or not? And he also wished to put another question in connection with another subject in which he was also greatly interested—the subject, namely, of the new arrangements for punishment in the field in lieu of flogging. Perhaps his right hon. and learned Friend would be able to offer to the House some few remarks as to the number of courts martial and the number of punishments that were inflicted during the last Egyptian Campaign? He did not ask for the information now; but it would be interesting, he thought, to the House and to the Army generally if it could be given at some time. He also wished to put to his hon. and gallant Friend the Surveyor General of Ordnance just two questions, leaving the hon. and gallant Gentleman to decide for himself whether he would answer them now or on some future occasion. The first was, whether the two-wheeled carts which were sent out to the Egyptian Campaign proved satisfactory or not? because he had been told that those two-wheeled carts, which were sent out at a considerable expense, though they might do very well for the roads in England or Ireland, were totally inadequate to meet the requirements of a passage over the sands of Egypt, and that many of the regiments which had those carts for their regimental transport were unable to get them up to the front. The other question which he wished to put to his hon. and gallant Friend was this. He understood that somewhere about 20,000 bedsteads were sent out to Egypt for the use of the troops, and he wished to know whether those 20,000 bedsteads still remained in Egypt, whether they had been started on their homeward voyage, or whether they had arrived in England? He asked this because it was a known fact, of which he could speak on good testimony, that many soldiers at Aldershot during the past winter had had no iron bedsteads at all to sleep upon, owing to the fact that those bedsteads had been sent out to Egypt. The men at Aldershot therefore had had to sleep upon wooden trestles, and had had to put up with a good many inconveniences and difficulties; and at the present moment a good many of the troops at Aldershot had had served out to them bedsteads which had been taken out of the hospitals in the Aldershot district and the neighbouring districts. He did not press for an answer to these questions now; but when the Votes came before the Committee he hoped the military authorities would endeavour to give him the information for which he sought. There was only one other question that he wished to put, and that was in connection with the troops sent out to the Transvaal. He wished to know whether it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to grant any medal or any other recognition to the troops who served in the Transvaal—who used their best endeavours as soldiers to do their duty, who fought day and night in the beleagured cities of the Transvaal, but who had never up to this time received any recognition of their services at all?

Sir ARTHUR HAYTER said, he would only trouble the Committee with a very few words; but one or two points had been raised which he would like to reply to at once. First, with regard to the recruiting in the Guards. The hon. and gallant Member for Ayrshire (Colonel Alexander) had, in his statistics, rather fallen short even of the deficiencies which existed at the present moment in the Guards. The figures were, at the present moment, 333 in the Grenadier Guards; 224 in the Coldstreams; and 352 in the Scots Guards; making a total of 909. All the Reserve men were now demobilized, and no less than 5,700 were discharged in January last. Orders had been given to the sergeants in all the recruiting districts that they should put it to each recruit who was fit physically, whether he was willing to join the Guards or the Artillery; and the sergeants had a direct interest in the matter, because the levy money would be raised to 5*s.*—from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* in the Artillery, and to 5*s.* in the Guards. The special recruiters were not abolished, and both systems were now in operation. The average weekly number of recruits for the Guards had increased very largely this year, as compared with the previous two years. From the 1st of January last the average number had been 17 per week, or an average of about 800 for the whole year, while the total number enlisted in 1881 was only 618, and in 1882 it was 656. As to the statements of the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) and the noble Lord the Member for East Essex (Lord Eustace Cecil), they had both of them pointed out that there would be a deficiency of men to go out if a second Army Corps had to be prepared; but they had forgotten the fact which the noble Lord the Secretary of State for War had mentioned, that no less than 17,000 men of the First Class Army Reserve had not been called out. All those men, in addition to 27,000 men in the Militia Reserve, were available, and might have been used.

Lord EUSTACE CECIL: But what would have been your Reserve, then?

Sir ARTHUR HAYTER said, that probably they would not all have been called out, and he simply mentioned the fact that they were not called out on the occasion referred to. Then the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex had said something about the youth of the Army, and had pointed out that the men who fought at Tel-el-Kebir were men of long service. But the fact was that no less than 8,042 of the men who fought in the victorious army of Tel-el-Kebir were men of under seven years' service. Our enlistment now was for seven years, but if on active service it was for nine years; therefore we could at any time put an army into the field quite as old as that which fought at Tel-el-Kebir.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: Does the hon. Gentleman say that there is an enlistment for nine years?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER said, the men were enlisted for 12 years, of which seven years were to be spent with the Colours, and five in the Reserve; but if the men were serving in India the term was prolonged to eight years, and if on active service it could be prolonged to nine years. Another point which had been mentioned by the hon. and gallant Gentleman was a very satisfactory one—that the number of men discharged for misconduct showed a considerable decrease when compared with the Returns for previous years. The number of men discharged for misconduct on the average from 1876 to 1880 was 1883, which number fell to 1,637 in 1881, and to 1,294 in 1882, and, therefore, it had dropped nearly one-third in two years. The number of men discharged as invalids had also fallen very considerably during the past two years. The average for the five years preceding 1881 was 408, out of 27,614, and in 1881 it fell from 408 to 287, and it was still falling, so that the Army had improved with regard both to conduct and physique. Although it was true that some men might be discharged as recruits who would do efficient service, it was satisfactory to know that there was a very considerable improvement both in the health and *morale* of these men. The hon. and gallant Member for Horsham (Sir Henry Fletcher) had spoken of an addition to the Army Code which would empower officers to attest recruits. The Judge Advocate General would take that matter into his consideration. But the change having been recommended by General Bulwer, there was little doubt but that it would be carried out. It was probable that an alteration might also be made in the matter of musketry instruction. One of the suggestions was that the prizes should be increased, so that all marksmen, and not merely 10 per cent of them, should have prizes. That, no doubt, would do very much to bring about an increase in the number of marksmen. The hon. and gallant Gentleman had also asked a question with regard to the transport animals. He (Sir Arthur Hayter) thought he had mentioned before, that a large number of the mules were sold, and that 120 used as transports had come home. Some were now in Malta, and some, of course, were still with the Army in Egypt. His hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Kincardineshire (General Sir George Balfour) had made some stringent criticisms upon the statement of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for War, and had said, that these Estimates were no less than £344,000 in excess of the former Estimates. But his hon. and gallant Friend had omitted to mention that £144,000 of that was due to the exceptional Expedition to Egypt, every shilling of which would be repaid. The calling out of the Irish Militia increased the Estimates by no less a sum than £143,000, and the additional day in Leap Year accounted for a further sum of £37,000; so that these two items alone made up £180,000 of the remainder of the increase. He had now only to trouble the Committee with an enumeration of the changes which it was proposed to make in his own Department—the Army Pay Department. There had for some time been some dissatisfaction in that Department, because the officers thought there were less well treated than others in the Supplemental Departments of the Army. What was proposed was, that the number of chief paymasters should be increased from 12 to 15; that all officers who joined the Department before June, 1881—all of whom joined as captains—should have the rank of major in five years, while those who joined after that date should have the rank of major in 10 years. After 25 years' service they would be allowed to retire; and if from ill-health or any other cause it was necessary for them to retire before that period, they should have the same retiring allowance as was given to similar ranks of their combatant brethren. Arrangements would also be made by which they would have annual leave of absence by adding to the pay of other officers who would perform their duties for them, they, however, being held responsible for the accuracy of their own accounts. It was also proposed to give them quarters as in other Departments, or an equivalent allowance. The Department would be very much better manned by the formation of a class of Departmental clerks. These men would would be taken from the Pay Offices and turned into clerks, so that the pay officers would have clerks specially instructed. With regard to quartermaster sergeants, their pay would be raised from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* a-day, and that would bring them up at once to the maximum rate which all quartermaster sergeants could receive. Veterinary surgeons were to be promoted to the rank of captains after 10 years' service, and their pay increased, while inspecting veterinary surgeons would get the rank of colonel after a certain time.

MR. BULWER said he had listened with great satisfaction to the speech of the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), who had moved the reduction of this Vote. It was an interesting reminder to the country of the difference between Liberal promises and Liberal performances. It was not the first time he had listened to attacks on the Government on account of their extravagance. A great deal had been heard about the extravagance of the Party to which he belonged when they were in Office; but he generally found that when the Liberals got into Office the most frequent attacks upon them were made by their own supporters. Mr. Cobden, in 1862, told them that the Liberal Government had added £8,000,000 more to the expenses of the country in four years than had the Conservative Party who preceded them. In 1871 the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Jacob Bright) prayed to be delivered from the tender mercies of an Economical Government; and now, again, in 1883, he heard the hon. Member for Bradford call the Government to task for increasing the burden of the taxpayers. He did not, however, always agree that our Expenditure was extravagant, for as our Empire and our wants increased so we were bound to meet those wants; therefore, it did not follow that increased Expenditure was extravagance. But the hon. Member had urged this reduction upon the ground that there was great distress in the country; that agricultural interests were depressed, and that the commercial classes were also depressed. What reason was this for reducing the strength of the Army? If the hon. Member were in distress, would he ask the authorities to reduce the police? But we kept our Army on the same principle as the police—for the protection of our country and our dominions. The hon. Baronet the Member for Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) said we must not increase our Army, but we might increase the expenditure on the Civil Service, because, although the agricultural and trading and working classes were distressed, the people still wanted education. But if distress were any argument in favour of reducing the police, it was an equally good argument in favour of cheaper education. Our Civil Service expenditure had increased by about £3,000,000 since the late Government left Office. As regarded the increased Military expenditure, he heard with satisfaction from the noble Lord that the increase proposed would be incurred in supplying the troops with ammunition to teach them how to shoot. Some years ago the Duke of Somerset said we had a Liberal Government, an Army that could not march, and a Navy that could not swim; he was afraid it might be said now that we had an Army that could not shoot. Probably the Committee were not aware of the real condition of our Army in regard to shooting; but they knew what took place at Majuba Hill. That was because our soldiers could not shoot. They also knew what happened at Kassassin. A 40-pounder gun fired 90 rounds at the enemy, and the infantry many thousands, and the whole list of killed and wounded only numbered 40. On another occasion the Egyptian cavalry were within 400 or 500 yards of our soldiers, who fired volleys calmly and quietly by word of command from the battalion commander, and managed to hit one horse. At Tel-el-Kebir the shooting of our soldiers—as General Willis stated publicly a few days since—was "simply infamous," and it was only because the Egyptian soldiers were not able to shoot at all that our attack did not end in a tremendous disaster. Men ought to be taught to shoot before they reached the butts, and he believed no money could be more wasted than in sending men to shoot at butts before they were thoroughly instructed in the use of their arms. Everybody admired the way in which our regular troops shouldered and presented arms, and the skill and precision with which they wheeled like a gate upon its hinges; but what was the use of all that if the men could not shoot? He did not wish to say one word against the excellence of the material of which our troops were made; in fact, he was lost in admiration at the gallantry which even the consciousness of their own incapacity could not cool. The hon. Baronet the Member for Durham (Sir. Joseph Pease) suggested that the existence of a large and efficient Volunteer Force was a reason for reducing the number of our Army; but the hon. Baronet was never under a greater delusion, for he (Mr. Bulwer) believed that if such a notion got abroad among the Volunteers as that their existence would be made the excuse for reducing the Army, the Volunteer Force would vanish. [*Ironical cheers.*] He (Mr. Bulwer) perfectly understood those cheers; but he would remind those who uttered them that our Volunteers were made of the same flesh and blood as our soldiers, and were animated by the same courage and the same spirit of patriotism, and were as ready to perform the duty which they had undertaken; but that was to defend the country in the time of war, and against invasion, not to take the place of the Army in time of peace.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, he wished to point out that the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) did not propose any reduction. His objection was to any increase of our Army; and the hon. Member for Bath (Sir Arthur Hayter) had not explained why this year, when we were apparently at peace with all the world, a larger number of men was asked for than had ever been voted in this country before. If 132,000 men were sufficient last year, why did we want 137,000 now? As a matter of fact, the right hon. and gallant Member for Lancashire (Colonel Stanley), in the last year of the late Administration, moved for a fraction under 132,000 men; and the highest strength in a time of peace under Lord Beaconsfield's Administration, was, he believed, 133,000. What those who were called Economists wished was not to interfere with the efficiency of the Army, but to know why, in a time of peace, a War Establishment should be maintained, and at what figure the Peace Establishment of this country was to be put? In March, last year, 132,000 men were voted; then hostilities broke out between this country and Egypt in the summer, and this marvellous Expedition, which all men praised, was sent out fully equipped, and won a victory which reflected the greatest credit on the men who organized and commanded it. Did that show that we had not a sufficient Peace Establishment last year? Our Peace Vote had always been sufficient; and he saw no reason, in what was to be anticipated this year, to justify an addition of 5,000 men. The hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) had spoken for one of the largest constituencies in England, and the hon. Baronet (Sir Joseph Pease) had spoken for another. Both were working-class constituencies. The feeling in this country in respect to the growing expense of our Army and the Civil Service was gathering strength every day; and, whatever Government was in Office, if they did not reduce these expenses, they would be swept from power. We were spending £5,000,000 more on our Army and Navy than we spent in 1857, after the Crimean War. He and his hon. Friends were making no attack on the Military expenditure of the Government; but what they asked—and they had received no answer from the Treasury Bench—was why, in a time of peace, the Government were increasing the Military Establishment by 5,000?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, I think the Committee will excuse me if I do not, at this time of night, attempt to give an answer to some of the numerous questions put to me during this discussion. Many suggestions have been made, and I hope hon. Members who have addressed the Committee will not suppose that, because specific answers are not given, their suggestions will not be considered. All I want to do is to point out, in reference to what has fallen from the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), that I think, though he has not done me the honour of listening to my statements in moving the Estimate, he has somewhat misrepresented the hon. Member for Bradford upon the Motion to reduce the Vote. I endeavoured to explain that the apparent increase in this Estimate is not not really an increase in numbers at all. Part of it is accounted for by the transfer to this Vote of the permanent staff of the Yeomanry Cavalry and Volunteers—1,740 men; and that is no increase either in numbers or in expense. The remaining 2,500 men are accounted for by the new mode in which the Infantry on the lower Establishment are arranged; and that, again, is not a real increase in numbers, and involves no additional pay. What I endeavoured to point out was, that what we have done in the present year is to ask Parliament to sanction the maximum Establishment at which the Army will remain part of the year; while, for the other half, it will be below that figure. The Establishment will remain an average Establishment; and, therefore, there is no real increase in the numbers, and no increase in the expense of the Army under this Vote. I must do the hon. Member for Bradford the justice to say that I do not think he bases his Motion on any such argument. I did not hear him refer to this nominal increase. He moved the reduction as a protest against the amount, and, so far as I heard his arguments, they were such as would have told as strongly in favour of a much smaller or a much larger Establishment. In fact, I thought many of his arguments went in the direction of proving that we did not require any Army at all. I do not think that is the view taken by the hon. Member for Bradford, although I admit that this is a perfectly legitimate opportunity for him to enter a protest against the cost of our Army if he thinks fit. Still, the debate has turned so little on the issue he has raised, that I do not think it is necessary for me now to follow him into the arguments he used. I would only point out this inconsistency—that whereas last year the Committee, at the instance of my right hon. Friend (Mr. Childers), raised the Army by a number of men, it is now proposed to reduce the number 2,000 below the mark sanctioned last year. I hope the Committee will not accept the proposition of the hon. Member for Bradford.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:* — Ayes 36; Noes 114: Majority 78.—(Div. List, No. 32.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2.) £4,121,300, Pay and Allowances.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked whether the noble Lord proposed to take this Vote now?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Yes.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, he asked the question, because the Vote in the particular form in which it was suggested to them raised a question of principle which he did not know whether the noble Lord was prepared to discuss at this late hour (1.15 a.m.). The question was a novel one—namely, whether or not a number of men maintained on the English Establishment could be maintained out of the revenues of a foreign Government? That was a question which had never before—certainly not within the last six years—been brought on in the House. If the noble Lord wished to take the Vote now, there were one or two questions which he (Lord George Hamilton) would like to put to him in reference to it. They had heard a good deal about Expenditure to-night. The new form of Accounts in which the Estimates were presented made it difficult to follow or ascertain how much the Estimates were in excess of the Estimates of a few years back. Under the old system the gross Vote appeared and there were deducted certain extra receipts. He understood that, under the present system, the extra receipts were deducted from the gross Estimate, and they had in the Vote only the net Estimate; and the consequence of that he should like to point out to the Committee. The gross Estimate for the last year the late Conservative Government was in Office was £15,500,000, from which was deducted extra receipts £561,000; but now the Estimate was £18,291,000, from which was deducted the enormous sum of £2,685,000 for appropriations in aid. He wished the noble Marquess to tell them what these appropriations in aid were? If they added the appropriations that appeared in the old Accounts and the amount that the Indian revenues brought in, they could easily bring the increase up to £1,600,000. He should like to ask the noble Lord to tell them where the extra amount came from, and whether he could not present an Account to the House giving the Estimates in their old shape? If the Estimates were presented in their old shape, the increase would appear very much larger than the sum here set forth. Whenever the Estimates were so changed as to change the ground of comparison, all effective criticism on the Expenditure was for three or four years effectually counteracted. At this time of night it was too late to go into the various details of this Vote; but there were a number of discrepancies which required explanation. For instance, if the noble Marquess would look at page 5, he would find that there was an apparent decrease of £40,700 and a real increase of £52,200, and if these two were added together they amounted to £92,900; there was then a certain sum paid by Egypt; and if these items were all added up they would be found to amount to £144,000. Now, it was perfectly clear that if this Vote was diminished to the extent of the sum contributed by Egypt, as was stated in the explanation of differences, the real increase would be found to be not £52,000, but £103,000; therefore, there was a discrepancy of £51,000 between the amount in the note of explanation and that for the appropriation in aid. It was no use going into these details at this hour; but he hoped the noble Marquess, if he could not reply now, would, in the course of a day or two, consider the matter and say whether he could lay on the Table the Estimates in their old shape, so that they could see exactly what these appropriations in aid were, and how it was that they amounted this year to the enormous sum of £2,685,000.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that formerly the sums which were voted in these Estimates showed the amounts which were required for Army service only—that was to say, that if the Department did work for other people and obtained repayment for that work, neither the work nor the repayment appeared in the Estimates, and the Estimates only showed the work done for the Department itself. On the other hand, there were certain repayments in the nature of extra receipts, not on account of work done for other parties, but on account of receipts under special arrangements, from India, for instance, in connection with particular Votes with which sales of old stores, and the like, used to appear as extra receipts. The Vote in this respect was taken in gross, but not so far as work done for other Departments was concerned. That work done for other Departments appeared in the Estimates for those other Departments and not in the ordinary Estimates. What was now thought the best method of account was to show in the 1st column, page 5, the whole of the work done of all kinds, whether it was work for which money was to be received in repayment, or work expressed as "service," for which a gross amount was formerly voted and for which the appropriations made appeared as "extra receipts." It was thought better to show first the whole amount, whether or not on repayment, and then to show in the next column the amount received either as extra receipts or received on repayment. The 3rd column showed really the amount which it was expected would be required solely for the services of the Department. In the 4th column they had the amount for 1882-3, which amount compared strictly with the column before it—it was the amount for last year, after deducting the extra receipts, but not after deducting the sums received on account of other services. That was an improvement made this year. Last year the extra receipts were deducted, and the result was shown in column 3, though column 2 was larger. As to what had been said about giving a comparison between the two Estimates, he agreed that it would be a good thing, and he said so on the part of the Treasury, who had just as much interest in trying to check the Estimates as anyone else. He would take care on the part of the Treasury to see that the necessary comparison was made.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he thought it would be a great advantage if they could have two Returns, one which would show a comparison of the Estimate under the old system and the new.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) thought he could undertake to say that the Return would be prepared. It would be difficult to embody one charge,—namely, that for which a charge was formerly made in the Army Estimates, but which was now made in the Navy Estimates. That was a different matter.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he quite understood that.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND wished to know the amount which would be gained under the new change, by which the Department was enabled to use as appropriations in aid, sums which were formerly paid as extra receipts into the Exchequer? What amount would the Department have more than they had in former years? That information appeared to him to be wanting in these Accounts.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, the account was not made this year but last year, and it affected the Army Estimates, he thought, to the extent of £500,000. But he was speaking from memory.

Vote *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

WAYS AND MEANS.—REPORT.

Resolution [March 10] *reported.*

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that at this time in the morning he would not occupy the House more than two or three minutes; but as this was the last opportunity he should have of saying a word with regard to the Civil Service Estimates for the year, he wished to enter his protest against an amount of Estimates which exceeded anything which the House had ever before experienced, and, in particular, he wished to draw attention to, and ask for, an explanation upon the Post Office Estimates. The Post Office Estimate this year amounted to the very large sum, including the Works' Estimate, of £4,726,401, being an increase of £300,000 on the Estimate of last year, which was in its turn an increase of £200,000 over the Estimate for the preceding year. Well, this increase at the Post Office of £300,000 was intended to earn an estimated income of £150,000, so that the net income of the Post Office with this £300,000 would be £150,000 less than it was last year, if the Estimates were realized or not exceeded. When they came to the Telegraphs, the question was still more grave. The Votes passed for the Telegraph Service this year, included in the Ways and Means Report, amounted to £1,588,717. Last year they were £1,413,000, showing an increase of £175,000 in the provision for telegraph expenses; and last year there was an increase of £146,000 on the year preceding. In 1871 this expenditure was £1,277,000, and in 1883 it was £1,588,000. In 1881 the gross income was £1,600,000, and in 1882 it was £1,630,000; that was to say, that with an increased revenue of £30,000 there was an increased expenditure of £146,000. There was an estimated increase of revenue this year of £20,000, bringing up the gross revenue to £1,650,000; but that extra £20,000 was obtained at a cost of £175,000 in expenses. The result was, that the net revenue of the Post Office, which was in 1881 £2,803,000, fell, notwithstanding the great increase in gross revenue, to £2,796,000 in 1882, and if the Estimates were realized—or not more than realized — this year, it would fall to £2,490,000. So that the expenditure was going on greatly in excess of the revenue. During the last three years they had reduced the net revenue by upwards of £300,000, and had increased their expenditure by £500,000 in the Post Office, and £300,000 in the Telegraphs, which was a most alarming condition of affairs in a trading undertaking. The Government undertook the conveyance of letters and the despatch of telegraphic messages as a matter of business, and that business was going back seriously, the result, so far as telegraphs were concerned, being shown in the Return presented that morning. According to that Return, the balance in 1881 was merely sufficient to pay the interest on the capital employed. It went up from £207,000 to £296,000, and then in 1881 to £325,000. It fell in 1882, according to the Return, to £213,000. He had estimated the amount at £216,000, but he had no doubt that the figures in the Return were much the more correct; and now, assuming that the Estimates of revenue were realized, there would be only £60,000 available for interest, on a larger amount of capital embarked. These figures were of a most serious character, and demanded an explanation from the Government. He was bound to say that while it was only to be expected that in a great business concern like this the expenses would grow, at the same time, it was dangerous for them to grow so considerably in advance of the increment of business.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he was sorry the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General had not been aware that this important discussion was about to be raised, otherwise, at all risks, he would have been in his place. As the right hon. Gentleman had been advised that it would not be well for him to remain until the late hour to which it was supposed the House would sit, and as it was not anticipated that his presence would be indispensable, he had asked him (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) to represent him in any discussion which might arise. It must be admitted that the increase in the Post Office Estimate was a very serious one; but, as hon. Members were well aware, it was almost wholly due to the increase in the salaries of postmasters, letter-carriers, and other officials forced on the Postmaster General—or agreed to by him, after very careful consideration, in consequence of the action of Members of the House on all sides. No doubt, the increase which had been made in the salaries made the account appear a bad one. He had been unable to follow the figures quoted by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith), and he had not been aware that it was intended to raise the discussion, otherwise he should have taken the precaution to properly inform himself with regard to all these details. It had only been suggested to him a couple of hours ago that reference was to be made to the subject, and he had done his best to inform himself as to the figures. The figures he had obtained, bearing upon the past three or four years, certainly did not in any way bear out the right hon. Gentleman's statement. If he compared income with expenditure, during the years the present Government had been in Office—that was to say since 1880—he found that, though the expenditure of the Post Office had considerably increased, the income had increased in somewhat larger proportions. In the year 1880, for instance, the gross income of the Post Office was £6,550,000, and the net increase was about £2,500,000. Since 1880, comparing that year with 1882, he found that there had been an increase in the expenditure of £256,000, and an increase in the income during the period of £473,000; therefore, the net income had increased during the three years by the sum of £218,000, or, relatively, more than the gross income. These figures, of course, did not include the current year, but only the expenditure down to the end of the financial year of 1882. It showed, however, that during the first two years the present Government had been in Office, though the expenditure had increased, the income had increased to a greater extent. He quite admitted that in the current year there had been a considerable increase of expenditure; but he believed he was correct in saying that the income would also increase largely—not, perhaps, in proportion to at the expenditure, but it would turn out the end of the financial year, most likely, that the income had increased nearly, if not quite as much, as the expenditure. The proportion would not be so great as last year, but, looking at the aggregate income, it would not be much worse. The account would work out better than the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) anticipated. He quite agreed that the Telegraph Account was not so good. The incomes of the Telegraph clerks had been raised almost as much, relatively, as the incomes of the Post Office clerks, but the income of the Department not having been so great, comparatively speaking, the account did not balance so well; but, taking the two services together, it would turn out, he thought, that the net income had increased relatively to the expenditure. He frankly admitted that the increase of expenditure, owing to the raising of salaries, had been a large and a serious one, and that it was necessary that the outgoings of the Departments should be most carefully watched in the future; and he was sure the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General would welcome any assistance from the Front Opposition Bench and any other part of the House in resisting the pressure which, he was sorry to say, was so often put on the Government from the other side of the House, to increase the salaries of officials.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, the figures he had read had been extracted from the Finance Accounts. He would give them to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), and if he found any error in them he could raise the Question again on the Ways and Means Bill.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT merely wished to point out that since the present Government of Retrenchment came into Office the Civil Service Estimates had increased by £3,000,000.

Resolution *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Courtney.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time.

DISTRESS LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

(*Sir Henry Holland, Mr. Heneage, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Mr. Cropper, Sir Joseph Pease.*)

[BILL 44.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND trusted the House would allow this Bill to be read a second time, its principle having been twice affirmed. The Bill contained provisions limiting the time of proceedings for distress, exempting the property of third persons from distress; and the rest of it was closely confined to following out the recommendations of the very able Committee which sat last year to consider the subject. He trusted the House would allow the Bill to be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Henry Holland.*)

Mr. DUCKHAM said, it was not his intention to oppose the second reading of the Bill, nor, at that late hour, to make any considerable remarks upon it; but there were some important alterations which must, he felt, be made in it in Committee. He then gave Notice that in Committee he should move the insertion of a clause, giving power to the tenant to establish any counter claim he might have against the landlord.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the Government had no objection to the second reading of the Bill, although he thought it right to say that in all probability they would deal with the subject in the measure they had laid on the Table of the House. He hoped the Committee stage would be put down for a date subsequent to the second reading of the Government Bill.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND: What date?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I cannot say precisely when the Government Bill will be brought forward.

Motion *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Tuesday* 3rd April.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, the sum of £4,121,300, be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow;*

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

MOTIONS.

FRIENDLY AND INDUSTRIAL SOCIETIES LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Bill to extend the power of Nomination in Friendly and Industrial, &c. Societies, and to make further provision for cases of Intestacy in respect of personal property of small amount, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Burt, Mr. Albert Grey, and Mr. Northcote.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 117.]

SEA AND COAST FISHERIES (IRELAND) FUND BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Trevelyan, Bill to provide for the better administration of the Fund under the control of the Trustees to aid Sea and Coast Fisheries of Ireland; and for other purposes in relation thereto, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Trevelyan.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 116.]

House adjourned at Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 13*th March*, 1883.

MINUTES.]—*Sat First in Parliament*—The Lord Greville, after the death of his father.

Public Bill—*Committee*—Payment of Wages in Public-houses Prohibition (1).

The Lord O'Hagan—Chosen Speaker in the absence of the Lord Chancellor and the Lords Commissioners.

PAYMENT OF WAGES IN PUBLIC-HOUSES PROHIBITION BILL.—(No. 1.)

(*The Earl Stanhope.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee read.

House in Committee accordingly.

Clauses 1 and 2, severally *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (No wages to be paid within public-house. Sec. 35 & 36 Vict. c. 76, s. 16, and 35 & 36 Vict. c. 77, s. 9).

LORD WALSINGHAM said, he had placed on the Paper an Amendment to the clause, to remedy what the noble Earl who introduced the measure (Earl Stanhope) would admit to be something of an oversight. However desirous the noble Earl might be to prevent the payment of wages in public-houses, he (Lord Walsingham) was sure he did not intend to place resident owners and occupiers of such places in a position of considerable inconvenience. It seemed only fair and reasonable to ask that they should at least be allowed to pay their own workmen on their own premises. He had therefore drawn up an Amendment, to enable the resident owner or occupier of any public-house or beer-shop to pay on such premises the wages of any workman *bonâ fide* employed by him; but he was perfectly willing to withdraw his Amendment in favour of any other form of words better adapted to attain the same object.

Amendment *moved*,

In page 1, line 26, after ("therewith,") insert ("save and except such wages as are paid by the resident owner or occupier of such public-house, beer-shop, or place to any workman *bonâ fide* employed by him.")—(*The Lord Walsingham.*)

LORD COTTESLOE said, he had a somewhat similar Amendment on the Paper, but he should have no hesitation in withdrawing it in favour of that of the noble Lord now before the Committee.

EARL STANHOPE said, he would accept the Amendment, which he fully agreed was an improvement to the measure.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Remaining clauses *agreed to.*

House *resumed.*

Report of Amendment to be received on *Thursday* next.

House adjourned during pleasure; and resumed by the Lord Chancellor.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—POLICY OF HER MAJESTY'S GOMENT.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK, in rising, according to Notice, to call attention to the Correspondence on affairs of the Transvaal; and to ask, What steps the Government propose to take in fulfilment of the Convention to save the Natives residing outside and on the borders of the Transvaal from the calamities in which they were involved by the lawless action of subjects of the Transvaal Republic? said, that in putting the Question down for consideration, no one could have been surprised at what he had done, as it was quite impossible to read the Blue Book without seeing that the subject could not be passed over without some notice. The Government should say what they proposed to do to remedy the enormous evils which had been going on against the African Natives; and this was the result, as it seemed to him (Viscount Cranbrook), of the surrender which was made on the part of the Government, with certain reservations. He had never concealed the fact that he was one of those who had always held that the steps taken by Her Majesty's Government in relation to the Convention were discreditable to this country, and that they could not tend in any degree to that peace and security of the African Natives, and of the States bordering upon the Transvaal, which it was supposed would result from them. It seemed to him that there had been a surrender by the Government, with a perfectly fictitious reservation; and that, on the part of the Boers, there had been a real triumph, and merely a semblance of respect and acceptance of submission, so long as the English Forces remained in the country, which disappeared as soon as they were withdrawn. The whole history of the Boers showed that they had always regarded the Native Races as inferior in every respect to themselves; and that they thought that everything they did against them was justified by the laws of their country, and, he believed, by the laws of God. From the very beginning, there had been a steady progress in the attacks upon the Natives, whose lands and cattle they only saw to lust for them, and these had resulted in the calamitous condition which was proved by Mr. Rutherford's despatches. That would appear from a perusal of the Blue Book, and the lamentable description which was presented therein. On the 3rd of August, 1881, attacks on the Natives began to be made on the Frontier; and, in September, they went on with greater force; and they had been going on ever since, and were going on now. He was not about to contend that there had not been Tribal wars, as well as wars between the Natives and the Boers; but it would seem that they too had been created by the Boers, who went over the borders and then withdrew to their own country with their plunder. It would be found, he asserted, that not one of the Native Chieftains had transgressed the lines of the Transvaal, which England had laid down under the Convention, and that they had not even followed their stolen cattle over the border. Looking at the Papers, he thought Sir Evelyn Wood was fully justified in his protest made at the time of the signature of the Convention. Sir Evelyn Wood had said that he knew his Colleagues were anxious for the protection of the Natives, alike within and without the Transvaal, but that the fact was that the object would not be secured by what was proposed, and that the British Resident would find himself powerless to intervene. In the debate which had taken place last year, the noble Earl who was then Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Kimberley) said that we were now going to do by right what we had previously done without authority—that we should have a right to intervene between the Natives outside the Transvaal and the people of the Transvaal. He (Viscount Cranbrook) was not going to enter into the affairs of the Natives within the Transvaal, though that was a serious matter, and it had been agreed that this country should use its moral influence in regard to them. Still, the laws of the country were to prevail within the territory. His remarks would apply with greater force to the state of affairs without the Transvaal; and it came, therefore, to this, that England having taken the responsibility of the interior of the Transvaal by moral representation, had taken care of the Natives outside the Transvaal upon much more imperative and important conditions—conditions which seemed, in honour and justice, to compel England to take some steps to show that she was sensible of the conditions which were made with the Natives themselves, and more especially with that part of them that inhabitated Bechuanaland. Mr. Mackenzie, a missionary of the London Missionary Society, under whose labours the country had improved for a great many years, who had long resided in the country, had written a pamphlet showing that infinite cruelties had been practised upon the unhappy Natives. The people had, during 50 years, built churches and schools, had ploughed large quantities of land, and had greatly enlarged the trade of their country. Their condition was shown by statements made by Mr. Hudson and others, whom he (Viscount Cranbrook) did not wish to quote at length; and it was perfectly evident that the sufferers, from Boer encroachment and rapine, were, in every case, those who showed themselves the most faithful allies of the British Government. When Mr. Rutherford went to that country in November or December last, he found that Montsioa had been obliged to enter into a Treaty with Moschette, at an enormous sacrifice. Mr. Rutherford found that from 12 to 15 people were dying every day from starvation and misery, and that, in one place, there was a body of Boers, with a couple of cannon, controlling the whole country. The appropriation of land and the stealing of cattle was going on, as if England was entirely out of the question, and not to be respected at all; 95 per cent of the ploughed land had, according to Montsioa, been seized in his territory, and handed over to these White freebooters. Almost all the best waters and fountains belonging to these people had been taken possession of by the Boers, and if this Treaty was carried out, the entire Tribe, numbering 13,000, would be driven into a corner where only about 2,000 could find means of subsistence. These things showed, as the fact was, that it was to the Boers that these cruelties were due. According to a despatch of Sir Hercules Robinson, on the 27th of January of the present year, women and children were slaughtered on many occasions, and a list of these atrocities was to be found in the Blue Book. There was one instance in which a Tribe was fighting with the Boers, and 19 men, who surrendered themselves on the promise of their lives being spared, were handed over by the Boers to a rival Tribe, and murdered in cold blood. Although not actually taking part in the butchery, the Boers were within 50 or 60 yards of the spot where it occurred, and took no steps either to prevent or to punish it. It was perfectly clear that the unfortunate men who were murdered surrendered themselves to the Boers on the faith of their lives being spared. In the country of Mankoroane, the farms had been taken and the cattle driven away by the Boers, and nothing was left for the unfortunate Natives but starvation and death. The peace of that country had been destroyed solely by White men, who came from the Transvaal. These outrages commenced some time ago, and had continued up to the present time. He was bound to say that the responsibility for them to a very great extent rested with Her Majesty's Government—that was to say, the responsibility rested upon Her Majesty's Government not so directly as with the Transvaal Government, but it certainly rested upon them indirectly. In a pamphlet written by Mr. Mackenzie, in no violent spirit, for he had favoured the independence of the Transvaal, and desired that the Boers should retain it, it was stated that the country had been for two years under British police, and that an implied obligation rested on this country that protection should be given to the Natives of Bechuanaland, and that something should be done to prevent the sufferings which they were enduring. Further, he said that the responsibility rested upon the Imperial Government, and especially upon the present Government, as being the authors of the Pretoria Convention. The Transvaal Government had stated that they had many excuses. One of these was that the Convention line was drawn in a manner that they thought highly injurious to them; but it should be remembered that they had agreed to the arrangement, and it was too late for them to turn round now and say that they objected to the line. In addition to that, the Transvaal Government alleged that these people wanted to come under their power. He was not surprised that the noble Earl then at the head of the Colonial Office (the Earl of Kimberley) showed the strongest disbelief in their statements, for the charges made against the Transvaal Government were confirmed by their own admissions. With regard to Zululand, Sir Evelyn Wood had great difficulty in inducing the Transvaal Boers to withdraw from that country; but it was provided by the Convention that they should withdraw, and that compensation should be given to those who had settled in that country by the authority of the Transvaal Government, by giving them land in the Transvaal, and by giving them other compensation. Last year, however, large bodies of Boers took the whole of their cattle into Zululand, and commenced to eat up the pastures because they were better than their own. Remonstrances were naturally made by the British Resident, who asked the Transvaal Government what steps they intended to take? With what feelings people would read the reply of the Transvaal Secretary of State to the great Government whose Suzerainty he acknowledged, he (Viscount Cranbrook) did not know. The Secretary of State (Mr. Van Bok) replied that his Government did not intend to take any steps, considering that the information obtained by themselves did not at all agree with that supplied by Sir Hercules Robinson and Sir Henry Bulwer. It should be remembered that Sir Henry Bulwer was Governor of Natal, and Sir Hercules Robinson was the High Commissioner of England, who never interfered except on the strongest possible evidence. That audacious reply showed the spirit which animated that people. When called upon by the British Government, under the Convention, to send to the Joint Commission with regard to the South-West Territory, they said that they had no time, as they were so much occupied with what was occurring in Natal. The event to which they alluded was that a number of Natives, with certain White men, had gone over to Natal, and the Transvaal Government affected to think that they had been encouraged by us to go there. This was totally false, for Sir Hercules Robinson had practically told them to go away. All that was done was to treat the people with hospitality while in Natal. Mr. Bok, the Secretary of State for the Transvaal, wrote that they would have nothing to do with the Joint Commission, until the Kaffirs and the White men in question had been sent back for trial at Pretoria. It was impossible to conceive anything so audacious and so inconsistent with their undertaking by the Convention. With regard to the projected Treaty of the Boers with certain Natives, it was to be observed that, under the Convention, they had no right to enter into any relations with Natives outside their border. They had pledged themselves not to do so. On the attention of Mr. Bok being called to the fact, that these negotiations were in violation of the Convention, he replied that highly important reasons had induced his Government to send a mission to the Kaffir Chiefs, and they were under the impression that by this step they had deserved the thanks of the British Government. What was done was not, he said, really in contravention of the Convention, but rather technically! That was a most remarkable way to treat the Convention. When Mr. Rutherford arrived at the spot, he found, not only the Natives, but a large number of Boers, who practically prevented him from getting at Moshette. One of them professed to represent Moshette, and it was therefore absurd to say that no responsibility rested with them. The Treaty itself, throwing over Great Britain and adopting the South African Republic, which was approved by the Transvaal Government, was an outrage upon the Convention of Pretoria. The Transvaal authorities had been repeatedly called upon to prevent the inhabitants of their territory from committing atrocities; but they had done nothing, and Sir Hercules Robinson had come to the conclusion that the Transvaal authorities were not only morally responsible for the cruelties that had taken place, but that they had connived at and were accomplices in the wrongs perpetrated upon the Natives. Now, the Convention entered into meant something or nothing. If it meant something, it entailed upon us, in the Transvaal, continual watchfulness and continued remonstrance against the ill-treatment of the Natives there. Besides, it imposed upon us a burden of the heaviest character—a burden which it was most difficult for any Government to discharge. The Government entered into it with their eyes open, and again and again it was impressed upon them by Sir Evelyn Wood, before he left the country, that this would be the result, and it was shown that after the three victories of the Boers there was nothing behind the British Resident, and the consequences were obvious. The Government ought to bear in mind that they were dealing with a lawless race, of whom it was said by Sir Hercules Robinson that territorial encroachment was as their very life blood. As to boundary, Sir Hercules Robinson said that, unless we altered the frontier to a position where there were no Native cattle to be stolen and no Native land to be appropriated, we were only working in vain. It was not to be supposed that it would be stopped by the crushing of these two Chieftains. The appetite of the Boers would be increased by what it fed on, and they would affect more and more the leadership of the Natives in South Africa. This country had under it a large mass of Native subjects, in whose tranquillity it had a deep interest, and the Government had imposed upon it a burden which must be acknowledged, if the English nation were to be saved from dishonour. The Natives were already asking—"Is the Queen's word broken? Has the promise of England, upon which we had relied, failed?" What answer could we give? It should be remembered that when the Boers were in arms against us, Montsioa and other Chiefs did what they could to help us. If we had allowed Sir Evelyn Wood, who wrote when chafing in spirit. when he felt he and his army were being dishonoured, and we were giving a triumph to lawlessness and rapine—if we had allowed him then to act, we should have shown that the English meant to be the predominant race in that country, not that they might receive any glory by it, but that they might exert their influence on behalf of the civilization of the Natives; and, instead of rapine and disaster following the train of these Boers from one Tribe to another, civilization, order, and Christianity would have followed in the footsteps of Great Britain. Did the Government mean that the name of England should be still sullied by disgrace and discredit, or would they take some steps to relieve this country from the responsibility it foolishly undertook, and which we should have fulfilled far better had we acted in a different manner? In conclusion, he begged to ask the noble Earl opposite the Question of which he had given Notice.

The Earl of DERBY: My Lords, I am not surprised, and I do not think that it is in any way a matter for regret, that the noble Viscount (Viscount Cranbrook) has brought this question before the House. It is one, undoubtedly, of very great importance, and it is quite right that your Lordships should take notice of it, when the situation is so grave, and when the circumstances are, as I, for one, am quite ready to admit, by no means satisfactory. I think it is well that your Lordships should have an opportunity of correcting exaggerated impressions, and of knowing exactly how matters really stand. I do not think, however, I need follow the noble Viscount on some points; and I am certainly not disposed to offer any defence against his criticism on the good manners and good taste shown in the official Correspondence of the Boer Government. It certainly is a very remarkable Correspondence; but that is a very small matter, and if there is any discredit to anybody concerned, the discredit falls, I think, rather on the writers of documents which are not couched in the usual terms of diplomatic or official courtesy, rather than on those who received them. Neither have I the smallest intention of making light of the acts of cruelty, although they are of a kind, I am afraid, not altogether uncommon in savage warfare, which appear to have been practised by these people. The noble Viscount expressed a hope that these things were committed by the Black men, and not by the Boers.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK said, that he had referred to one particular case which he had cited.

THE EARL OF DERBY: Of course, I might argue that these people were only fighting one another in the manner of their race. But if they did so, and committed cruelties beyond the British Frontier, I do not see that that is a matter of which the responsibility rests with our Government. The war was carried on, in the main, by savages, aided by some White volunteers; and it is probable that many regrettable and lamentable acts have been committed. But, my Lords, what we have to consider is the state of matters with which we have to deal. I do not know whether all your Lordships have read all the Colonial Blue Books. Perhaps it may be well to recapitulate the circumstances of the case, and to explain the position in which we stand. On the West and South-West of the Transvaal, when we held it, and closely connected with it, though not belonging to it, lies the Bechuana country, inhabited by savage Tribes. It does not seem that these Tribes were ever united under one paramount Head. In 1872-3 the South African Republic claimed to have acquired some of this territory, and they endeavoured, at the same time, to put forward one of the leading Chiefs as a paramount Chief, no doubt with a view to negotiate with him. We did not, however, recognize the cession made by the Chiefs, or alleged to be so made; and in 1881 a boundary line was drawn between the Transvaal and the independent territory, which excluded from the Transvaal a good deal of land which the Boers claimed, but with regard to which their claims were disputed. Before the annexation, and I believe for many years previously, these Chiefs had been divided into parties, Montsioa and Mankoroane heading one party, and Moshette the other. When difficulties arose in the Transvaal, the first-mentioned Chiefs took the British side, while Moshette sympathized with the Boers, and between these two parties a war broke out, as far as I can understand, arising from local rather than from general causes. In May, 1881, peace was restored for a time; but it did not last, and in October, 1881, hostilities were resumed, Montsioa being attacked, with the help of some Boer volunteers or filibusters acting on their own behalf. Our Resident (Mr. Hudson) called upon the Boer Government to preserve neutrality. This they did to a certain extent, for they issued a proclamation and consented to place a guard on the frontier for the purpose of preventing Boer volunteers from crossing it. Mr. Hudson also sent an Agent to negotiate with the Tribes with the view to the restoration of peace; but, unfortunately, the negotiations were abortive, the war extended, and Mankoroane, who had sided with Montsioa, was also attacked. Then Boer volunteers began to crowd in; and, as an evidence of popular feeling in the Transvaal, it appears that in one case the very guards themselves, who were placed on the frontier to prevent volunteers crossing over, fraternized with them, and joined them in the war. Representations were made by Mr. Hudson, and a Correspondence followed; but nothing came of it, that I know, until July last year. In July, on the suggestion of Sir Hercules Robinson, Her Majesty's Government adopted a proposal that the Transvaal, the Orange Free State, and the Cape Government should unite in sending a force of mounted police to clear the country, and drive away the marauding parties. That proposal, as might have been expected, came to nothing, because neither the Transvaal, nor the Orange Free State were inclined to listen to it. In the end, Montsioa and Monkoroane were compelled to place their territory under the Transvaal State, and to grant a large portion of their land to the White volunteers who had taken part in the war. The Transvaal Government accepted the cession, as far as they had power to do so; but it has not received the sanction of the Suzerain Power. The Treaty, therefore, is not a valid document, wanting that necessary qualification, and we have not acknowledged it. In February last, I telegraphed to Sir Hercules Robinson, asking if the Cape Government was favourable to the organization of a police force in the Colony, not with a view to putting an end to the war generally, but to prevent British subjects from taking part in these quarrels. The answer was that the Cape Government were prepared to consider the proposal; but it was their judgment, and, I am bound to say, that of the Governor also, that it would not be an effectual remedy, and Sir Hercules Robinson has told us that the only effectual remedy would be to clear the country by a military force, and to occupy it afterwards. He stated that the Bechuana territory had been swarmed over and occupied by adventurers coming, some of them, from the Orange Free State, from the Transvaal, and a few from our own Colony. Those from the Transvaal came, not with the direct support of their own Government, but undoubtedly with the very general support of the Dutch population; and it is an important feature in the case that not only in the Transvaal, but throughout the whole of South Africa, where we know that a considerable majority of the White population are of Dutch descent, the sympathies of that population are, I am afraid, all in one direction. Well, my Lords, what, under these circumstances, are we to do? There are not many alternatives from which to choose. I think that, after what I have stated, and after what has appeared in the Blue Books, your Lordships will be of opinion, as I am, that it will be simply useless to appeal to the authorities at Pretoria, and to call upon them to interfere. It will be of no use asking them to enforce the Convention. We might, no doubt, put pressure upon them, and we might, no doubt, succeed in making them feel that it was for their interest to do what we ask. But I call your Lordships' attention to this, as a material part of the case—could they do it if they tried? The Government of the Transvaal is a popular Government. I mean by that, a Government that rests upon a purely popular basis. It has no regular Army; it has no centralized Administration; it has no organized police. The only force it could possibly bring into the field, would be a force consisting of volunteers; and if such a force were formed and called out, it is, to my belief, as certain as anything can be, that the majority of them would join with the adventurers beyond the frontier, instead of attempting to put down the insurrection. I do not wish to mislead the House, or overstate the case. I am not contending that the authorities at Pretoria would be very willing to interfere, if it were in their power; but I am convinced that it is not in their power, that they could not interfere effectually, however much they might wish to do so. That being so, it seems to me that it is useless to blame those who are nominally in authority for not undertaking what is absolutely impossible for them to perform. Well, my Lords, excluding that alternative, what remains to be done? We may send an expedition on our own account into the disturbed country beyond the frontier. That is, no doubt, possible. It would not be inconsistent with justice, and, for the moment, it would, no doubt, be successful. But let me ask your Lordships to consider what that undertaking would involve. It would be madness, I say deliberately, to send a small force upon such an errand. We have had some lessons in that respect already, and we cannot afford to receive another check such as those we have received once or twice in South Africa before. You may argue that the number of lawless marauders and adventurers is comparatively small—not more than a few hundreds. But it is not the 500 or 600 who are actually on the spot with whom you have to deal. I am afraid you will find that a very large proportion of the Transvaal population and the people of the Orange Free State would be ready to help them. Nor is this a case where, as in the case of the Zulu War, we should fight within easy reach of the coast, within easy reach of our depôts, and with supplies reaching us by sea. The Bechuana country is 1,000 miles at least from Cape Town, with no railways, except for a very short distance, and with such roads as you might expect in a country of that kind. There is, it is true, another way from Port Elizabeth not quite so long; but I do not believe that route would offer any greater advantages. The cost of sending 2,000 men into that region, with all the necessary supplies, would be something fabulous. I dare say your Lordships will recollect that we did something of the sort in the case of the Abyssinian War. We thought it would be enough to spend £2,000,000 or £3,000,000 upon that Expedition; but it cost us nearly £10,000,000. I do not pretend that cost or risk are reasons for holding back, if a clear case of duty were made out; but, at least, they are considerations which, when we are dealing with this question, are not to be ignored. But, my Lords, there is something more to be considered. What good should we do by sending out an army merely to clear the country of those filibusters? They would return again directly the very moment our backs were turned. People say—"Send a force that will settle the matter once for all." Well, if we could do that, the object in view might justify some considerable sacrifice on our part. But you might as well talk of brushing off flies once for all; these adventurers will come back as soon as your force has retired. You cannot permanently protect the Natives except by the one remedy that has been more than once pointed out—namely, that of occupying the country, and holding it with a British garrison. Now, I think that is really the alternative we have to face. It is not a mere question of clearing the country, nor one of sending out an expedition for a short time, and then relying on an armed police to keep the peace afterwards, but one of holding the whole of Bechuanaland, and guarding the frontier of the Transvaal. My Lords, I do not think that would be a wise thing to do, or that Parliament or the British nation would contemplate with pleasure the creation and maintenance of a fresh British Province in the interior of South Africa—a Province which would be absolutely useless for the purposes of emigration, for it is not a place where European settlers are likely to go. It is absolutely unproductive for the purposes of trade; and, in fact, there is no countervailing advantage to be gained by the occupation. There is the further consideration that, by placing a force there, we should be laying ourselves open to endless quarrels with the Transvaal State. However much we might be in the right, we should have to face this fact, that we should have against us the sympathies of all the Dutch settlers—that is, of a considerable majority of the White population of South Africa. It appears to me to be the *reductio ad absurdum* to send out an expedition to such a place for such a purpose. Long before the expedition could arrive at its destination, the cost would far exceed the fee-simple value of the land it was employed to protect. It may be asked whether we are not bound to act under the terms of the Convention? I have studied the terms of the Convention, and I do not think we are. Undoubtedly, the Convention gives us the right to interfere; but it does not follow that it imposes upon us a corresponding obligation. If a man trespasses on my land, and does damage, I have a right to proceed against him; but it would be a strange doctrine to say that, therefore, I am bound to proceed against him, though the cost of law proceedings would exceed the damage done. Bechuanaland is of no value to us for any English, or for any Imperial purposes. It lies beyond the frontier of the Colony; far beyond it for the most part, and, politically, it is of no consequence to us whether Boers or Native Chiefs are in possession. But one obligation, and one only, I am ready to recognize in connection with that country. No doubt, the dispossessed Chiefs have acted as our allies to a certain extent, and they will suffer, to some extent, for taking our part. I say to some extent—I speak with that qualification—because the fighting between the Native Chiefs dates from long before the time of our annexation of the Transvaal, and also because it seems to me very probable that those Chiefs who took the opposite side, and acted as allies of the Boers, will not fare better than the rest at the hands of their White allies I believe that in this matter there has been far less political feeling than a simple desire on the part of the adventurers—as I said in this House before—to get land without paying for it. We cannot, as I believe, restore order to the disturbed country without burdening our own people to an extent disproportionate to any good that we can do to the Bechuana Chiefs. But if we cannot do that, we can discharge our duty towards these Chiefs by compensating them in some measure for their losses. The difficulties and the expense of providing compensation, whether it might be in land or money, will, no doubt, be very great; but that difficulty is as nothing when compared with the only other practical alternative we have to face. I have instructed Sir Hercules Robinson to make inquiries, with a view to action in the sense I have indicated, and to ascertain what the Native Chiefs have suffered. My Lords, it may be said, and I know the argument has been used, that the liability involved in a military occupation would not be permanent, because, if we were to occupy the territory, the Cape Colony would be ready to take it off our hands, when once everything was quiet. My Lords, if that were so, I fully admit it might very much simplify the situation. But I speak with perfect certainty, when I say that that is absolutely the reverse of the fact. We know what has happened in Basutoland. The Cape Government have had quite enough of the responsibility of holding Native territory, and endeavouring to put down Native insurrections. They are thoroughly disgusted with the result of their Basutoland operations, and I am not surprised at it. They are, therefore, much more likely in future to desire to restrict their Native territory than to extend it. Another obvious consideration is this—that even admitting that we occupied Bechuanaland, we should not put an end to these quarrels. We should merely be going from one difficulty to another, for forays would take place in different directions, and if we were to follow these Boer adventurers wherever they might go beyond the Transvaal frontiers, we should attempt an impossibility, for we should have to follow them hundreds of miles to the Northward into the heart of the Portuguese territory. That is the course we have already adopted more than once, and we have compelled the Boers to trek from one part of the country to another. They moved off into Natal. We followed them there. They moved into the Orange Free State, and they went into the Transvaal. We cannot continue the process for ever. As to the more comprehensive questions of the steps that we intend to take for the protection of the Natives in the future, it is hardly possible to give a general or definite answer, because everything depends upon the circumstances of the individual case. It is quite clear that we have neither the right under the Convention, nor the power to take into our hands the police of the Transvaal State. What we can do is to remonstrate, whatever may be the value of that remonstrance. ["Oh, oh!"] Of course, in the last resort, assuming the Treaty to be broken, we have the right of vindicating our claims under it by force; but I think your Lordships will agree that that is not a course to take, except under the compulsion of the most urgent necessity. In such matters, you have to consider not merely the result to be attained at the moment, but what is to follow. I do not think that any Member of this House is very likely to propose that we should endeavour permanently to hold the Transvaal country against the strong wishes of the inhabitants. We do not want another Ireland in South Africa; and I think I may say, with some confidence, that the Transvaal never would have been annexed, but for the assurance of persons on the spot, who were in a position to have known better, but who assured us that the annexation was desired by the Boers themselves, or, at the very worst, was not deprecated. Those assurances turned out to be groundless; and, whatever may be urged against the policy of retrocession, which is really the question involved in the debate raised by the noble Viscount, I think it is preferable to retaining a Province which added nothing while we held it to the strength and security of the Empire, and which would have been a source of endless bitterness and trouble. This, however, is a question which I will not now argue, and to which my noble Friend who preceded me in Office is more competent to do justice than I am. For myself, whatever can be done with the very limited powers at present in our possession, in the interests of humanity, and in the prevention of these Tribal wars, under the Convention, I shall be willing and ready to do; but those powers are very limited and restricted. I hope I have now put the whole state of the case before the House. I admit that there is much in the present situation which is unsatisfactory, and not what we could desire; but what we have to consider is whether, in attempting to provide a remedy, we might not possibly raise a worse difficulty than the one we are now attempting to solve.

Earl CAIRNS: My Lords, there was some conversation last night on the question of reporting what was said in the House; and I observed it was said that, whatever might be the acoustic properties of the House, statements of importance were always perfectly heard, and perfectly well reported. I have no doubt that what the noble Earl opposite the Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Derby) has said to-night has been perfectly well heard, and will be perfectly well reported, and will go out to the Transvaal, and will be read there with great care. The noble Earl spoke of the remonstrances he means to address to the Government of the Transvaal. My Lords, his speech will precede his remonstrances, and I will undertake to assure him that after that speech, his remonstrances will be received with the most complete contempt. The Blue Book which has been placed before the House is certainly not very agreeable to read. It is not a very pleasant thing to find the Chief of a friendly Tribe addressing our Resident in these terms—

> "I wish to let you know that the Boers who have been fighting against me are now busily erecting beacons in the country given to the Bechuanas by the Convention of Pretoria. I wish to know if the English Government allows these freebooters to seize my country in this way? And whether the Convention they made at Pretoria with the Boers is really destroyed? Are these freebooters really under no government, and will they be allowed to do as they like?"

And when we sent our Envoy to meet the Chiefs of the Tribes who have suffered, I find this is the report he gives us—

> "The Chief and council then pressed me (just as had been done by Montsioa and his council) to give them some information and some hope of intervention on their behalf; pressed hard upon me how unfalteringly they had stood by the English and respected the English laws and line and 'the Queen's word.' I could only reply in the same general terms as I had done to Montsioa, and assure them that my duty did not extend further than to collect information, to see, to hear, to note down, and carefully report. I warned them against relying upon any active intervention on their behalf, and also against getting into still deeper trouble by recommencing hostilities or acting in any offensive way, and urged them generally to do all in their power to preserve peace and get an opportunity of pursuing peaceful avocations. What I said was received in silence. At last the Chief asked—'Why do you English take so much trouble and come down so far from time to time to make inquiries, and see with the eyes and hear with the ears, if nothing is to come of it?' I could only say that I had come in pursuance of my instructions to observe and report, which I should fully and faithfully do. All beyond that was in much higher hands. The interview then closed."

That is the way in which we are spoken to by Tribes who have befriended us, and helped us when we required their assistance. The noble Earl dwelt very much on this point, and in doing so he appeared to be anxious to exculpate, as far as he could, the Government of the Transvaal of all responsibility in these matters. He spoke again and again of filibusters, of individual attempts made to take the land of these Tribes and otherwise illtreat them, and the burden of his remarks seemed to be, I thought, to disconnect the Government of the Transvaal, as a Government, from all responsibility for what has been done. Now, I should like to put the matter on its proper footing. As regards the filibusters, I am not at all sure that that term may not be applied more correctly to the Boers, and if the noble Earl means that, I agree with him; but if he means that the Transvaal Government have not made themselves responsible for what has been done, I can only say that he does not read the Blue Book in the way in which I read it. As I understand the Blue Book, it was recognized by the Transvaal Government, when the work was done, when the Tribes were plundered, and they were forced to give in their adhesion to the Transvaal, that their land formed part and parcel of the Transvaal territory, and the Secretary of the Transvaal Government himself is very far from taking the view now put forward by the noble Earl. The document came from them, and went back to them, making these States part and parcel of the Transvaal territory. The Secretary to the Transvaal practically says—"We are doing exactly what you complain of. We do not deny we have broken your Convention. It was a bad one. The very part we have broken we disliked." So far from attempting to shelter himself, he glories in what was done, and he says—"The British Government ought to be obliged to us for what we have done." I hope the noble Earl, in those violent remonstrances he is going to send, will adhere to the view he has taken here, that the Transvaal Government was not responsible, and it is only a question of filibustering. There is nothing in the matter that requires argument; we have it all in black and white. The whole case, as it presses on my mind, is to be found in this short compass—in the remonstrance or complaint which was made by Mr. Hudson, our Resident at Pretoria, to the Transvaal Government, as to which the noble Earl himself has sent a despatch, stating that he approves the language Mr. Hudson used. What does he say with regard to the breach of the Convention? Writing to the Secretary of the Transvaal State, he says—

> "It appears to me the action of your Government has been clearly inconsistent with the following provision of the Convention:—First, Article 18, section 3, sub-section B, inasmuch as the Government has been communicating and negotiating with Native Chiefs outside the Transvaal without reference to or making the British Resident the medium of such communications; second, the acceptance by the Government of any cession of territory contravenes the very first Article of the Convention, which fixes the boundaries of the territory and the State; thirdly, the promise of the Government to send a Commission to meet independent Chiefs residing outside the Transvaal, and to carry out the objects indicated in the letter, in my view, proposes to violate Article 2, section C, wherein the control of the external relations of the State is reserved to Her Majesty."

He regards the action of the Government as illegal, in consequence of the violation of the Convention. The noble Earl says of this—

> "Her Majesty's Government entirely approve of the terms of Mr. Hudson's letter to the Transvaal Government of the 30th of November, and observe with surprise and regret that his representations as to the undoubted infractions of the Convention of the 3rd of August, 1881, have not been answered in a more satisfactory manner."

There is nothing to argue about; the Convention has been broken in every term which referred to the maintenance of peace outside the Transvaal. The Resident remonstrates, and the noble Lord approves his language. What is the reply of the Secretary to the Transvaal, which the noble Earl says truly is unsatisfactory? This is it—

> "The Government plainly see by your letter the deep interest you take in this case, and your own conviction that highly important reasons have induced the Government to adopt a line of action which you call, on three points, a violation of the Convention and illegal. It is really so; highly important reasons had induced the Government to send a message to the Caffre Chiefs; but the Government are under the impression that by this step it has deserved the thanks of the British Government, rather than the blame expressed in your letter."

"It is really so." This is the answer of the Secretary to the Transvaal Government; it is a violation of the Convention, and he says a good many reasons induced the Government to break it. He says—"We have broken the Convention, and you ought to thank us for doing it." Why? "These Chiefs came to us and they asked us to take them under our protection. They were very tired of quarrelling among themselves, and they thought the best thing they could do would be to come into the Transvaal State. Therefore, we took them in." Is this true? Our own Resident was commissioned to investigate the matter, and I am anxious you should hear a few sentences from the authentic Report. This is the view of Sir Hercules Robinson.

> "Mr. Rutherford gives a deplorable account of the straits to which the Chiefs Montsioa and Mankoroane, with their Tribes, have been reduced by the operations of the gangs of White marauders calling themselves Moshette's and Massouw's volunteers, who, without a shadow of a grievance against either Montsioa or Mankoroane, have assailed those Chiefs for the purpose of despoiling them of their lands and cattle. He points out also that, in the pursuit of plunder, these freebooters are regardless of human life, and the annexures to his Report specify, by name, a series of cruel, cowardly, and cold-blooded murders of Natives, including even those of women and children. After carefully perusing these papers, it appears to me difficult to resist the conclusion that the Transvaal Government are morally responsible for these proceedings."

Mr. Rutherford, the Secretary to the British Resident, gives the convictions which were forced on his mind by his mission to and beyond the South-Western borders of the State. He traces the murder of the 15 of Jan Massibi's men, and he says—

"I think the complicity of the Boers present at the attack and surrender extends to this, but not beyond this, viz., they promised immunity, but took no steps at all to insure it, before handing over the prisoners to the will and pleasure of the barbarous Chiefs to whom they had hired themselves as 'volunteers,' nor any steps at all, at the time or since, to prove that what happened—viz., the murder of the 15 men—was a thing which they did not anticipate, and against which they afterwards expressed either indignation or remonstrance."

He further says of Montsioa and Mankoroane—

"The position and calamities which have fallen upon these Chiefs are very lamentable. It is no exaggeration to say, that during the time of my visit their country was being appropriated by the White people precisely in whatever locality and to what extent they pleased. I have no reason to believe otherwise than this lust of land has day by day since I left that part of the country increased and been practically developed rather than abated, and that immunity from interference in the shape of some powerful factor from outside will daily add to the wrongful acquisition of land and property until an uninhabitable desert or the sea is reached as an ultimate point. The continued immunity from interference by some civilized and sufficiently powerful Government will inevitably lead, is daily leading, to an accession, to the number of 'freebooters' both of land and property from the Transvaal, the Free State, and also from Colonial borders. Tribe after tribe will be pushed back and back upon other tribes, or absolutely perish in the process which is going on; the only 'peace' that will be made will be continually progression, subjugation, or extinction."

The only other passage I will quote is part of Mankoroane's own account, in which he gives us another touching story. I cannot read it all; but in the course of it he says—

"'All my cattle which were not sent very far away in time have been stolen, and although it is "peace," they are being stolen every day, even those which had been sent for safety beyond the Griquland West line. I believe I have lost about 25,000 head of cattle and horses during the fighting. The number is uncountable. Most of my people are quite ruined. I have hardly recaptured anything. This place and my people were all locked in, and could not go out to recapture or capture. I have never trespassed over the Convention line. At the beginning of the siege and before it began, I had some slight success (as before Mamusa), but, respecting the Queen's line, did not not follow up my enemies after I had beaten them off, for they went always in and out of the Transvaal. Ever since the pretended peace, my people's goods are being stolen, and they are often fired upon, if they try to herd them not far from the station. A man who went only a few days ago to fetch some cattle from beyond the line which had been sent there to plough for a friend, have been stolen on the road and the man killed. I will make "Daumas" get proper affidavits, and send them to you at Christiana.'"

There is the story of the ruin and extermination of these friendly Tribes. They appeal to us to know whether we are going to assist them in any way. The Agent of the British Government complains that the Convention is broken. The noble Earl approves his language; there is no doubt it is broken, in every term which relates to these Natives. And then the noble Earl says—"It is broken; but there is nothing in it which binds us to interfere or to take any step." No, my Lords, there never is. I never heard of a Convention in which we stipulated and bound ourselves to dò anything; that is not the form in which Conventions are usually framed. The question is, what are we morally bound to do? I recognize as much as the noble Earl does all the difficulties of an expedition in a country like this. He compared it to an expedition to Abyssinia. I could not help recollecting that some two years ago, addressing your Lordships upon this Convention, I anticipated exactly what has occurred. I said—"You are making a Convention; but will it protect the Natives? In order to protect them you will have to interfere and take proceedings; and an invasion of the Transvaal will be like an invasian of Abyssinia, except that you had no troops in Abyssinia, and you have them in the Transvaal." What has happened is this? The fact is, that two years ago Her Majesty's Government were afraid, in the face of the country, of not having something to show in the shape of a Convention, and so they made a Convention which is not worth the paper on which it is written. Yet they persuaded the people of this country that it was a real instrument, and the people were soft enough to believe that it would secure the safety and well-being of these friendly Tribes who were in danger of extermination. I suppose, indeed, that the Government themselves believed the same thing; but, if so, they were labouring under a vast amount of hallucination. It was obvious that the Government would be without the means of enforcing the Convention and would be driven into the dilemma which the noble Earl has so piteously and so mournfully described. I do not want to embarrass the Government by tendering to them advice as to what they should do, or what they should not do; but there is one question which I should like to ask them. If the view of the noble Earl is to prevail, if the Convention is to remain broken, and if nothing is to be done, is the Sovereign of this country going to remain Suzerain over the Transvaal with all its plunder? Is the Sovereign of this country to be Suzerain of this large district of the country which has been filched from its rightful owners by the Transvaal? Are we to be the receivers of stolen goods? Is that the position to be occupied by the Sovereign of this country, who has been dignified with the style of Suzerain at the express device of the present Government? Is the Sovereign of England to be imagined by the Tribes of South Africa to be the Suzerain to the Transvaal, and are they to see that their territory has been violently, wrongfully, and immorally taken from them by the country of which our Sovereign is the Suzerain? That is the question to which I should like to have an answer from Her Majesty's Government.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, he would first notice the criticisms of the noble and learned Earl opposite (Earl Cairns) upon some of the observations of his noble Friend (the Earl of Derby) with respect to the conduct of the Transvaal Government. He thought the noble and learned Earl had misunderstood his noble Friend's remarks. The noble and learned Earl supposed that his noble Friend was not aware of the fact, that the Government of the Transvaal had directly violated the Convention in the communications to which reference had been made with the Bechuana Chiefs. That that was a direct violation of the Convention there could not be the slightest doubt; but his noble Friend pointed out that he thought the Transvaal Government had not been directly concerned in the proceedings which had led to such lamentable results. That was his (the Earl of Kimberley's) own opinion also; but he was not going to stand up to excuse the Transvaal Government. That, indeed, was the last thing he should undertake to do. What he thought correctly described the attitude of the Transvaal Government in the earlier part of those transactions was a sentence of Sir Hercules Robinson in a despatch which the noble and learned Earl had quoted. Sir Hercules Robinson said they had connived at those transactions when the Convention was made. That was, he believed, a very correct description of what they had done. They took some action in placing some police on the frontier; but, in their hearts and in their wishes, they doubtless desired the success of the marauders. The history of the matter would show why this territory had been the subject of constant dispute for at least 15 years. There were troubles there as long ago as when he (the Earl of Kimberley) was Colonial Secretary in Mr. Gladstone's former Government, and the Transvaal Boers, who occupied a considerable portion of the territory, their right to which we never acknowledged, had always, he believed, intended in some manner or other to get possession of that territory again. When we made the Convention, it was hoped that, by laying down what was believed to be a fair boundary line, it would be possible to put an end to these troubles by satisfying the Boers. It was obvious, however, that that expedient had not succeeded. As regarded the Chiefs Mankoroane and Montsioa, though he would admit that we were under a certain obligation to them, it was necessary not to place that obligation too high. They were never subjects of the Queen, and could not even be correctly described as our allies. Our relations with them did not arise out of the Transvaal affair, but out of certain difficulties which occurred in Griqualand West some years ago, when they acted on our side. In the Transvaal affair they maintained a friendly attitude, but they took no part in the disturbances. The whole question lay in this—whether it was, or was not, necessary to retain by force our position in the Transvaal? He was one of those who, to a certain extent, welcomed the action of the late Government when they took possession of the Transvaal. He did so upon the ground that he was told at the time, and he believed it on the authority of the Government, that we were about to take possession of the Transvaal with the consent of the Boers. Unfortunately, that statement turned out not to have been well-founded, and he said now, as he said then, that it would be a very fortunate thing for this country, if we could have held the Transvaal with the consent of the Boers, for by no other possible means could we secure South

Africa against the continual disturbances created by freebooters on the frontiers and in distant parts of the country. But everything depended on our having the consent and assistance of the White inhabitants; and when it turned out that not only were we not acting with the consent of the White inhabitants, but that they were in open revolt, and when that open revolt had the sympathy of the great majority of the Dutch in South Africa, he maintained there was but one alternative—namely, that which we took, of retiring from the country. Having retired, we accepted the consequences of that retirement, and the only question that could be raised was whether it was right or not to make a stipulation such as was made in the Convention for the protection of the Natives after we had retired from the Transvaal. He doubted whether the Natives would have been in any better plight if we had simply retired from the Transvaal without any stipulations. There was one thing which the Boers desired, and that was that their deeds should be done in the dark, and there was nothing which would have greater effect upon them than that these deeds should be dragged to the light. Formerly Her Majesty's Government had great difficulty in getting authentic information on the subject; but, through the Resident and the Convention, there had been means of bringing to the Boer Government a thorough knowledge of our views and feelings with regard to their action against the Natives, and it was just possible that our remonstrances might create a more healthy public opinion in South Africa on this subject. His noble Friend had pointed out that the sympathies of the majority of the people in South Africa were with these marauders. If they were not, let the Colonies make some sign that they did not sympathize with them. If they made no sign, they were morally accomplices. The difficulty of this country was, that in dealing with South Africa on a Native question, we had not the sympathies of the White population. This prevented Her Majesty's Government from carrying into effect the policy which they naturally desired. Either we must hold South Africa strongly by force and maintain our policy, whether the Colonists like it or not; or, else we must acquiesce in a great many things being done in these Colonies which the majority of the people in this country do not approve. For his own part, he was not favourable to a thorough policy. He would not say—"As we cannot have our own way about all these things, we will not attempt to control these Colonies at all." We must continue to exercise such a salutary influence as we could over the Colonists. In the dealings of the Colonists with the Basutos, he saw that they were beginning to take a sounder view of what their relations with the Natives ought to be. The Orange Free State was more advanced than the Transvaal, although some men had gone from the Orange Free River State to join those marauders. The Transvaal was the great refuge of all the unruly spirits in South Africa; it might, in fact, be called a kind of Alsatia; and, although he did not defend or excuse the Government of the Transvaal, it would not be quite fair to overlook the fact that, from the weakness of their Government, they had a difficulty in controlling such a population. No doubt, their conduct had been marked by a want of consideration for the engagements into which they had entered, which was a disgrace to any Government; and, as regarded one point which had been referred to by the noble Viscount who had introduced that discussion (Viscount Cranbrook), he must say deliberately that a more impudent answer than that given by the Secretary of the Transvaal Government it had never been his lot to read, and any man ought to have been ashamed to give it. As to the pretext that the facts were not true, they certainly demanded a fair and reasonable answer from the Transvaal Government. Sir Henry Bulwer's action had been in every respect what it should be. There could not be a more monstrous assertion than that he had said or done anything inconsistent with the arrangement made with the Boers. Those Natives came down from the country, and, so far from Sir Henry Bulwer giving them any encouragement he simply told them to return as they came. Now, he entirely concurred in the course which his noble Friend said he intended to take. He (the Earl of Kimberley) had himself lately been responsible for the conduct of Colonial affairs, and he said personally, that it was his strong individual opinion that nothing could possibly be more imprudent, nothing could less contribute to the permanent peace of South Africa, nothing could less conduce to the ultimate welfare of the Natives themselves, than that we should undertake to send an expedition into the Bechuana territory. Such an expedition, unless we were able to occupy the country, would be complete folly; and to occupy the country, without holding all the neighbouring country, without holding the most commanding position towards the Transvaal and the Orange River Free State, would put us in a situation in which we ought not to be placed. The question was asked, what course the Government would take in regard to the Suzerainty over the Transvaal? He did not think that the time had arrived for the deliberate consideration of that point; but he had no hesitation in saying that if the maintenance of that Suzerainty meant that we were to be responsible for such atrocities as those committed on the Transvaal Frontier, or to acquiesce in the tone assumed by the Transvaal Government—if it meant that, he thought that, when the time came, it was not difficult to see what the answer of Her Majesty's Government would be.

Earl STANHOPE said, he could not help regarding the speech of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Derby) as a masterly illustration of *laisser-faire* policy. The noble and learned Earl (Earl Cairns) had most convincingly shown that the Convention had not been observed. In that case, he (Earl Stanhope) would like to know what was the advantage of signing a Convention, the provisions of which could be broken without our being able to insist on their observance? The noble Earl who had last spoken (the Earl of Kimberley) had said that there were two courses open to us with regard to Bechuanaland. But there was still a third course, one much better for the credit of the country, and that was to withdraw Her Majesty's Representative from Pretoria, and tear up the Convention. The noble Earl implied that we were not bound to carry out the Convention. If that were so, what object could be served by keeping it in existence?

Lord BRABOURNE said, that he had not known that this question was about to be debated, and should not have risen, but for the speeches of the noble Earls the present and late Secretary for the Colonies. He wished, in the first place, to correct an historical inaccuracy into which the last-named noble Earl had fallen. It was not correct to say that the Government had been misinformed as to the opinion of the White population of the Transvaal at the time of annexation. The truth was, that, although there was a protest on the part of a few officials, the main part of the population were rightly stated to be favourable to annexation at that time. It was when British power had put out of their way the Zulu King, and the other Native Chiefs who had threatened their existence, that a change came over them, and they found themselves able to rebel against the Power which had preserved them from destruction. The condition of the Transvaal and the helplessness of the Boer Government at that time amply justified the annexation. He (Lord Brabourne) had heard with shame and regret the words of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, owning that this Convention had been broken again and again, and having no stronger language to use than that he could not defend the Transvaal Government from the charge of bad manners and bad taste. If, when this country entered into a Convention with another, and that other confessedly broke that Convention again and again, the Minister of the Crown had nothing to say but a complaint of bad manners and bad taste, could anyone wonder that the reputation of England had diminished, that her character suffered, and that her name was despised in South Africa, as it would be if the same course was pursued in other parts of the world? The Government could not fairly say that anything unexpected had come upon them, or that they had not had fair warning. Before they had taken a single step towards quitting the Transvaal, he (Lord Brabourne), as he would humbly remind the House, had fully laid before their Lordships the past history of the Boers, and what would inevitably follow if the country was given up to them. More eloquent tongues than his had prophesied the same, and it was because they had neglected every warning that they had landed themselves in their present difficulties. But a passage in the speech of the noble

Earl (the Earl of Kimberley) surprised him still more. That noble Earl had just said that the British Government holding the Transvaal was the only possible means of preserving the peace of South Africa, inasmuch as they were a strong and honest Government—a comparison with the Government of the Boers into which he (Lord Brabourne) would not enter. But if the holding of the Transvaal by the British Government was the only possible way to secure the peace of South Africa, what stronger condemnation could there be of the policy of the present Government in its abandonment? Why was the annexation justified? For that very reason—that the lawless conduct of the Boers, and their quarrels with the Native Tribes, added to the disputes between the Tribes themselves, had reduced the country to such a state that our occupation of it was necessary to give security to life and property. But why had the Government relinquished that occupation? It was but too easy to explain. There had been Governments whose main object was to uphold the honour and reputation of England, and who, when they had taken measures to effect this object, appealed with confidence to Parliament and the country to support them. But the present Government had one idea—to get rid of responsibility. Their endeavour to get rid of responsibility in South Africa had landed them in all their present troubles; and until the Government learned that there were responsibilities which could not be evaded and shirked, but which must be boldly and resolutely borne, they would never govern the country as England had a right to expect.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: My Lords, I do not know whether the Government are satisfied with the debate that has taken place to-night; but I can hardly think that their supporters will derive much satisfaction from what has passed, because the Government appear to have entirely ignored that which, in the eyes of most people, will be the principal question upon which the country will have to decide. They have addressed themselves simply to this one point, whether they ought to go to war in South Africa or not; but I think the people of this country will be disposed to view the policy of the Government in the Transvaal as a whole, and to ask, Has that policy been a success? They will be disposed to ask whether this Convention, which, two years ago, we were assured was to be so brilliant a means of extricating ourselves from all difficulties in the Transvaal, has effected the results which were expected of it? As a matter of fact, the Convention has absolutely failed. The noble Earl the late Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Kimberley) said that the hope of Her Majesty's Government was that, by drawing a line, they would prevent any further disputes from taking place. When, in the memory of the noble Earl, has such a phenomenon taken place, as that the drawing of a line, without the provision of any force to maintain that line, has effected any settlement of differences that previously existed? The noble Earl who now holds the seals of the Colonial Office (the Earl of Derby), in the pathetic and melancholy speech with which he introduced the subject, asked us, in a manner which excited in us sincere compassion, What shall we do? There is no easier policy for a Government than to ask Parliament what they should do; and there is no policy which the noble Earl himself is better fitted to carry out. But what we wish to know is, whether this Convention was a reality or not—whether the Government two years ago believed that they settled the South African difficulty by signing this Convention; and, when they signed it, what was their intention with respect to it? Did they mean it to be a real thing or not? Did they mean to carry out its provisions? What was their view in case the stipulations on the other side were broken? Did they, from the first, intend this, that the moment the stipulations on the other side were broken, they would themselves treat the Convention as waste paper altogether? It is perfectly true, as the noble Earl says, that we did not bind ourselves to interfere; but was there never any intention to interfere? The circumstances, as has been observed in this debate, are by no means new. The character of the Boers is a well-known character. They have, from the first, treated the claims of the Natives that surround them with little humanity, and shown a constant disregard of their rights. I believe that the origin of the Boer nation—the origin of the emigration from which they sprang—was a dissatisfaction with the policy of this country in abolishing slavery in South Africa; and what they were at first, they have continued to the end. As Sir Hercules Robinson says, encroachment has been their very life. They have been engaged in a perpetual career of filibustering, broken only by the short interval during which their country was under British rule. These things were known from the first; and if the Government imagined that by simply signing a Treaty, that by simply expressing a wish, they could induce the Boers to give up this habit, which was the habit of their whole history and existence, they might as reasonably have hoped, by lecturing, to induce the Ethiopian to change his skin, or to persuade the wolves, in some woodlands impossible of access, to abandon the habit of feeding upon sheep. I am not here to recommend any particular course of policy in this difficulty in which the Government have placed themselves. I hold that it is not the business of Parliament to advise the Government, but that it is for the Government to take measures, and to submit them to the judgment of Parliament. I am now concerned with asking, What are the results of the policy which Her Majesty's Government has already pursued? They appear to think that this character of Suzerain, that these illusory obligations which have been taken up by the Queen on their recommendation, are a matter of very little moment. They can put this character of Suzerainty on as they would a robe at a masquerade, and throw it off again, and then think no harm has been done. It served its purpose at the moment in hoodwinking the public opinion of England. It covered a retreat which otherwise would have been too disgraceful even for the tolerant public opinion of England of the moment; and, having served its purpose, it can be freely and contentedly cast aside. But they forget what abundance of human suffering is caused by this policy of publishing promises which they have no intention to perform. They forget how many Tribes on the borders of the Transvaal have been induced to expose themselves to rapine, to starvation, to murder, to every kind of outrage at the hands of the Boers, on the faith of the Queen's word, which they now find means nothing. We have heard nothing now of the duty of the English Government towards the Native Races of South Africa. That subject has been passed very lightly over; but it was not passed very lightly over at the time when this Convention was recommended to Parliament. There was one voice, at least, which spoke with authority on that subject; and the assurance that he gave tended more than anything else to assuage that feeling of uneasiness which had taken hold of very influential classes in this country. Because, remember, my Lords, that there were two set currents of feeling opposed to the policy of the Government in respect of the Transvaal two years ago. There were those who were jealous of the honour and interests of England; there were those who thought we were bound to have broken the power of the Boers after all that had taken place; but, besides those, there was a large number of people who had little sympathy, perhaps, with ideas of a military kind, but who felt intensely and deeply for the dangers to which the Native Races of Africa would be exposed; and it was to that feeling, prevalent largely among the supporters of the Government, that the Government were especially sensitive. How did Mr. Gladstone recommend this Convention? He said—

> "What was still more important was, that we should reserve sufficient power to make provision for the interests of the Natives. And this reservation of foreign relations was a most important one as regards the interests of the Natives, because a very large portion of the Native interests of the community involves tho Natives beyond the Frontier of the Transvaal. Therefore, the whole of the interests of the Natives beyond the Frontier of the Transvaal will be retained in the hands of the British Government by the retention of the Suzerainty."

What mockery that language is now! These Natives, whose interests have been retained in our hands by the retention of the Suzerainty, are the Natives whom we are abandoning without an attempt to defend them from any atrocities which the ingenuity of the Boers can inflict. Mr. Gladstone also said—

> "Now, I contend that we have put ourselves in the position to . . . . . provide a far more efficient safeguard than we could have had for the interests of the Natives if we had retained the Transvaal in the Colonial connection."—(3 *Hansard*, [263] 1859-60.)

I have no doubt of the sincerity with which those words were uttered; but I ask, could words, in view of events that have taken place, have been devised more calculated effectually to hoodwink the opinion of the people of England? These Natives, whom Mr. Gladstone wished to retain the power to protect, and whom Sir Hercules Robinson distinctly stated had always been faithful British allies, we have now abandoned. The noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Kimberley) stated that the Transvaal Government had no moral responsibility.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: Excuse me; I said nothing of the kind. I said I had not a word to say in defence of the Transvaal Government.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Is this the only injury on these unfortunate people which our policy has inflicted? It is hard enough, after all these professions, that we should abandon them; but it seems to me there is something worse, and that is the contempt with which we are loading the British name in South Africa. I know not whether any Members of the Government think it, at this penitential season, a wholesome exercise to listen to assurances of contempt; but if they desire such a discipline, this Blue Book is full enough of wholesome material for them. Is it possible to concieve contempt in any form of official language—contempt more distinctly, more openly stated than in the letters of the Secretary to the Transvaal Government? Is it possible to conceive contempt more pathetically stated than in the remonstrances of these unfortunate Chiefs, who so long had trusted to our interference, and who, hearing of our language upon the subject, in their utter ruin, said what was the use of inquiry after inquiry, if nothing was to be done? My Lords, depend upon it that that contempt will not be confined to those whose mouths have spoken, and whose pens have written, the words we find in these papers. We have been told of the deep sympathy which unites all the Dutch Colonists with the inhabitants of the Transvaal. Depend on it that that sympathy will extend to the contempt with which the Transvaal has evidently learnt to look upon the British name. The Natives and the Dutchmen throughout the whole of South Africa will have learnt from those of their own race and colour that the English word may be passed and nothing may be done, that assurances may be given which, when distress comes, will be entirely forgotten, and that those who trust to the British Government run the danger of absolute ruin. You may read in future dangers of other parts of your Empire the utter folly of treating with the levity with which you have treated it the credit and the good fame of this country.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I had not intended to take any part in this discussion, having more limited information upon the subject, particularly with regard to details, than my noble Friends; and I do not think it would be of any use my going again over the ground which has been trodden by the two noble Earls behind me in the very accurate, very clear, and very frank statements they have made with regard not only to the existing state of things in the Transvaal, but also to the general tendency of the present policy of Her Majesty's Government. But the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) has put very pointedly to Her Majesty's Government what they think must be the result of this debate upon the country. What I remarked most was that the chief object of the noble Marquess was to point out how disgracefully the Government behaved two years ago in ratifying the Convention which they signed, and he says one result of this debate will be to impress this still more strongly upon the minds of the country. I am quite sure that the country will not be inclined to confine its political retrospect to the last two years only. The country, I think, will have the good sense to consider the position we were placed in by the previous policy of the late Government, and, to use the noble Marquess's own words, "the most extraordinary levity" with which they embarked in that most unfortunate annexation of the Transvaal. The country will consider the difficulties in which we were then placed; and when we were left to deal with the matter, that there were really no alternatives left to us which were not open to the gravest objections. What I wish to remark, and what I think the country will not fail to note, is that although the arguments of the noble Marquess, as well as those of the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Cranbrook), were in favour of violent measures at this moment, neither actually recommended them. At the same time, I certainly noticed that the noble and learned Earl who spoke third in the debate (Earl Cairns) freely acknowledged the difficulties of taking any such course, and carefully guarded himself against making any such recommendation. I think that what I have pointed out constitute the most valuable results of the discussion which has taken place.

House adjourned at Seven o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 13*th March,* 1883.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee —Resolutions* [March 12] *reported.*

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee—Resolution* [March 12] *reported.*

PRIVATE BILLS (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Alloa, Dunfermline, and Kirkcaldy Railway; Exeter, Teign Valley, and Chagford Railway; Hull and Lincoln Railway; Oxford, Aylesbury, and Metropolitan Junction Railway; Seafield Dock and Railway; Windsor, Ascot, and Aldershot Railway; Cleator and Workington Junction Railway*; Glasgow and North Western Railway*; London and Eastbourne Railway*; Metropolitan Railway*; Midland, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, and Milford Junction Railway*; North Metropolitan Tramways, *negatived;* Plymouth, Devonport, and South Western Junction Railway*; Rhondda and Swansea Bay Railway*.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Tithe Rent Charge Recovery* [119]; Underground Railways* [120].

Second Reading—Agricultural Holdings (No. 2) [73], *debate adjourned;* Consolidated Fund (No. 1)*.

Committee—Report—Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment* [13-118].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

ALLOA, DUNFERMLINE, AND KIRKCALDY RAILWAY BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [27th February], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And which Amendment was, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

EXETER, TEIGN VALLEY, AND CHAGFORD RAILWAY BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [27th February], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. HICKS said, there was a Notice standing on the Paper in his name, for the postponement of the second reading until that day six months. That Notice was given in order to protect the agricultural interest from any increase of tolls on artificial manures; but after taking into consideration the new Standing Order passed yesterday, he wished to withdraw his opposition to the Bill.

Qustion put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

HULL AND LINCOLN RAILWAY BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [27th February], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

OXFORD, AYLESBURY, AND METROPOLITAN JUNCTION RAILWAY (*by Order*).

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [27th February], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

SEAFIELD DOCK AND RAILWAY BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [27th February], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

WINDSOR, ASCOT, AND ALDERSHOT RAILWAY BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [27th February], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

NORTH METROPOLITAN TRAMWAYS BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

MR. J. R. YORKE begged to move, as an Amendment, that the Bill be read a second time upon that day six months. He was under the impression that his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for East Derbyshire (Admiral Egerton) intended to move the rejection of the second reading; but as he did not see the hon. and gallant Member in his place, and as he certainly thought the Bill ought not to be allowed to go any further, he would take the liberty of making that Motion himself. The main fact upon which he relied in making the proposition was that a Committee last year rejected the most material and important part of the present Bill after a full consideration of the whole matter on its merits. Indeed, he might say the Committee rejected it unanimously, in view of all the circumstances of the case, and nothing had occurred since last year which ought in any respect to alter the position of affairs. He did not think that it was necessary that he should go at length into details, because they were amply discussed before the Committee last year; and if his contention was right, that no Bill, which had been rejected on its merits by a Committee, in one year, should be introduced into the House in the following year without any new circumstances to justify its re-introduction, it certainly was not necessary that he should go into the details of this Bill. The Holborn Board of Works were the road authorities having control over the roads in the St. Andrew's district through which these lines were projected, and they themselves opposed in the Session of 1879 a proposal to introduce tramways into their district, alleging—

> "That the construction of tramways in the district would of necessity prove a great obstruction, and be fraught with danger to the large vehicular traffic which would use the thoroughfares, and would depreciate the value of the property along the entire route: That there existed no public necessity for the construction and making of the tramways within their district, sufficient to justify the damage, danger, and inconvenience which would result therefrom to the public interested in or using the thoroughfares."

Now, nothing had happened since that time to alter the fact, or to induce anybody in the district to change his mind. The only alteration, if there were any, was in the large increase of vehicular traffic which had taken place over these roads in the interim, and that could only result in the proposed tramways becoming much more dangerous to the public than they would have been in 1879. The Tramways Company had been endeavouring, year by year, to get possession of this district; but no such tramways had yet been sanctioned by Parliament. He had before him a Petition very largely signed by the frontagers throughout the district, in which they alleged the inconvenience and danger which would accrue to them if the Bill were allowed to pass. And they also said that the Western terminus of the proposed tramway was in a most objectionable position. It was close to the entrance of a new fire brigade station, and was badly placed for affording access to the main thoroughfares; and as it had already been decided by Parliament that tramways could not be continued further West, in that direction the proposed tramway could not be prolonged westward, as the Company hoped to carry it in the direction of Oxford Street, to any central point in London, or to form a junction with any other line? In point of fact the promoters were stopped, by a Private Act, from going beyond their Western terminus; and, therefore, they could not afford the facilities which they might reasonably be hoped to afford. He submitted that after the decision of the House of Commons last year, rejecting a Bill almost entirely identical with this—namely, the Tramway Lines No. 1 and 1a, it was quite ridiculous that the opponents of the Bill should be put a second time to all the trouble, expense, and inconvenience of opposing a Bill before a Committee upstairs, an important part of which was thrown out unanimously upon its merits by a Committee last year. This was an attempt, such as they often had to resist in these days, on the part of the Companies to endeavour to starve out individuals who were opposed to their schemes. The House would be aware that recently the public had suffered very much by an omission to protect public interests, which ought to have been dealt with at the time the Bill of the Metropolitan District Railway Company was passing through that House. Instead of doing so, the Bill of the Metropolitan Company was sent upstairs, and there objectionable provisions found their way into it. He (Mr. J. R. Yorke) thought it would have been far better if the Bill had been dealt with on public grounds in the House, and never sent upstairs at all. He was sorry that his hon. and gallant Friend the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) was not present, because he should have liked to ask him what the opinion of the surveyors of the Board was upon the matter. In regard to the present Bill, he would suggest to the House that the only alternative to the throwing of the Bill out altogether was that the promoters should consent to abandon all that part of the scheme which was submitted last year to a Committee upstairs, and unanimously rejected by them. If they chose to abandon that portion of the Bill he would not have a word to say against the remainder of the measure. But unless he had an express declaration from the promoters that they proposed to take that course, he trusted the House would agree with him that the Bill ought not to be allowed to go further. It was alleged, in a statement circulated in support of the second reading of the Bill, that the local authorities having jurisdiction over the proposed roads, with the exception of St. Luke's, had given their assent to the Bill. That was the case, and it was in view of having that fact in mind that the Committee unanimously determined last year to reject the Bill. The promoters said that this year the lines had been altered and laid out with a view to meet the objections raised by the opponents last Session. It was quite true that the present Bill contained one slight divergence; but the proposed deviation was more apparent than real. The same offer was made to the Committee last year; but the Committee having that alternative clearly in view, nevertheless declined to accept it, and threw out the Bill. Therefore he submitted, on the ground of public convenience, and on the ground that it was wrong for two years running to put people to the great expenditure and inconvenience of fighting Bills of this kind, that these were matters which ought to be dealt with by the House instead of being sent to a Committee upstairs. He begged to move that the Bill be read a second time on that day six months.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. J. R. Yorke.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. FIRTH said, he was not prepared to contest many of the observations which had been made by the hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Mr. J. R. Yorke), because he had no special knowledge in regard to them; but he should like to say a word as to the facts of the case. He believed it was true that the Metropolitan Board of Works and the frontagers on the road were in favour of the Bill, and that they had sent in a joint Petition in its behalf. The Holborn Board of Works, by a majority of 20 or 30, passed a resolution in favour of the Bill on the 8th January, and there had also been two Petitions in its favour, signed by the frontagers. He therefore thought that the Bill, which proposed to construct tramways for the advantage and convenience of the public, ought to be enquired into by a competent representative authority, and that it should, therefore, be submitted to a Committee upstairs.

Mr. RAIKES said, he thought that this was a case, judging from what he had heard from his hon. Friend the Member for East Gloucestershire (Mr. J. R. Yorke), which would justify the House in departing from the usual course that was generally adopted in dealing with the question of Private Bill Legislation. The proposal to reject a Private Bill on the second reading was generally deprecated both in that House, and by the public out-of-doors; but in this case it appeared that the matter had already been inquired into by a Committee, and the House ought to respect, as far as it could, the decision of its own Committees. If in any such case they adopted a contrary course, the practice was not unlikely to grow up of the House becoming slack in maintaining the authority of its own Committees, and of allowing abuses of the Forms of the House to the injury of private individuals, owing to the great expense that attended investigations of this kind. They had heard from his hon. Friend the Member for East Gloucestershire (Mr. J. R. Yorke) that last year the Committee to whom the Bill was referred unanimously threw it out. The alternative scheme for a deviation, which was the only difference in the Bill submitted on this occasion and the Bill of last year, was at that time submitted to the Committee; and the Committee, having that deviation before them, nevertheless took the extreme course of throwing the Bill out. The House was now invited again, in the course of the present Session, to send upstairs to another Committee a Bill, to all intents and purposes, exactly identical with the Bill they had rejected last year. He asked the House to consider whether that was a course that was likely to maintain the credit of their Committees or of the House itself? It would certainly fail to show that there was anything like harmony between the House and its Committees. In regard to the question of expense, it was notorious that the proceedings upon Private Bills in that House were very costly, and it was quite possible that private individuals, having once maintained their opposition, might eventually find themselves crushed by a great Company coming down to the House, year by year, and endeavouring gradually to extinguish an opposition which any private persons might be in a position to offer. He hoped, therefore, although he should be sorry that the House should make it a practice generally to refuse the second reading of a Private Bill, that they would consider that his hon. Friend the Member for East Gloucestershire had made out a case, and had given sufficient reasons, on the present occasion, why they should take a step which might be regarded as a precedent by parties outside the House interested in the promotion of Private Bills. Such persons ought to be made to understand that the Forms of the House would not be allowed to be used to the injury of private interests; and the rejection of the Bill upon the second reading would thus teach a salutary lesson. Reluctant as he was to consent to the rejection of a Bill upon the second reading, yet, after what he had heard, if his hon. Friend chose to go to a division, he would certainly support him.

Mr. W. M. TORRENS confessed that he had listened with some surprise to the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes). Hitherto the advice the right hon. Gentleman had given to the House had always been in opposition to the course proposed to be taken by the hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Mr. J. R. Yorke), and very wisely so. Bills of this nature ought to undergo the investigation of a Committee upstairs; and, for his own part, he (Mr. W. M. Torrens) had very seldom consented to vote for the rejection of a Bill on the second reading. He gathered, from what the right hon. Gentleman said, that the House was invited not only to treat this as an exceptional case, but to convert it into a precedent. He certainly thought that was a proposal to change the well-known and especial practice of the House upon rather illogical grounds. He would remind the House of the difficulties which the Member for a Metropolitan constituency was under in a case like this. He had been asked 10 days ago, on behalf of certain frontagers in Holborn, to present a Petition from many very respectable people in their parish against the second reading of the Bill. But it became necessary to inquire somewhat further into the merits of the case, and to ascertain what the conflicting claims were. A numerous deputation represented to him that the interests both of the frontagers and of the employers and employed throughout the district of Clerkenwell would be best served by supporting the Bill; and he held in his hand a Petition from that district exactly in the contrary sense to the one which worthy people in Holborn had asked him to present. He would, therefore, suggest, whether, seeing in the localities chiefly affected that there was such a difference of opinion upon the subject, the House would now consent to alter its practice and set a new precedent, or whether it would not send the Bill to a Committee upstairs, to form a judgment upon it after hearing the evidence, and after having had the assistance of counsel, and so to decide what ought to be done with the Bill? His own opinion, speaking perfectly impartially, because he had no interest in the matter, except to see that justice was done, was that the objectors to the Bill were considerably outnumbered by those who thought that it ought to be read a second time. He, therefore, advised the House not to change its practice and set up an exceptional case. They did not know yet what the arguments were which brought about the unanimity of the Committee in rejecting the Bill last Session. For his own part, he had no objection to urge against the case which had been made out against the Bill by the hon. Member for East Gloucestershire; but he certainly did dissent very widely from the proposal to alter their Constitutional practice and to establish a new precedent.

MR. GREGORY said, he happened to be a resident in the neighbourhood through which it was proposed these tramways should pass; and, in fact, he would have to cross one of the lines of the proposed tramways daily in his way from his house to his office. He, therefore, knew the inconvenience to which the public would be put by the construction of them. It was proposed to carry them down a street which had been recently formed and thrown open to the public. If the Bill passed, tramway lines would occupy a considerable portion of the street which was originally contemplated to provide a great main artery between the East and West of London; and he ventured to think that the persons who had to traverse that street would be subjected to considerable danger. A large number of the inhabitants of the district objected to the Bill, and one of the grounds of their objection was that they had already been put to considerable expense in opposing a similar measure. As it was desirable that they should not be put to more expense a second time, he trusted that the House would reject the Bill.

ADMIRAL EGERTON said, that as he was Chairman of the Committee which threw out the Bill last year, he hoped he might be allowed to say a few words on the subject. The case was this. The opposition to these lines of tramways came, to a great extent, from those who were living on the road. They were intended to take a particular route, and they were opposed by the owners of a brewery, which the line proposed to pass; and the fact that the line now diverged, to a certain extent, from the front of that brewery was the sole excuse for bringing the Bill before the House again. He might say this, as far as the brewery was concerned—that that was not the fatal objection upon which the Committee decided to reject the Bill. If it had been, it was probable there might have been a difference of opinion among the Committee. But the question the House had to consider now was this—was this line of tramways precisely the same as that which was inquired into by the Committee last year? He thought that no case, although he had only seen the statement on one side, was made for bringing the matter again before the House. Of course, if there was any essential difference between the Bill now before the House and the Bill of last year, the Petition for the Bill ought to be referred to a Committee; but if the two Bills were practically identical, then he could only state what the opinion of the Committee was last year, and leave the House to decide the matter.

MR. HICKS said, there was one fact connected with the Bill to which he wished to draw the attention of the House, and which seemed to have escaped the notice of those who opposed the Bill. He did not think it necessary to say anything to strengthen the ground which the hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Mr. J. R. Yorke) had taken up in moving the rejection of the Bill, which was that a similar measure had not met with the approval of the Committee to which it was referred last year; but, as far as he had been able to gather during the noise which had prevailed almost throughout the discussion, he had not heard one word as to the state of the roads or the streets through which it was proposed to carry these tramways. He believed it was intended to bring these tramways through two roads which had been made at great expense during the last two years, and through a very populous neighbourhood, formerly occupied by very narrow streets. This new road had been constructed for the purpose of facilitating the traffic between the East and West of London, and the improvements had been carried on up to the present time, a Fire Brigade depôt having been established in one part of them. It was proposed to carry the improvements further West by way of Bloomsbury Square and Portland Street, and he believed that in the course of a few years they would have a thoroughfare through Oxford Street to Piccadilly Circus. He would only ask the House if it was right that this new road, which was being made for the purpose of relieving the congested traffic of our thoroughfares, should be monopolized by a private Company for private gain? He considered that there was a great principle involved, and he hoped the House would not allow these new streets to be handed over to a private Company, merely because, on their first formation, the traffic was not so great as there was reason to expect it would ultimately become.

Question put.

The House *divided:* — Ayes 100; Noes 139: Majority 39.—(Div. List, No. 33.)

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Second Reading *put off* for six months.

Mr. Hicks

QUESTIONS.

* * *

THE RAILWAY COMMISSION—PERMANENCY—LEGISLATION.

Mr. GREGORY asked the President of the Board of Trade, If he contemplates bringing in a Bill in the present Session to put the Railway Commission on a permanent footing, and to carry out the recommendations of the Committee on Railway Rates and Fares, with respect to the powers and jurisdiction of such Commission?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, he had answered this Question a short time ago. He then said that it was thought undesirable to bring in any Bill which there was no immediate hope of passing through the House; and at the present time the Government list of measures was so full that he could not promise to give attention to the matter.

Mr. GREGORY said, he would give Notice that he should take an early opportunity of calling the attention of the House to the subject.

Mr. TOMLINSON asked whether such a Bill could not be brought into the other House?

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—GLANDERS.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that glanders has spread among the horses of the Artillery and the 7th Dragoon Guards; and, whether there is any reason to believe that the disease was communicated by association with glandered horses of the Indian Contingent in Egypt?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON, in reply, said, that two horses of the 7th Dragoon Guards and one of the Artillery, besides six animals in other Corps, had been destroyed, for glanders in Egypt. These troops were encamped on, or adjacent to, ground previously occupied by the Bengal Cavalry; and it was reputed, after the Lancers' return to India, that some of their horses or baggage ponies had been destroyed for glanders when picketed on this ground. The question had been referred to India for investigation.

ORDNANCE MAPS—EAST STAFFORDSHIRE AND EAST WORCESTERSHIRE.

MR. WIGGIN asked the First Commissioner of Works, When the 6-inch Ordnance maps for East Staffordshire and East Worcestershire will be ready for distribution to the public?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, they were in preparation, and would be issued as soon as possible.

INLAND NAVIGATION (IRELAND)—THE UPPER SHANNON NAVIGATION.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Lords of the Treasury have considered the prayer of the memorial lately addressed by the Limerick Chamber of Commerce to the Treasury on the subject of the tolls on the Upper Shannon Navigation; whether he can hold out any hopes that the prayer of the memorial will be granted; and, whether it is intended to make any change in the management of the Navigation?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, the anomalous position of the Shannon Navigation, with which my hon. Friend is familiar, has for some time occupied my attention, and I am glad to say I now see my way to introducing a Bill this Session, enabling the Government to transfer the management of the river navigation and of the piers on the estuary to persons or bodies interested in their maintenance and improvement, and possessed of more local knowledge than the Government have, or can hope to acquire. Pending the passing of such a Bill, it would not be right for the Government to take any steps which might diminish the solvency of the trusts which they hope to transfer to others; and for that reason the Treasury would not be warranted in reducing the tolls as suggested.

DRAINAGE, &c. (IRELAND)—ACTION OF THE BOARD OF WORKS

MR. P. MARTIN asked the Secretary of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been drawn to the statement in the Report and Evidence laid before the then Government, in June, 1878, by the Committee appointed to inquire into the Board of Works (Ireland), that the action of the Board in respect to drainage and other matters has been greatly obstructed by reason of the very many obsolete, amending, complicated, and contradictory Acts of Parliament which control and fetter the Board in their exercise of the statutory powers and duties entrusted to them by Parliament, and to the recommendation of the Committee that the immediate consolidation of those Acts was desirable; and, whether, considering that the late Chief Secretary for Ireland, in May 1880, assured the House that such a Bill would be laid by the Treasury upon the Table within a reasonable time, if he could now state what steps, if any, have been taken to give effect to those promises and the recommendations of the Committee; and is it the intention of the Treasury, and, if so, when, during the Session, to introduce a Bill to make the Law by which the action of the Board is to be regulated plain and simple?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, I have read the Report of the Committee in question, and my own experience bears out the truth of what they say as to the state of the law relating to the operations of the Board of Works in Ireland. The consolidation of these Statutes was commenced in 1880; but, owing to the course of events in Ireland, could not then be proceeded with. I have, however, been recently engaged upon the subject, and hope to lay on the Table, during the present Session, two Bills consolidating and amending the laws relating to the functions of the Board of Works and to land drainage in Ireland. I propose to avail myself of the results of English experience and legislation on the same subjects, and to introduce such improvements in the law as experience has suggested. There will be little prospect of such Bills passing, unless their progress is assisted by those interested in the progress and prosperity of Ireland; and I therefore appeal to hon. Members from Ireland for co-operation. Any suggestions which may be offered will be carefully considered by Government, and should be addressed to me at the Treasury.

UNITED STATES—THE REVISED TARIFF.

MR. ECROYD asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it is true that the revised tariff of the United States, which is to take effect on the 1st July, imposes greatly enhanced Duties upon some important classes of textile fabrics now exported from this Country; and, whether the alterations in the Duties on raw materials, as compared with those on manufactured goods, are in some instances such as to give increased protection to the American manufacturer?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, the Revised Tariff was only passed by Congress on the 3rd of the present month. As soon as a copy has been received from Her Majesty's Minister at Washington, it will be forwarded in the usual course to the President of the Board of Trade, who will, no doubt, take immediate steps for its publication, and to whom any questions as to the effect of the Tariff should be addressed.

SPAIN (INTERNATIONAL LAW) — EXPULSION OF CUBAN REFUGEES FROM GIBRALTAR.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any communications have passed between the Foreign Office and Her Majesty's Minister at Madrid on the subject of the Cuban Refugees other than those which have been presented to Parliament?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, if my right hon. Friend alludes to confidential communications, his Question is, perhaps, rather unusual. I understand, however, that the specific reference is to a statement made by my Predecessor to the effect that Her Majesty's Minister at Madrid had asked Her Majesty's Government not to make any statement until the matter was complete. That statement was perfectly accurate.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked, Whether the noble Lord had yet received any answer to the despatch, asking whether General Maceo had been subjected to unnecessary indignities in his incarceration?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE in reply, said, that, as he had informed the House yesterday, they had no reason to believe that the statement that General Maceo had been transferred from Ceuta to Pampeluna was incorrect. The statements as to his ill-treatment referred to the time previous to that transfer; but, at the same time, he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) did not want to make too much of that transfer, because, as he understood, General Maceo was a gentleman who had been accustomed all his life to live in a very warm climate, and the transfer might not be of appreciable benefit, nor altogether a welcome one. Enjoying, as he had always done, great freedom of action, it would be difficult to reconcile him to the discipline of a Spanish prison.

PUBLIC HEALTH (IRELAND) ACT, 1878, 41 & 42 VIC., c. 52, s. 149—INFECTIOUS DISEASES—CASE OF BARTHOLOMEW ROE.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, under "The Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878," 41 and 42 Vic., c. 52, s. 149, it is the duty of the Local Government Board, of which he is President, to make regulations for the prevention of the spread of infectious diseases, and for the speedy interment of the dead; if so, whether the Board fulfilled the requirements of the Act in the case of Bartholomew Roe, who died recently in Dublin of malignant fever, and over whose remains a wake was held for two days and two nights; whether he has inquired into the facts, and can now state how many cases of fever, and how many deaths followed; how many children have been left orphans; and, whether any steps can be taken to provide for the survivors of this sad calamity?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have not yet received the report of the further inquiry which I stated on Friday was being made into this matter; and, as this Question has been put down without Notice, I must ask the hon. Member to be good enough to repeat it on a later day.

STATE OF IRELAND — GEEVAGH, COUNTY SLIGO.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Irish Executive have received from the clergy and people of the parish of Geevagh, County Sligo, a Memorial, pointing out that no case of violence of any kind whatever had occurred within the parish during the course of the recent agitation; that the only unusual incident there was the posting, some time ago, of boycotting notices, and praying the Government to remove the extra police which had been quartered on the parish; also pointing out that Thomas Curreen, of Geevagh, accused of the murder of Henry East, in the County Roscommon, has been acquitted; and praying that no part of the parish may be assessed in respect of compensation levied for a murder committed in a part of the country so remote from the parish of Geevagh; and, whether the Irish Executive will grant the prayer of this Memorial?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have not received the Memorial referred to, nor can I ascertain that it has been received by any other Member of the Irish Executive.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND)—TOYS FOR WORKHOUSE CHILDREN.

MR. HICKS asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is a fact that the district auditor has disallowed the sum of three shillings and three pence, expended by the master of the Wisbech Union Workhouse, under the orders of the chairman and other guardians, in the purchase of toys for sick children; and, whether he has reversed such disallowance; and, if not, if he would explain the reason why?

MR. HIBBERT: Sir, the auditor of the Wisbech Union has disallowed the sum referred to, which was expended in the purchase of toys for children in the workhouse. There have been similar disallowances previously, and the Local Government Board, while relieving the persons surcharged of their liability, have held that expenditure of this character should be defrayed by private liberality, rather than out of rates compulsorily levied. The subject had been considered in connection with the recent surcharge, and it is proposed to hold that the expenditure was within the legal powers of the Guardians, and the auditor will be communicated with, with a view to a reversal of his decision.

VACCINATION ACTS—COMPULSORY VACCINATION.

MR. P. A. TAYLOR asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, in the appointment of public vaccinators, the conditions and restrictions under which vaccination is to be enforced are made the subject of specific contract; and, if he will provide means to make the terms of such contract as widely known as possible, so that, in cases where disease or death follows upon the operations parents may have the satisfaction of knowing that all the precautions deemed necessary by the medical advisers of the Local Government Board have been scrupulously observed?

MR. HIBBERT: Sir, the contracts with public vaccinators contain a provision that the vaccinations shall be performed in accordance with certain instructions to public vaccinators which were issued by the Privy Council in 1871. Copies of these instructions have been freely issued by the Local Government Board, and they will be quite prepared to furnish copies whenever they are applied to for the purpose. No further means of making the terms of these instructions known appear to the Board to be necessary.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL.

MR. GIBSON asked Mr. Attorney General, If he could state to the House, whether the Judges in England or Ireland, or either country, or any, and, if so, which, of said Judges were consulted as to the Court of Criminal Appeal Bill?

MR. HOPWOOD wished to know, since when it had been recognized as a condition precedent to the introduction of a measure to that House that the approval of any other persons should be previously sought or obtained?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): Sir, if my right hon. and learned Friend intends, by this Question, to suggest that it is the absolute duty of the Government, before introducing a measure of legal reform, to obtain the sanction or approval of Her Majesty's Judges, I hope I may be allowed to say that I cannot give adhesion to such a proposition without considerable qualification. The responsibility of introducing such a measure as the Question refers to rests with the Government, and the responsibility of passing or rejecting it attaches to Members of this House. But, Sir, with this reservation, I can inform my right hon. and learned Friend that both because I was desirous of obtaining either suggestion or criticism from those whose opinions were of the highest value, and also because I should have been much wanting in courtesy if I had acted otherwise, I did submit the heads of the Bill and also the draft Bill to several of Her Majesty's Judges, and naturally among them to the Chief

Justice of England, as representing that portion of the Judicial Bench which has to administer the Criminal Law; and, Sir, I have the Lord Chief Justice's permission to state that, while he reserves to himself the fullest right to discuss the details of the Bill, he gives a very cordial assent to its principles and the main provisions contained in it, subject, however to this observation—that he regrets that there is no provision to be found in it giving to the Court of Appeal the power to revise sentences, so as to deal both with the inequality and sometimes with the severity to be found in them. As this Court of Criminal Appeal Bill has been mentioned, may I ask the House to grant me its indulgence, so as to allow me to state that in the course of re-framing the Bill, at a late stage of its drafting, a paragraph, which from its nature could only refer to non-capital cases, has, by a strange inadvertence, which I cannot account for, found its way into the 2nd clause, relating to capital punishment, and has produced a manifest subject for observation, upon which I have received many communications—I mean the paragraph which provides that there shall be no increase by the Court of Appeal of the sentence imposed by the Court of trial. I hope this explanation will protect the Bill from further criticism upon that head.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN FRASERBURGH.

DR. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the continuance of disputes regarding the administration of justice in Fraserburgh; whether it is true that, notwithstanding the decision of the Court of Session, the superintendent of police refused to take instructions from the gentleman who has been declared procurator, except upon the orders of the clerk to the Commissioners; whether that clerk, though ordered by the magistrates, will not convey their instructions to the superintendent of police; whether the administration of justice in the burgh is not thereby paralysed; and, whether, in the public interest, he will take immediate steps to compel the recalcitrant magistrate and officials to acknowledge the validity of the decree of the Court of Session?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): Sir, I am glad to say that the unfortunate disputes to which my hon. Friend refers appear to be now at an end. I have to-day received information that Mr. Finlayson is not to carry his contention further, and instructions have consequently been given to the police to report to Mr. Tarass the cases, appropriate for being dealt with by the burgh fiscal.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — THE ROYAL MARINES.

MR. NEWZAM NICHOLSON asked the Secretary of State for War, If any arrangement has been made by which non-commissioned officers from the Marines now serving with the Auxiliary forces will receive the same warrant rank and pay that has been for some time granted to non-commissioned officers from Line regiments serving in a similar capacity?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON, in reply, said, there was only one non-commissioned officer in the Royal Marines serving on the Staff of the Auxiliary Forces, and his case was now under consideration.

ARMY—EMPLOYMENT OF CONVICT LABOUR AT DOVER.

MR. HOPWOOD asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any military reports on the expediency of constructing a harbour at Dover by convict labour have been made to the War Office; and, if they can be laid upon the Table without inconvenience to the public service?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON, in reply, said, no Military Reports had been received on the expediency of constructing a harbour at Dover by convict labour; but Reports had been received on the military question of constructing a harbour. It was not usual, however, to present such Reports to Parliament.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—COMPENSATION FOR MALICIOUS INJURIES.

MR. ION HAMILTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can state how soon compensation under the Crimes Act will be granted to those who have received malicious injuries, and who may be deemed entitled to such compensation by the Lord Lieutenant; and, whether such compensation, when granted, will be paid by the Government in a bulk sum, afterwards to be collected from the Country, or whether by periodical instalments?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, in the majority of cases His Excellency's award will be made known in a few days; and in the remaining cases within the next six weeks. The Act gives the Government no power to pay the money in a bulk sum, to be afterwards collected from the country. It will be paid over when collected, and in most of the cases will be raised in one sum, and not in instalments.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—THE WORKHOUSE TEST.

Mr. O'BRIEN (for Mr. O'Donnell) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the appeal of Mrs. Power Lalor, in the "Morning Post" of the 7th instant, on behalf of multitudes of starving children in Donegal, and especially to her statements that the distress, though limited to certain localities—

> "Is equally acute with the distress in 1879-80, and calls for immediate exertion if the children there are to be saved from a lingering death, or, worse still, life-long diseases. In many places they are existing upon seaweed, with a small quantity of Indian meal mixed through it. I propose to give one good plentiful meal daily at the schools to the really hungry destitute children, irrespective of creed. I bar Indian meal as an article of diet; as used alone it produces scrofula and ophthalmia in children. Three pounds sterling weekly will furnish a good meal daily to 100 children. There are several thousands to be fed;"

and, whether he will take any steps to relax the alleged necessity of the workhouse test in the case of so many thousands of starving children?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have seen the appeal referred to; but I am not aware upon what authority the charitable lady who made it founded the statement that the distress, though limited in area, is as acute as that of 1879-80. She is not, I believe, resident in Donegal, but writes from Dublin; though I have no doubt she was satisfied with the evidence which was in her possession justifying the truth of her statement. I do not think, however, that statements put forward in this manner, by private individuals, would justify the Government in altering a course of action adopted after careful consideration of the Reports of their responsible local officers.

MADAGASCAR—REPORTED BLOCKADE BY FRANCE.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether a blockade of the Malagasy Coast has been, or is about to be, established by the French Republic; and, if so, in what way the large population of the Mauritius can obtain their necessary food; and, whether a British representative will be sent to Madagascar?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, no intimation has been given of any intention on the part of the French Government to blockade the Coast of Madagascar. Mr. Pakenham is Her Majesty's Consul in the Island; he has been there for a considerable number of years, and is still there. There is also a Vice Consul, Mr. Wilson, at Mahanoro, on the East Coast of the Island.

SCIENCE AND ART MUSEUM (DUBLIN).

Mr. COOPE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is a fact that 80 designs were submitted in competition for the Science and Art Museum, Dublin, of which five were selected; whether the Treasury, in accordance with the original conditions of competition, guaranteed to carry out one of them, the works to be executed under the superintendence of its author; whether, notwithstanding this pledge on the part of the Government, the Treasury is now making arrangements for a fresh competition; and, whether such a procedure is consistent with justice as regards the successful competitors?

Mr. COURTNEY, in reply, said, that it was the fact that five designs for carrying out the original scheme were selected; but no guarantee was given that one of them would, in any case, be carried out. In point of fact, the original competition contemplated nothing of the kind. In deference to local opinion, the former scheme was abandoned, and quite a different one substituted for it; and it was for this that a new competition was about to be instituted. The position of the architects formerly selected would not be forgotten, and he had now before him Papers on the question.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE TRANSVAAL.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can name a day on which he will give facilities for the discussion of the Motion on the affairs of the Transvaal of which the Right honourable Member for East Gloucestershire has given Notice?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Mr. Speaker, I stated yesterday, in answer to a Question on this subject, that I was not prepared to enter upon the consideration of any matter connected with the bringing forward of the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman until I knew what was to become of the debate to-night, upon the Motion to be proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). That Motion stands upon the Votes, and I am aware of no reason why we should not proceed with the discussion of it; and if we are to proceed with that discussion, I must adhere certainly to the answer I gave last night.

Mr. GORST: Perhaps, after the statement of the Prime Minister, the House will allow me one word of personal explanation. Immediately that I heard on Saturday last that the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) intended to move his Motion, I indicated to him by letter that, in the event of the Government giving a day for the discussion of that Motion, I should be ready to waive the Motion of which I had given Notice. That information was conveyed to the Government on Saturday last.

Mr. GLADSTONE: No; I beg your pardon. I was not aware of it.

Mr. GORST: Then on Monday morning. I understood from the answer given by the Prime Minister to the right hon. Baronet's Question yesterday that Her Majesty's Government were not prepared to give a day until after Easter for the discussion of that Motion. I carefully listened to the answer of the Prime Minister, and I gathered from it that if my Motion were withdrawn to-night, he would then be willing to name an early day after Easter for the discussion of that Motion. [Mr. Gladstone: No, no!] I therefore beg to say that, if it will remove any difficulty on the part of the Government, I shall be perfectly ready to abstain from moving the Motion of which I have given Notice for to-night, upon the express understanding that Her Majesty's Government will name a day early after Easter for the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman. In the event of the Government not naming any such day, I shall persevere with my Motion.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I believe that to-day I have simply repeated what I stated yesterday. I am aware of no public reason why the Motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gorst) should not come on. In point of fact, it relates to events which are recent, which may be said to be authenticated, and which are of an importance that deserves the attention of this House; whereas, as far as I understand, the other and somewhat larger Motion of which Notice has been given by the right hon. Baronet, it is rather in the nature of a re-trial of the general questions of policy which were discussed and considered during the year before last. I may say also, as regards the Business of the House, that it is in a state of the utmost pressure. [Lord John Manners: Oh, oh!] Yes, Sir; if the noble Lord does not know it is in a state of pressure I may acquaint him of it; and I do not think that that pressure is likely to be diminished after Easter. On the double ground, therefore, of the nature of the question and the Business of the House, it appears to me that if the hon. and learned Member for Chatham is in a position—as I believe he will be—to introduce his Motion at an early and reasonable hour in the evening, he may go forward with it.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Sir, I should like, in the first place, to say, in reference to what fell from my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gorst), that I have no complaint to make as regards his action in this matter; but that, in regard to the reply of the Prime Minister, I beg to give Notice that on Thursday next I shall repeat the Question which my right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote) has addressed to him this evening. I trust that I may then receive from him a more satisfactory answer, because I may venture to point out to the Prime Minister that my Motion is a direct challenge to Her Majesty's Government on a most important question of their Colonial policy of the last two years—a Motion which, I believe, will be supported by the great body of the Opposition. I trust I may then hear that the right hon. Gentleman will give me facilities for bringing it on. If he does not, I can only say, with regret, that I shall be compelled to ask hon. Members who take an interest in the subject to aid me in obtaining, if necessary, by the use of the Forms of the House, and even at the risk of some delay in Government Business, those facilities for the discussion and the decision of this House upon a fair and legitimate challenge, which, so far as I know, has never yet been refused by any Government, but which, on the contrary, I believe all previous Governments have not only felt it their duty, but have been anxious to afford all facilities for on such an occasion.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I shall not be tempted either by the threats of the right hon. Gentleman, which I perfectly understand, and which are by no means the first intimations which have been perceptible to us with regard to the course of Public Business, nor shall I be tempted by the interruption of a peculiar character—["Oh, oh!"]—which has been made by the hon. Member opposite. [*Cries of* "Which?" *and* "Order!"] I do not wish to make any personal reference. [*Renewed interruption.*] I will say, after that last passage, to the hon. Member himself—I do not know where he sits for—I say I shall not be tempted by those threats to deviate from what I have recently stated—namely, that it appears to me that the question of the Transvaal, as it is touched by the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman, will be more conveniently handled by me with respect to the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman after we see what will become of the Motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman has contrived to introduce into an intimation, which I conceive ought to have been a mere Notice, a very large amount of accusatory and historical matter. Well, I suppose, in strictness, I should be entitled to refer to that accusatory and historical matter; but I must do that which is often obligatory upon those whose first duty is the promotion and expedition of Public Business; I must allow the assertions of the right hon. Gentleman, which I dispute, and which I shall be prepared to refute, to stand uncontradicted until the time comes when, if he pleases, he will revive his menaces, and we can deal properly with them.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER asked the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, after what hour he would not bring forward his Motion?

Mr. GORST, in reply, said, his only motive in bringing the Motion forward was a desire to bring under the consideration of the House the very grave position of the Native Tribes in the territory bordering on the Transvaal. He did not think that object would be obtained if he brought it forward at a late hour; and, therefore, he would not bring it forward unless he was able to do so before 10 o'clock.

EAST INDIA—CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (NATIVE JURISDICTION OVER BRITISH SUBJECTS).

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government will now undertake to grant a day for the discussion by this House of the proposed change in the Criminal Procedure of India, in view of the great and widespread opposition of the British population to that measure, and of the revolutionary language of the Native Press?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I am afraid my answer to the hon. Gentleman must be in the negative. The facilities which he asks for mean public time, and public time I am not able to afford him.

In reply to Mr. E. Stanhope,

Mr. J. K. CROSS said, that, so far as he knew, Lieutenant General Wilson had not written a Minute in opposition to the change of the law. The text of the Bill in question, with an account of the proceedings on its introduction, would be in the hands of Members in a very few days.

UNITED STATES—THE REVISED TARIFF.

Mr. H. T. DAVENPORT asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, under the new American tariff, the heavy Import Duties on china and earthenware which now prevails will be largely increased?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, that, though though the official copy of the new American Tariff had not yet reached this country, there was an unofficial copy in the hands of the Board of Trade. He had no information as to the change of rates on china and earthenware.

In reply to Mr. BROADHURST,

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, that, as soon as he received the official copy of the Tariff, he would consider in what form it could best be communicated to the House.

PARLIAMENT—THE MINISTRY—EARL SPENCER.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Prime Minister, Whether it is true, as is currently reported, that the proposed change in the Offices held by Lord Spencer involve his retirement from the Cabinet; and, if so, whether the right hon. Gentleman will state what he proposes to do with reference to the representation of the Irish Government in the Cabinet?

Mr. GLADSTONE: No, Sir. I can assure the House and the hon. Member that Lord Spencer, in no sense, retires from the Cabinet.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ORDER—BALLOT FOR PRECEDENCE.

Mr. DICK-PEDDIE: I wish, Sir, to put a Question to you upon a point of Order, in reference to the ballot for Notices of Motion, on Tuesdays and Fridays. I find it is the common practice for hon. Members, in order to secure a place for a particular Motion, to secure the co-operation of several other hon. Members. All of them place Notices on the Paper, and it is understood that if any one of them should be drawn, the particular Notice agreed upon should be given to him. I wish to know, Sir, from you, whether the adoption of this practice, by greatly diminishing the chances of other hon. Members acting separately, is not inconsistent with the Rules of the ballot for precedence in regard to Notices of Motion?

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I would also ask, if it is in Order for an hon. Member to put to you a Question which involves a charge of *male fides* against other hon. Members?

Mr. SPEAKER: A Question of a similar character to that of the hon. Member for Kilmarnock (Mr. Dick-Peddie) was put to the Chair twice in the Session of 1876; and I will state what then fell from the Chair upon the matter. The Speaker stated that the point was one which had been brought under his notice at an early period of the Session, and that he had then stated his opinion upon it. It appeared to him then—as it appears to him now—that if two or more Members, holding the same opinion upon the same specific Motion, combine together to ballot for precedence, with the view of giving undue precedence to that Motion, such a practice was an evasion of the Rules of the House.

Mr. HOPWOOD: Supposing that individual Members, without combining—each one having the intention and the determination to bring forward a Motion on a particular matter, to which he attaches great importance, accidentally or otherwise, all ballot for precedence for that Motion, would such an accident invalidate the chance of the hon. Member whose name happened to be called?

Mr. SPEAKER: In answer to the Question which has been put to me by the hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood), I have to say that it appears to me that if a number of hon. Members interested in bringing forward a particular question take the course indicated by the hon. and learned Member, I fail to see how the ballot could be worked.

EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION)—THE EARL OF DUFFERIN'S DESPATCH.

In reply to Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE,

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, that Lord Dufferin's despatch with regard to Egypt had been received on the previous night, and he hoped that it would be presented in connection with a great number of other Papers relating to Egypt, in the course of this week, and certainly before the House rose for the Easter Recess. There would be two volumes—one in continuation of the general series, and the other in continuation of the re-organization series—and Lord Dufferin's despatch would be in the latter series.

MOTIONS.

MERCANTILE MARINE—HARBOUR ACCOMMODATION ON THE EAST COAST.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

MR. MARJORIBANKS, in rising to call attention to the want of Harbour accommodation on the East Coast of Great Britain, and more particularly to the lamentable need of low-water Harbours suitable for fishing and coasting vessels; and to move—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the Harbour accommodation on the Coasts of the United Kingdom, having regard to the laws and arrangements under which the construction and improvements of Harbours may now be effected,"

said: I am confident that the House will not need any apology from me for bringing the subject of our Harbour accommodation before it — a subject which must excite the keenest and most general interest of a nation, whose success in the past, whose glory and material welfare in the present, are so inextricably bound up in the maritime enterprize and prowess of her sons. Some apology is, however, due by me to those hardy seamen and fishermen, whose interests I desire to further, and whose perils my earnest hope it is to be, in ever so small a measure, the means of decreasing, for having ventured to bring this Motion before the House, instead of leaving it to the care of some more able and older Member. I do not think the necessity for some action of the kind being taken can be more clearly shown than by a short statement of the casualties which occur along our Coasts from year to year. According to the Report of a Select Committee of this House, which sat in 1857, the annual average of all wrecks and casualties, from whatever cause, which occurred on the Coasts of this country in the five years 1852-6, both inclusive, appears to have been 1,025 per annum. Dividing the 20 years 1861 to 1880 into quinquennial periods, we find the average annual casualties to have been in the period from 1861 to 1865, 1,538; in the 5 years from 1866 to 1870, 1,862; in the 5 years 1871 to 1875, 2,536; and in the 5 years 1876 to 1880, 3,380. Are not these figures appalling, not only in their aggregate number, but still more so in their fearfully rapid and never-failing progressive increase? Surely it is time for Government to interpose, with firmness and determination, and to take steps to put a stop to so disgraceful a state of things; and surely one, at any rate, of the means by which these evils may be mitigated is by a judicious, but resolute, policy of encouraging by every possible means, at intervals and in carefully selected localities around these Islands, the construction of low-water Harbours, which shall offer a ready place of refuge to vessels in distress, at all times of the tide. It is but a poor answer, and one quite unworthy of the Government of a great country like ours, to say, when hundreds of lives have been lost by sudden storms, and they are petitioned by poor fishermen for assistance in constructing necessary Harbour accommodation, that the great commercial seaports have been able to provide for themselves stupendous harbour works, that all such works must only be undertaken on the most strictly commercial principles, and that they must imitate their great corporate neighbours, and help themselves to what they want without Government intervention. Now, Sir, it is just six years since a debate on Harbours was raised in this House. On that occasion, it was on the Motion of the noble Lord who now represents Liverpool, and then King's Lynn (Lord Claud Hamilton). The object of his Motion was to press the claims of one particular locality, and to ask the grant of large sums of the public money. My Motion is on totally different lines. It is not to press the claim of any particular locality, nor to demand the free grant of Government money. I only ask for a thorough, an impartial, a searching inquiry. I contend the time is opportune. We have had two exceptionally stormy seasons in succession. It is now 26 years since the last inquiry upon the subject was ordered by Parliament. A Committee was appointed in 1857, and the result of their labours is to be found in the passing of the Harbour and Passing Tolls Act, which has been of immense benefit; but, as I shall presently endeavour to show, has not of late years been administered in the spirit in which it was framed, or for the purposes for which it was passed. Then the great harbour works on the South Coast at

Portland, and elsewhere, have been completed, or are on the point of completion; and the convict labour thus to be set free is available for and about to be applied in new localities. And, again, the Scotch Fishery Board, which has an annual sum, though a very small one, for disposal on harbours, has just been re-constituted; and some inquiry on the past disposal of those funds, and into the present needs of the country, whose interests are its care, must be beneficial, and help the new Board to a thoroughly sound decision as to their action in the future. I intend to rest my demand more especially upon the facts relating to the East Coast of this country, the most dangerous of our shores, and on which—more particularly on that part between the North Foreland and the Firth of Forth—an altogether undue proportion of wrecks annually occur. That will be evident at a glance to any hon. Member who will refer to the Wreck Charts annually compiled and published from the Board of Trade Wreck Register. Upon this point the Report of the Committee of 1857 is very clear. In that Report it will be found that Captain Washington states that he had computed that one-half of the whole wrecks of the United Kingdom occur on the East Coast of Great Britain, and fully one-half of that number between the Firth of Forth and the Humber. This estimate of Captain Washington is fully borne out by the statistics of the last year we have now published—from June, 1880, to June, 1881—in which, out of a total of 2,865 wrecks, excluding casualties by collisions, 1,171 occurred on the East Coast, between the North Foreland and Cape Wrath, and 956 of these last, or one-third of the whole number, between the North Foreland and the Ferne Islands; while out of a total loss of life, excluding collisions, of 888, 496 were lost between the North Foreland and Cape Wrath, of which 420 were between the North Foreland and the Ferne Islands. In the year 1881-2, of which the statistics are not yet before Parliament, the loss of life on the East Coast was, I fear, even more appallingly great than that which I have already presented to the House. On two occasions alone 249 lives of fishermen were lost on the Coasts of Scotland—namely, 58 in the Shetlands in July, and 191 on the Berwickshire Coast in October. Now, Sir, what are the harbours we have on this fearfully dangerous East Coast? Many indeed in number, but few indeed in value for refuge purposes. It should be remembered that the value of a harbour for refuge purposes must be gauged by its capability for taking in the class of vessels for which it is intended at all states of the tide; and I believe that 10 feet at low tide should certainly be the least that should be allowed, even for the class of fishing boats now in general use on the North-East Coast. For it is necessary to bear in mind that, in addition to the amount of water a vessel actually draws, an allowance must be made for the "send of the sea," or, in other words, the depth to which the keel of the vessel descends in the trough of the sea, equal to at least one-half the height of the waves. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) recently made an important speech on the subject at Swansea, in which he showed himself fully alive to the importance of the subject, and expressed his desire to gather all the information he possibly could on the subject. This inquiry now asked for will, if granted, be the means of furnishing him with much that will be useful to the formation of a sound opinion. The following is a statement of the existing harbours on the East Coast. Between the Thames and the Humber there are 17, of which five only—the Thames, Harwich, Lowestoft, Yarmouth, and Lynn—are harbours having more than 8 feet at low water; between the Humber and the Forth 27, of which only five also—the Humber, Tees, Hartlepool, Sunderland, and the Tyne—are harbours having more than 8 feet at low water. And of these five, four are on the Coast of Durham, within 30 miles of each other, so that their utility as harbours of refuge to the country generally is greatly diminished. Between the Forth and Cape Wrath there are 48, of which two only—the Forth and the Tay—have more than 8 feet at low water; but the latter is very dangerous to enter during storms; and five with between 6 and 8 feet at low water—namely, Montrose, very difficult to enter in certain states of wind and tide; Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Buckie, and Aberdeen—

this last also dangerous to enter in storms. This short summary of the harbours on this dangerous and rocky Coast, combined with the wrecks that annually occur on it, surely speak for themselves for the crying necessity that exists for the multiplication of harbours that should be available in all weathers and at all states of the tide. I must now again, for purposes of comparison, refer to the Report of the Committee of 1857. The following passage will there be found:—

> "It appears in the evidence taken by your Committee that between St. Abb's Head and Flamborough Head, a distance of about 150 miles, every harbour along the Coast, without any exception, has a bar at its entrance more or less dangerous, and that none of them can be entered at low water. This Coast includes the important ports of the Tyne, the Wear, and the Tees, besides those of Berwick-on-Tweed, Blyth, Hartlepool, Seaham, Whitby, and Scarborough."

Now, how far does the present state of things differ from that set out in the Report? Between the Humber and the Forth, since 1858, many harbours have been altered or enlarged—*e.g.*, Bridlington, Scarborough, the Tees, Hartlepool, Sunderland, the Tyne, Blyth, Warkworth, Burnmouth, and Dunbar; but, with two exceptions, it cannot be said that any of these harbours offer better refuge for vessels during storms; several—*e.g.*, Scarborough, Sunderland, and Blyth—offer more accommodation, but are not available more than formerly by ordinary vessels except about high water. The two exceptions are the Tees and the Tyne. The former is already available at all times of the tide by small vessels, and is steadily improving; while the Tyne may now fairly be described as a real harbour of refuge for all purposes. Twenty years ago the Tyne had a very dangerous bar at its entrance, over which the depth of water was, on the average, about 6 feet at low water, and 20½ feet at high water. Of springs, now, the bar has been entirely removed, so that there is 23 feet at low water between the pier heads. The total cost of these works has reached something like £3,500,000 sterling, of which the Tyne Commissioners have laid out in the last 20 years £1,000,000. A grant of £250,000 was recommended for them by the 1859 Commission; but the only aid they have received has been loans to the amount of £345,727 from the Public Works Loan Commissioners. The distance from the Humber to the Tees is 110 miles, and there is no refuge harbour along that great stretch of Coast. From the Tees to the Tyne is only 30 miles; but this portion of the Coast is specially fortunate in regard to harbour accommodation; while from the Tyne to Inchkeith, in the Forth, the next available shelter, is 130 miles. Let me give, as instances of the great need of low-water harbours of easy access, two disasters that recently happened on the coast of my own county, both of which, humanly speaking, would certainly have been greatly mitigated, if not wholly averted, by the existence of such a harbour. The first was on the 19th of November, 1875. Some 40 Fife boats had left Yarmouth for home the day but one previously. They were on the morning in question overtaken by a severe gale. A number of the boats made the attempt to take Berwick Harbour; but the Berwick fishermen signalled them against such a course, and they were forced to make for the Holy Island. Two of the boats followed in the wake of some Burnmouth boats, and found safe shelter in that harbour; but a third, which made the attempt later on, was warned off by the coastguardsmen, and had to stand out to sea and was lost. Five boats in all were lost—three belonging to St. Monance and two to Cellardyke, with 37 men, who left 18 widows and 71 children. Then came the terrible disaster of the 14th October, 1881. On that occasion, between 1 and 2 o'clock in the afternoon, a terrible storm burst on the fishing fleet fishing off the Berwickshire Coast, and in a couple of hours 35 boats and 191 lives were lost, leaving 107 widows and 351 children. Many of the boats on that occasion were smashed up within sight and hearing, and almost within touch, of the shrieking women on the shore, or at the pier heads at Eyemouth and Burnmouth. The skipper of one of the Eyemouth boats described to me the fearful horrors of that day. He ran for his own harbour; but, as he neared it, he realized the absolute impossibility of entering. To use the man's own words, he came to the conclusion that there was nothing for it but to "put his trust in God, and make the sea his friend for the night." He accordingly went out to sea, and, after 28 hours of the greatest hardships and danger, got into Shields.

Eyemouth alone, on this occasion, lost 129 men, Cove, Coldingham, Burnmouth, Newhaven, and Fisherrow, losing the remaining 62. Seven Eyemouth and one Burnmouth boat weathered the storm at sea, and took shelter at last on the 15th and 16th in the Tyne. Instances such as these may be multiplied without end. It is only a week ago to-day since a fearful storm raged on the North-East Coast, which, I am informed, placed the boats on the Aberdeenshire Coast in the gravest danger, and would, had it come upon the men at low tide, infallibly have led to a great disaster. The same storm terribly jeopardized the safety of the whole fleet of Yorkshire fishing boats. Eight fishermen were drowned at Filey, leaving seven widows and 20 children. These men, I hear this morning, were lost entirely from the absence of proper harbour accommodation. I may here mention that I have the authority of the Secretary at Lloyd's for saying that one great reason for fishing vessels not being accepted on the books of that great institution is the want of suitable harbours for their accommodation on our Coasts. Ramsgate, Hull, Prestonpans, the Shetland Islands, have all been among recent sufferers. I do, Sir, implore the Government to take into their most serious consideration the clamant necessity of coming to the assistance of these unfortunate men, and to make some endeavour to devise a plan by which we may deal effectually with a state of things which year by year becomes a more and more crying disgrace to the country. It is my contention that great national harbours of refuge, and perhaps defence, which have so often been the subject of debate in this House, can only be constructed at the most enormous expenditure, and by means of public money. I, therefore, pass them by. It is, however, I believe, the fact that the Government have already determined to employ the convict labour set free by the completion of the works on the South Coast, on three works of this character at Dover, Filey, and Peterhead. But we have a right to ask for a clear and definite statement of their policy in this matter, the reasons that have weighed with them in coming to this decision; and why, especially, the works at Dover are to take precedence of the works at Filey, for, as far as I can judge from all the evidence, the latter place has far greater claims as a harbour of refuge than the former, and is situated in a position where such works are far more needed than at Dover, with the Roads and the Thames so near at hand, and would, besides, be of the greatest service in the development of the North Sea fisheries. I hope the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade will not fail to make a very full and definite statement on this point for the satisfaction of the House and the country, though, of course, he may plead the value of defence works at Dover to be sufficient to outweigh all other considerations. It is often said that fishery harbours will not pay. I do not believe that at all. I believe that if the place is judiciously chosen and the works efficiently constructed there need be little fear of their paying. Look at the marvellous development of Grimsby. In 1856, 1,540 tons of fish were sent inland from that place by rail; while, in 1881, 49,583 tons, or about one-fifth of the whole quantity so conveyed in the whole of England, were despatched from that place. Again, Fraserburgh may be cited as another example of rapid development. In 1815, the total catch of herrings there was 5,560 barrels; from 1840 to 1850, about 24,000 barrels per annum; while from the extension of the harbour, which commenced in 1873, the catch has yearly increased, and in the years 1877 to 1881 the average number of barrels caught yearly reached the enormous figure of 180,000, worth about £250,000. In 1870 the number of boats was 480, and in 1880, 789. In 1847 the revenue from harbour dues was under £1,200; in 1877-81 it was considerably over £10,000 per annum. It seems to me that the policy to be adopted is something of this sort. A certain number of places should be carefully selected along the Coast, with the view of being made into first-rate fishery harbours, which should be available by small craft at all times. The selection of these places should depend on their suitability for improvement from an engineering and commercial point of view, and from their situation on the Coast in regard to one another. It will be at once apparent that there is a vast difference between the construction of great national harbours of refuge, or even of harbours suitable to the vessels of our great commercial ports, and of harbours that will serve for refuge for fishing and other small trading vessels. Such harbours, into which small craft of all description could run with safety at all times, are undertakings comparatively small, both in difficulty and expense. The first thing absolutely necessary is the extension of the principle of lending money at a low rate of interest, recognized by the Act of 1861, to the establishment of fishery harbours. Hitherto, as far as the East Coast, at any rate, is concerned, it has been chiefly the large ports which have benefited by that Act; and the smaller harbours, including nearly all those devoted to fishing, have obtained but little assistance. Between the Humber and Cape Wrath, £1,377,000 has been lent to 11 harbours, with an income exceeding £2,000 per annum, and only £19,205 to five places whose income is below this amount. There are, in this district, between 40 and 50 harbours which rely mainly or entirely upon the fishing industry; only about four of them have an income exceeding £2,000, and only eight have received loans. The Committee of 1857 recommended free grants to the amount of £2,000,000; the Commission appointed to complete the Committee's work recommended grants amounting to £2,365,000. Both the recommendations as to grants were set aside, and never acted upon; but as an alternative policy, the Harbours and Passing Tolls Act, 1861, was introduced and passed, to make provision for the construction and improvement of harbours, by authorizing loans from the public funds to harbour authorities. Now, Sir, many and various applications were at once made under the Act, and during the first four years the Public Works Loan Commissioners advanced some £1,250,000, or about half of the whole amount lent by them for harbour purposes in the 20 years ending 1880; but soon a dispute arose between the Board of Trade and the Loan Commissioners, first proceeding from the Board of questioning certain decisions of the Commissioners. The Board seem always to have taken the more liberal interpretation of the Act; the Commissioners always the more restricted one. The result has been that year by year the loans became less and less, till at last the policy seems to be to give as little as possible. and that only under the most severe conditions. In the four years ending March, 1866, the average annual amount granted was £331,925, and £115,750 refused; in the four years ending March, 1870, £101,711 granted, and £174,132 refused; in the four years ending March, 1874, £111,950 granted, while the returns of refusal are incomplete; in the four years ending March, 1878, £49,050 granted, and the average of refusals in three years—1875-8—£336,266; and in the four years ending March, 1881, £68,000 granted, and £250,743 refused. Again, Sir, it is impossible to get at the reasons of refusals from the Loan Commissioners. In 1875, before a Committee of this House, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London (Mr. Hubbard), Chairman of the Board, stated that the Commissioners wished all their acts to be clear as the light of day, and that they had no objection to state their reasons for refusing loans to harbours; but though it has again and again been asked that the reasons of refusal should be included in Parliamentary Returns, it has been impossible to obtain an acquiescence to the demand. To return, however, to the places to be selected for the purposes of these harbours, if possible, they should not be distant from one another more than 40 or 50 miles, so that vessels using them might not have far to run in a storm. When once these places have been decided on, loans should be refused to intermediate places till the completion of the works at the selected places. The execution of such a policy as I have attempted to sketch would give, for instance, on the East Coast of Scotland first-rate fishing-boat harbours at Eyemouth and Anstruther, improved harbours at Stonehaven, Banff, Helmsdale, and Scrabster; and first-rate fishing-boat harbours at Wick, Melvich Bay, and in the Kyle of Tongue. These, together with a harbour of refuge at Peterhead, would, I am certain, lead to such a development in the Scottish fisheries of the North Sea, whether of herrings, or of cod, ling, and haddocks, as would seem to be almost incredible. I do not suggest, for one moment, of course, that these works should be carried out by free grants of Government money, though, of course, cases might occur where such grants might be deemed necessary, as in the case of Arklow last year; but I do say that this is a policy to be effected by means of loans at low rates of interest. The figures I have put forward to the House, however, are remarkable, not only for the actual decrease in loans granted, but as much or more so for the proportionate decrease between loans granted and loans refused, and prove, without another word, how far short the results of the Harbour and Passing Tolls Act has fallen of the intentions of its promoters. Fishermen have always shown themselves willing to pay heavy harbour dues. At this moment the Grimsby dues are, I believe, some £17 per annum on each boat, which is a heavy yearly tax on boats originally costing from £400 to £500. But a further difficulty has been placed in the way of applicants for harbour loans, for which we have to thank the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). As the Act was passed in 1861, the rate of interest for harbour loans was 3½ per cent up to £100,000, and in excess of that sum such higher rate as the Commissioners might determine, not exceeding 5 per cent; but in 1879 the right hon. Gentleman changed the rates to 3½ per cent for loans not exceeding 20 years, 3¾ per cent for loans exceeding 20, but under 30 years, 4 per cent exceeding 30, but under 40 years, and 4½ per cent exceeding 40, but under 50 years; and, moreover, limited the sum to be lent to any one place in one year to £100,000. The effect of these changes cannot be better stated than in the words of my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade—

> "The Bill now presented for our consideration, if I may judge of its purpose by the statement which was made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, has for its object the abolition of this system of loans altogether. Everything which he said would apply to the whole system of loans. If that be his opinion, why does he not bring in a Bill to that effect? Instead of that, he seeks to secure the same result by a side-wind, by making the conditions of the loan so onerous that nobody can take advantage of them."—(3 *Hansard*, [249] 616.)

I hope, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman will bear these opinions he then expressed in his mind, and give us all the help he can to a return to the original provisions of the Act. After all, but little loss has accrued from advances hitherto made for harbours by the Loan Commissioners. Between 1861 and 1880 they advanced £2,781,822; during that period their losses, including principal and interest, amounted to only £16,434. I wish, in conclusion, to urge in the strongest terms upon the House, that, though all round our shores we have innumerable small tidal harbours, which are, no doubt, exceedingly useful in calm or even moderate weather, yet in a storm, unless at high-water, or, at the best, at half-tide, are worse than useless, for those seeking refuge must perforce remain outside till the harbours fill with water, or, at any rate, a sufficient depth of water is on the bar at the entrance of the harbour to enable them safely to cross it. In fact, in the case of vessels that do try to make them, they are little better than mantraps. The true policy to be kept in view by all interested in this subject is, I am confident, not the construction of one great harbour of refuge in one district, which would be of no use whatever to nine-tenths of the vessels which might be in distress, but the formation of a number of smaller harbours dotted here and there at judiciously selected intervals all round our shores, with a sufficient quantity of water at low-tide, to which vessels might run at whatever part of the Coast they might be overtaken by a storm. I beg to move the Resolution of which I have given Notice.

Sir EARDLEY WILMOT said, he had much pleasure in seconding the Resolution so ably proposed by his hon. Friend the Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks). He should have apologized to the House for taking so prominent a place in the debate, not being a commercial or naval man, had he not brought forward the same question himself in a Resolution in 1876, when the Conservative Ministry held Office. The then President of the Board of Trade (Sir Charles Adderley) made at that time two objections to the proposal, which he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) confessed somewhat surprised him. One was that if no more harbours were constructed shipowners would construct their vessels of better material, and be more able to resist stormy weather; the other, that harbours did not pay in a financial point of view. As regarded the first objection, he was afraid that no amount of skill or science could always resist the power of the elements; and, as regarded the second, although Portsmouth, Portland, or Plymouth harbours did not pay financially for their construction, they paid abundantly in the security they afforded to our commerce, in the safety of our shipping, and in the preservation of many valuable lives. As regarded the necessity of more harbour accommodation than existed at present, he had only to refer hon. Members to the two Blue Books he held in his hand. One was the Wreck Register of last year, the other was the Report of the Commission on Convict Labour, lately published. Both these documents afforded undoubted testimony to the truth of the statements made by the hon. Mover of the Resolution, containing, as they did each, a Wreck Chart, upon which the spots more thickly clustered together on the North-East Coast, in the region of Filey and Whitby, than in any other part of the shores of Great Britain, were a plain proof of the great loss of life and property in that district. The hon. Member had dwelt forcibly on that point; and he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) could confirm his testimony by the tables and statistics to be found in the Wreck Register in his hand. The same tables were valuable in another direction, as they proved that, although the prevalent wind throughout the year on our Coasts was from the South-West, yet the wrecks which occurred were in a much larger proportion from the North, North-East, and East. The table also showed that the fact of there being much fewer wrecks on the Southern and Western Coasts was to be accounted for by there being more harbours for vessels to take refuge in in time of tempests in those districts—as, for example, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Falmouth, and many smaller harbours. Then, as regarded the sufferers from shipwreck, the tables in the Wreck Register also showed that the casualties almost invariably occurred in vessels of small tonnage, generally under 300 tons. The losses to vessels upwards of 500 tons were few. The poorer classes—namely, the fishermen, whose whole property often consisted of their vessels and nets, were the chief sufferers; and, in determining the harbour question, this class of seamen was very greatly entitled to consideration. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had told them that the Government had decided in favour of two sites at which harbour works were to be commenced—namely, Filey and Dover, in conformity with the recommendation of the Commission on Convict Labour; but that they had determined to begin first with Dover. He (Sir Eardley Wilmot) must say he regretted this decision, for he thought that preference should be given to the far greater requirements of the North-East Coast—at Filey. There was ample and excellent material close at hand for the works; and the Brigg, a natural breakwater, extending half-a-mile into the sea, and affording shelter from the winds prevalent on that Coast, would save, at least, £250,000 in the expense of construction. Filey was close to a railway, by which coal could be brought down to the bay; and suitable and safe accommodation might be readily found on the adjacent cliff for the convicts employed in the work. At Dover, on the contrary, concrete had to be used, as no stone was to be found within reach; and if the harbour were completed there, as proposed by the Government, it must be considered rather as a work of defence than as one of protection and safety for shipping. At all events, if they made another pier and breakwater at Dover, he hoped they would not make it in a straight line, like the present Admiralty Pier, which was built broadside to the prevailing winds, but in an arched or convex form; the disadvantage of the present construction being that in one night damage was done to the masonry to the extent of £20,000. The wall, too, of the present pier had another defect—namely, that its side was perpendicular instead of slanting, and thus sustained the full force of the waves, instead of enabling them to slide off them. There was the danger of silting, too, at Dover which did not exist at Filey. He must apologize for having troubled the House at such length, and thanked it for the indulgence with which it had received his remarks. There was only one other subject to which he would briefly refer, and that was the strategic aspect of the question as regarded the North-East Coast. At present there was not a single harbour between the Tyne and the Thames in which an iron-clad could anchor should it at any time come to grief in those seas, or where it could take in coal or water. On the opposite coast, the Germans had constructed the magnificent harbour of Wilhelmshaven, at the mouth of the

River Weser, and up to the year 1876 had expended on it £1,500,000. Even before that time, so secure was the accommodation for ships of war there, and so powerful the defence, that in 1870, during the Franco-German War, the French Fleet lay outside Wilhelmshaven for some time, and was quite unable to get at the enemy's Fleet inside. Was it desirable that other nations should be so far ahead of us in providing the means of safety for our fleets, even putting aside the security afforded by such a harbour to numberless trading vessels which might be labouring under stress of weather in those dangerous seas? In conclusion, he confidently appealed to the Government to grant the Committee asked for by his hon. Friend, when this great and very important question of harbours might be fully considered, and something effectually done to guard against the lamentable loss of life, and the great injury to property, which he contended was materially owing to the insufficiency of adequate harbour accommodation in many parts of the United Kingdom, and especially on the North-East Coast.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the Harbour accommodation on the Coasts of the United Kingdom, having regard to the laws and arrangements under which the construction and improvement of Harbours may now be effected."—(*Mr. Marjoribanks.*)

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I am very loth to interpose at this early stage of the debate; but I wish to do so, because I think there is a general feeling that, if possible, it would be well if the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) should have an opportunity of bringing on the very important Motion on the Transvaal of which he has given Notice. As I hope I may be able to make a statement on the subject before the House which will be satisfactory to my hon. Friend the Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks) and other hon. Members interested in the question, I think it better, very briefly, to state at once the opinion the Government have formed on the matter. Let me say, in doing so, that I think we are all very muchi ndebted to my hon. Friend for the extremely able and very interesting statement which he has made on the subject. It is quite impossible to exaggerate the interest in the matter, because I believe there is no question which appeals more strongly to our sympathies than anything which concerns the life and security of our sailors. There is, therefore, no doubt that it is not difficult to make out a very strong case for some immediate reform and amendment of the law. I did not quite follow my hon. Friend at the commencement of his speech; but I imagine the terrible loss of life to which he referred was included in the general loss of life during the years quoted. In 1882, there was a total of 526 British vessels lost on the Coasts of the United Kingdom. The total loss at sea was, of course, however, very much greater than that. I am speaking only of the loss of life on the Coast, or immediately within sight of it. There was a loss of 692 lives; but if I take the average for six years, I find that the loss in 1882 was considerably in excess of the previous year. Of course, the House will understand that only a very small proportion of this loss is due to the want of harbours of refuge. At the same time, I believe no one can be more deeply impressed than I am with the fact that the loss of a large proportion of those lives is due to preventable causes—that it is due to mismanagement and misconduct on the part of the shipowners, or in some cases to carelessness in the furnishing of ships, and above all, to the most shameful practice of overloading. These are evils for which I hope, at no distant time, I may be able to propose what I think will be sufficient remedies; but they are not touched at all by the Motion which has been put on the Paper by my hon. Friend. That Motion deals solely with the question, how far life and property at sea might be saved by the creation of harbours of refuge, or ordinary trading harbours round our Coast, and also, perhaps in a minor degree, how far a stimulus might be given by the construction of such harbours to one of the greatest and most important of our industries, and how far the Government and Parliament can aid in such work. I was very glad to hear from my hon. Friend that he did not ask the House for anything in the shape of a grant of public money, but that all he asked was that there should be a searching inquiry to see where these harbours could be best provided; and also, as I understand him—and, if so, I accept that construction—to ask for inquiry into the working of existing legislation, to see how the facilities which are at present afforded by the Harbours and Passing Tolls Act may be modified and extended. I say I am glad that he excluded the question of a grant of public money. That arises, no doubt, in the case of convict harbours; but then it must be understood that convict harbours stand on a different footing. I do not understand that my hon. Friend purposes this Committee should inquire into the construction of convict harbours, which are not constructed under the Harbours and Passing Tolls Act, 1861. In the case of convict harbours, what you have first to regard is the convenient employment of the convicts, and you have to see that certain provisions are fulfilled; that the works will not interfere with local interests; that there is a probability of satisfactory accommodation for the convicts; and that the works will be of a kind to justify the construction of the necessary accommodation for them on the spot, and that the works will be in themselves of a sort which can be properly undertaken by the convicts. The Government, after carefully inquiring into the matter, have come to the conclusion that the two localities which best fulfil these conditions are Dover and Filey. My hon. Friend asks me why we have selected Dover as the place first on our list. My answer is, because we have had in view the several purposes for which such a harbour is to be used, and they are three-fold. There is, in the first place, the possibility of using it as a harbour of refuge; in the second place, there is the possibility of using it as a commercial harbour; and, in the third place, there is the possibility of using it as a great national harbour for the Naval Forces of this country. As regards all three purposes, I think Dover undoubtedly has the higher claim. With regard to the third, it is already the site of a considerable fortification; whereas at Filey the fortifications will have to be constructed, and will involve a great addition to the total cost. But we do not exclude Filey from our early consideration, and although we begin with Dover, yet we hope and believe that the time may not be far distant when we will commence similar works at Filey; and, most certainly, it is not the intention to wait until Dover is completed before the works at Filey are commenced. I may here state the reasons why I do not think it would be desirable to contemplate any great scheme of public grants for harbours generally. In the first place, we should be involving the country in an expenditure, the vastness of which might be calculated to appal the House. Let us see what our experience has been in reference to this matter. The Committee of 1857 recommended an expenditure of from £1,500,000 to £2,000,000, three-fourths of which was to be provided by passing tolls, and one-fourth only was to be provided by Government grant. The Commission which was subsequently appointed increased this Estimate to the sum of £4,000,000, of which it was proposed £2,500,000 should be provided out of the public funds. There is nothing so uncertain and so unreliable as the estimates of harbour construction. There is nothing so uncertain as the success of the works undertaken. In the case of Dover, the original estimate of the works was £245,000; and we have spent already £693,000. At Alderney, where the original estimate was £620,000, we have spent £1,274,000, which might as well, for all practical purposes, have been thrown into the sea. At Holyhead, where the original estimate was £638,000, the sum actually expended was £1,479,000; and at Portsmouth, where the original estimate was £558,000, the expenditure already amounted to £1,034,000. Altogether, upon these four harbours, while the original estimates of qualified engineers was £2,059,000, the actual expenditure has been £4,500,000. In any calculation that may be made on this subject, we may assume that the original estimates will probably be more than doubled; and, in fact, there is no limit to the probable expenditure which may be contemplated in the case of these harbours. There is also no limit to the claims that will be made when it is understood that the public purse strings are to be loosened for this purpose; because, although the Committee recommended altogether some 12 localities as suitable sites, since that time there have been applications, supported by strong memorials, from at least a score of places, which can put forward claims almost as strong as those to which the Committee gave preference. Among these places

I may mention Bridlington, which by many people is preferred to Filey; Warkworth, in Northumberland; Dungeness, Lundy Island, in the British Channel; Newhaven, Torbay, and other places; and altogether at the Board of Trade we have applications for 19 places which would have to be considered, and on behalf of which the local pressure would be extremely strong if it were once understood that the Government money was to be forthcoming. The only justification for undertaking such an expenditure of public money would be the certainty that there would be a saving of life and property in proportion; but from a very careful Parliamentary examination that had been made into this subject, in 1862, it appeared that the loss of life on our Coasts—the loss which, in any event, could have been saved by harbours of refuge—was very small indeed. After eliminating from all these losses all that is due to founderings or misconduct of owners or officers of ships, the number that is due to causes which might have been prevented by the existence of harbours of refuge is exceedingly small. On the East Coast it was found, after a careful examination, that only 15 lives could by any possibility have been saved by means of harbours of refuge. No doubt there are some cases, like those which were quoted by my hon. Friend, and especially as touching fishing interests, in which the loss of life could be prevented by such harbours; and, therefore, I say the Government will gladly welcome the multiplication of these harbours, which may not only be the means of saving life, but will undoubtedly give a great stimulus to commerce and trade. Therefore, as the contention of my hon. Friend is only that a Committee of Inquiry should be formed for the purpose, the Government will undoubtedly and with great willingness assent to this proposal. I understand that my hon. Friend the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) proposes to move, as an Amendment, that the Committee shall be instructed to inquire into the working of the Public Works Loans Act; but that, I understand, is entirely covered by the original wording of the Resolution, and I agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Berwickshire that there is room for such an inquiry. There is no doubt that works carried out under that Act have very materially fallen off in late years, and it will be interesting to understand on what grounds this has taken place. The Board of Trade are of opinion that trading harbours, even where they are not specially harbours of refuge, ought to be assisted by Government loans, and they were included in the original conception of the legislation in question. It would be well worthy of inquiry, whether a modification of the Public Works Loan Act, which was made at the institution of the right hon. Baronet the late Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1879, may not also come under consideration, considering it is a fact that out of grants of something like £2,500,000 of public money which have been advanced altogether under this Act to 45 harbours, there has only been a loss of money amounting to £34,000. I think it is a fair subject for inquiry whether facilities which have proved so valuable and useful may not be extended. There are a great number of cases of fishing harbours to which large assistance has been given. £100,000 has been given to Fraserburgh, and £30,000 to Peterhead. In conclusion, I cannot help saying that whatever may be the defects of this system, and the faults of the administration, the general results have, on the whole, been extremely satisfactory, and the way in which private enterprize has been stimulated by these grants is something very remarkable. Any course of action that would check that flow of private and local enterprize would, therefore, be unfortunate, and should be carefully avoided, and I hope sincerely that one result of the appointment of the Committee may be greatly to stimulate it.

Mr. BOURKE said, he considered the subject under discussion one of the most important connected with their domestic legislation that could engage the attention of the House. He did not agree with the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) that the number of lives lost on the Coasts owing to the want of harbours of refuge was very small. The loss was, he (Mr. Bourke) believed, larger than the right hon. Gentleman supposed; and if he were the Representative of ever so small a constituency on the Coast, instead of a large place inland, he would have a somewhat different opinion on the matter, and might think that considerable saving of life would result from the construction of harbours of refuge. To the fishermen class there was no question of greater or closer interest than this; and he earnestly trusted something would be done on their behalf, and that something good would come of the inquiry. He was sorry that Dover had been chosen as the first harbour on which to begin operations; but still they must be satisfied. Half a loaf, however, was better than no bread; and, while accepting it, with the belief that the President of the Board of Trade had shown a wise discretion in assenting to the appointment of a Committee, he would express the hope that in a short time further progress would be made in regard to this very important subject.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE, who had an Amendment on the Paper, proposing to include in the inquiry the administration of the Harbours and Passing Tolls Act (1861), said, his object was to bring under the notice of the Committee the manner in which the Public Works Loans Commission had carried out the powers committed to them. He still hoped it might be embodied in the Motion. He was exceedingly disappointed at the line his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade had taken on that important matter. What disappointed him (Sir Joseph Pease) most in that statement was that, without any further inquiry, convict labour was to be employed in order to make harbours at Dover and Filey. Dover was not a place for such a refuge harbour at all, nor was Filey, at that moment, a place where the best harbour of refuge could be constructed on the North-East Coast. He would point out that the Tyne was already a harbour of refuge, and the Tees was fast becoming one. Since 1858 the whole character of the shipping trade of the country had altered, and on the Coast between Berwick and the Tees they had now one-fifth of the number of ships going out and in, and one-eighth of the tonnage of the United Kingdom. The larger number of wrecks on that Coast occurred either South of the Humber, or in the neighbourhood of Tees Bay. On that Coast the use of the refuse slag from the ironworks at Middlesborough was capable of forming a harbour at a very low cost indeed, for its deposit in a suitable location would cost them nothing; while there was no longer any doubt that this material could be used practically for this purpose, for it had been tested, and found a most excellent substance to stand the exposure to the water and waves. The quantity of slag at present being poured into the North Sea was about 12,000 tons a-week, it soon would be about 24,000 tons a-week, while two years hence it would probably be about 30,000 tons a-week. They were told there were great natural advantages at Filey. Why, on the Tees they could have a breakwater that could enclose 1,000 acres of sea, with ample depth of water, and the cost to the nation would not run above £100 a running yard. He complained of the slender character of the inquiry instituted by the Commission, on whose recommendation Dover and Filey had been selected. They had examined only two engineers, both previously committed; and that, he was sure, would give no satisfaction to the country generally. The Downs would certainly have been a far better site than Dover, and beyond that the Tees had never been looked at for a single moment by this Departmental Commission, yet they could make a harbour there at a very much smaller cost than either at Filey or at Dover. There was in the neighbourhood of the Tees sufficient accommodation for the convicts who might be employed there. On the question of harbours for the fishermen, small harbours could not provide sufficient employment for convicts, and could not afford to pay interest to the Exchequer, and the result would be that the national purse would have to pay for the works. To that he should not very much object; but he thought the action of the Public Works Loans Commissioners should be considered, and the rules that were to decide their course of proceeding in relation to the securities required for these loans. One thing he hoped most sincerely, in common with the right hon. Gentleman who spoke last (Mr. Bourke), that the fishermen would ultimately reap some benefit from the inquiry.

MR. A. F. EGERTON said, that, while he begged to thank the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade for the very serious consideration he had given to the subject, he could not help wishing the Government had made further inquiry before deciding to employ their convicts at Dover and Filey. He regarded Dover as a most unfortunate selection; it was not, and really never would be, a harbour of refuge; and, as far as the national defences were concerned, it would be no use at all. It was a question whether, when the harbour was completed, it would not rapidly silt up. He thought that the construction of the harbour was a mistake, seeing that within five or six miles of Dover there was the magnificent anchorage of the Downs, which, whatever kind of harbour Dover might be made into, would still be in case of war, as in times of peace, the great *rendezvous* for the Channel Fleet and other squadrons. However, as the Government seemed to have decided upon Dover, they must make the best of it. He hoped that it would be within the scope of the Committee to inquire whether a new harbour of refuge could not be constructed at some other place far more preferable for the purpose than the port of Filey.

Sir HUSSEY VIVIAN pointed out that the Public Works Loan Commissioners were bound by the Act of Parliament, in the most stringent manner, to look to the security which they accepted; and he could assure his hon. Friend the Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks) that there were many applications which had been refused which they would have been glad to have entertained if they had thought that in so doing they were performing their duties as guardians of the public purse. How, then, would they stand, if they put their hands in the pockets of the public and were as liberal as it was desired they should be in granting loans for harbours of refuge or other harbours? The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) had told the House about the enormous sums of money that had been expended on harbours of that character, and he had shown that at least double the estimated expenditure had been incurred in those harbours. Further, the right hon. Gentleman had also informed the House that the claims on the Board of Trade for harbours of this nature were of a very large character. He (Sir Hussey Vivian) did not object to any inquiry the House might desire into the Public Works Loan Commission. There were as humane men as any on that Commission; and if they only saw their way clear, in the discharge of their public duty, to make these grants, he was sure every application made to them under these circumstances would be accepted. But then it was impossible for them to shield the public from excessive loss if they allowed their humane feelings to guide them in the consideration of questions of that kind. He supposed the hon. Baronet the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) complained that they did not make a grant to a harbour which undoubtedly had a large income, and was a solvent concern. He (Sir Hussey Vivian) might, however, complain in the same manner, for about the same time that his hon. Friend made his application, he (Sir Hussey Vivian) made a similar one on behalf of Swansea Harbour, and was likewise refused. The question, indeed, was simply a commercial one. A good ample security could always obtain any amount of money that might be required. His hon. Friend, he might mention as a proof, found no difficulty in carrying out those great works on the Tyne. Nor had they at Swansea any difficulty either. They went to the public, and very readily obtained a large sum of money necessary for the works—he believed something like £300,000. These, indeed, were not cases in which the country's purse ought to be drawn upon. If it was the desire of the country that harbours of refuge for fishermen and for shipping should be carried out, distinct sums of money should be voted for that purpose. But he did not think the House should be permitted to deceive itself into the belief that grants could be made for harbours of this kind without, at the same time, some risk being run. Indeed, on the contrary, they were liable to make very serious bad debts in granting such loans. He did not come to the House prepared to enter into the discussion, or otherwise he could assure hon. Members he could have given them many instances in which large sums of money had been lost through grants of this nature having been made. He believed, for instance, that the whole of the money granted for the harbour at Wick might be regarded as a bad debt, inasmuch as the works had been washed away and no longer existed. Thus it was apparent that the country must face these risks if grants were to be advanced for the making of harbours. He was far from saying that such harbours were not desirable; but, at the same time, the pecuniary risk they ran was great, and it would be unfair to cast on the Public Works Loans Commission the decision as to whether or not the public money should be granted in such cases. If they did advance the money, and there were no incomes to meet the loans, then they would be blamed for so doing by the House; and, therefore, while on the one hand he would court the fullest inquiry as to the course taken by the Public Works Loan Commission, on the other hand he felt that unless they were acting under the conditions of an Act of a very different character to that under which they now acted—which compelled them to look with the greatest care to the security of the public money lent—they would not be able to grant public money any more than they had heretofore done. While hon. Members had been urging the necessity of a harbour of refuge on the East Coast, the claims of the West should not be overlooked. The whole of the North Coast of Cornwall, for instance, was entirely void of any place to which vessels could run in distressed weather; and, again, along the Coast from Milford to Penarth there was no safe place in which vessels could seek shelter when the weather was stormy. Lundy would be a good site for the protection of the Bristol Channel. No better site for the purpose could be found; and, in addition, it possessed the advantage of being a place from which convicts could not possibly escape, unless they were amphibious. Thus, while hon. Members were laying before the House the requirements of the East in the way of harbours of refuge, the House should not also forget the requirements of the South and West in the same respect. He was extremely glad that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had assented to this Committee; but, so far as the Public Works Loans Commissioners were concerned, if the House expected them to grant larger loans than heretofore, then the Act of Parliament under which they derived their powers would first of all have to be changed.

MR. C. ROSS said, he concurred entirely in the necessity for this inquiry. He wished to put in a word for the Bristol Channel and the South Coast, which, at the present moment, were entirely unprovided with adequate harbour accommodation. It struck him that an inquiry dealing with a limited portion of the country, which might probably lead to an expenditure of money, was scarcely fair to the rest of the community. He could not but look upon the question, to some extent, from a local point of view, and he was bound to place before the House the case of the fishermen on the North Coast of Cornwall. But from a national point of view, also, the construction of harbours of refuge was a matter of great importance. The condition of the North Cornwall fishermen was absolutely deplorable. If the Government would lend money for the construction of harbour works on that Coast, the rate of interest to be necessarily at a very low rate, the money would be safe and the interest regularly paid; and great advantage would accrue not only to the poor fishermen of that district, but also to the community in an ample supply of wholesome food at a cheap rate. To his own knowledge, the fishermen of the West Cornwall frequently dared not venture out to sea in doubtful weather, because of the utter absence of any harbour of refuge. The Committee of 1859 reported that a harbour of refuge was more wanted at St. Ives than almost any other spot in the United Kingdom. On the East Coast there were many competitors, and no absolute preference of one port over another had ever been made. Thus the case of St. Ives was the most pressing of all. If that recommendation was warranted in 1859 it was still more so now, as the harbour was much worse now than it was then, and our commerce and carrying trade had been enormously developed. Besides that, St. Ives was on the highway of the most important part of our trade from Liverpool and the chief ports of the country, and had thus especial claims upon the attention of the Government.

MR. STEVENSON said, he regretted that the Motion had not continued to be confined to the East Coast, and that a Committee of the House was now proposed instead of a Royal Commission. The East Coast was large enough to be the subject of a special inquiry; and a Royal Commission, visiting the localities, would have collected much valuable evidence as to the harbour accommodation now, compared with what it was 25 years ago, when the former Commission reported. Except on the Tyne, none of the plans then proposed had been carried out. He (Mr. Stevenson) had to thank the hon. Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks) for his appreciation of the labour of the Tyne Commission, over which he (Mr. Stevenson) had the honour to preside; but he would not claim that the Tyne was yet a complete harbour of refuge, though they hoped to make it so. They had spent £3,000,000 on the piers and in river works, principally dredging; and they had got only £350,000 on loan from the Public Works Loan Commissioners. Already the Tyne was largely used as a refuge for ships sailing to or from other ports. The people on the Tyne had no interest beyond other taxpayers in the question of the employment of convicts on harbour works. But he thought the opinion of the House should be taken, and much fuller inquiry made before either Filey or Dover was selected. There was some case for Filey 25 years ago; but it was entirely altered now. Then fleets of laden colliers which had left the coal ports, caught by a sudden gale before weathering Flamborough Head, had no port to run back to short of the Firth of Forth, and many were wrecked or foundered. The steamers had changed all this; fleets did not accumulate, and the Tyne was open for refuge. Besides, the intended area of Filey could not contain all the men-of-war and fishing and other vessels that were said to be likely to use it, all at one time. He had the greatest misgivings also as to the success of the harbour at Dover, on account of the danger of silting up, if they enclosed the area and interfered with the currents that now maintained its depth. What was now wanted at the Tyne was a pilotage service adapted to the change of circumstances, so that vessels seeking refuge should have pilots to conduct them into the harbour, when the present pilot cobles could not get to sea. Most of the wrecks that still occasionally took place would thus be prevented. He thought this was a subject that deserved the fullest inquiry. The coasting tonnage from the Tyne in 1859 was in the proportion of 5½ sail to 1 steam; in 1881 the proportion was 1 sail to 3 steam.

Earl PERCY said, he was of opinion that his hon. Friend the Mover of the Resolution was only to be congratulated upon one thing—namely, the ability with which he had put forward his views. His hon. Friend and his supporters had failed to obtain a single crumb of comfort from the Government. He (Earl Percy) regretted exceedingly that the President of the Board of Trade had thought it right to restrict this inquiry to its present very narrow scope, while, at the same time, pronouncing so decided an opinion upon the larger question included in the Resolution as it originally stood. In the event of the great question of harbours of refuge all along the Coast being re-opened, they would all have their pet schemes; and he, for his part, would certainly advocate the claims of a harbour further North than Filey. He was convinced that inquiry would show that the President of the Board of Trade under-estimated very much the real good that could be effected by harbours of refuge, and over-estimated the dangers arising from the misconduct of shipowners and the overloading of ships. He had very little hope that much advantage would result from the proposed inquiry; but he trusted that they might look upon it as the forerunner of better things.

Mr. HENEAGE said, that representing, as he did, large shipping interests, he looked with dismay on the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman to build with public money a harbour at Filey. He did not know of what use it was going to be to the fishermen of the Humber. If any money was to be spent, it should be spent on harbours at places where they were really required on the North East Coast, and not on a harbour built for the purpose of propping up the decayed trade of a particular town. He protested against the Government taking up the cause of Filey, and trusted the Government would allow the whole question to be thoroughly considered, and, if they found they had made a mistake, relinquish their absurd purpose of laying out money for the benefit of a decaying port.

Mr. BLAKE said, that, in his opinion, the speech of the President of the Board of Trade was most unsatisfactory in some important respects. For his own part, he was disappointed at the limited nature of the proposed inquiry, and he would suggest that it should be so enlarged as to apply to the whole of the United Kingdom, and that there should be an adequate Irish representation on the Committee. On the Coast of Ireland there were as dangerous spots as any to be found in Great Britain, and both the Committee which had previously sat and the Royal Commission which followed unanimously reported in favour of the construction of two harbours of refuge on the Coast of Ireland. The Committee unanimously recommended that Waterford, with which he was identified, should be improved and made a harbour of refuge, as between Dublin and Cork there was no possible place in which large vessels could take shelter. He therefore hoped that now, when the matter was being revived, Irish interests would not be neglected. He hoped that the Committee would also take into consideration the question of fishery harbours. He thought it was the bounden duty of the Government to render available for the benefit of the people every industrial resource. Regarding the fisheries as a nursery for both the Royal Naval and Mercantile Marine, he thought there was nothing which would better repay the outlay, to say nothing of the benefit to the localities concerned, and to the community in general, from the more abundant supply of wholesome food. He earnestly hoped, therefore, that on the Committee there would be a sufficient representation of Irish interests, so that when the Report came up for consideration they would be able to come to an impartial conclusion on the different views which would be submitted as to the best sites for harbours.

MR. W. H. JAMES said, he trusted that the advantage of having some great harbour of refuge would not be lost sight of amid the number of local claims. Why Dover should be selected he did not see. The relative claims of Dover and Filey had been discussed before the Committee, whose Reports he held in his hand, and in the result the Committee said that they did not feel in a position to express an opinion on the subject. He thought that the reason why it was deemed necessary to have a very large harbour at Dover was because the project of a Channel Tunnel had conjured up in the minds of the military authorities the idea of invasion, and as a large harbour was being constructed at Boulogne it was thought that we should have a large harbour at Dover. But it would be better if the Government paid more attention to the preservation of life, and the safety of the fishing population. He hoped they would hear from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or some other Member of the Government, before the close of the debate, that though the works at Dover had been commenced, some opportunity would be given to the House to express an opinion whether concurrently with those works a harbour on the North-East Coast should not also be made.

COLONEL MILNE HOME said, that considering his very close and intimate connection with the part of the Coast which his hon. Friend (Mr. Marjoribanks) represented, it was right that he should express thanks to the hon. Member for the manner in which he had brought this subject forward. He congratulated the hon. Member on having got from the Government even a quarter of a loaf. He would much rather have had a Royal Commission than a Select Committee; but it would have been useless to divide the House on the question of a Royal Commission, and therefore the hon. Member was justified in moving for a Select Committee. They had this question before the country for almost a century. There had been Committees, and Commissions, and Reports to no end; but nothing had been done. He sincerely hoped that the Select Committee now promised might bring about some result. He did not intend to enter into the very large question of refuge harbours, for the reason that it had generally been the custom to advocate the claims of one locality against another, and they had had petty local jealousies brought into what was a national question. The result had been that nothing had been done, and the fishermen on our Coasts were still in peril. The sum subscribed for the relief of the sufferers by the Eyemouth disaster was £55,000; and if it had been expended on the previous improvement of the harbour, it was highly probable that the disaster would have been prevented. It was well, on every ground, that the Government should stimulate local effort to improve these harbours. Not only would disasters be prevented, but the supply of fish food would also be increased. Grants might pauperize the dwellers on the Coast, but those who helped themselves should be assisted by loans on favourable terms. The Public Works Loan Commissioners, through their Representative here (Sir Hussey Vivian), had stated that they required to go to Parliament for more powers if they were to give assistance on better terms. If so, he was sure that Parliament would readily grant those powers. He could not discover on what conditions loans were given, and it would be a convenience if the conditions were strictly laid down. Appeals were made now and again on behalf of occupiers of land; but Government assistance in the manner he was advocating would be a far greater benefit than assistance given to the landed interest. He cordially supported the Motion.

Colonel NOLAN said, when the question came before the Select Committee he hoped the interests of the town of Galway would not be overlooked. The question of utilizing convict labour was now occupying the attention of the Government; and, in his opinion, convict labour could be nowhere more usefully employed than in Galway Harbour. The late Government were promoting a scheme for building a breakwater at Galway, and he did not think the present Government could do better than resume that project. There was a great want of proper harbour accommodation on the West Coast of Ireland. Nature had done a great deal for it, but the Government had done nothing. He hoped that on the Select Committee Irish interests would be fairly represented, and that the important question of improving harbour accommodation on the West Coast of Ireland would not be further neglected.

Mr. DODDS said, the terms on which loans were granted were distinctly laid down; but the conditions required to be made a little more elastic. He protested against the conclusion that appeared to have been arrived at by the Government to adopt Filey as one of the harbours of refuge, without giving the House an opportunity of discussing the question. He assured the House that public opinion on the North-East Coast was that Filey was a bad, if not the very worst site that could be selected for the purpose. He would, therefore, express an earnest hope that the Government would proceed no further with the project until the House had an opportunity of expressing an opinion upon it. It was unfortunate that those most interested had not been listened to, and that action had been taken on the advice of the gentleman who had been professional engineer to Filey.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said he should much like to see the harbours of Ireland attended to, as a means of increasing the industrial resources of the country. As Chairman of the Commission on Irish Prisons, county and local, he was glad to have heard that the recommendation as to the closing of Spike Island Prison was to be acted upon as soon as possible. A number of plans for the employment of convict labour had been considered; but the question of Galway Harbour had not been brought before the Commissioners. Independently of that, he would impress upon the Government to give the preference to Ireland by way of encouraging the people to look for a living to something besides their holdings.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, he hoped that after he had answered a few questions the debate would be permitted to conclude, inasmuch as the Government had accepted the Motion. The Government distinctly understood that the Motion was to include the Irish harbours, and of these none deserved more consideration than that of Galway. The question had been raised whether this Motion included an exhaustive inquiry into the conduct of business by the Public Works Loans Commissioners. That was the distinct object of the Motion, and that was the sense in which the Government accepted it. Of course, the law, as it was worked now, was not exclusively the law of 1861. That law had been largely altered on the proposal of the right hon. Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer some years ago. It would only be proper, therefore, that the Committee should expressly inquire into the whole working of the law of 1861, as well as of the law since. Most unquestionably, it was right that the law and its amendments should be thoroughly looked into by the Committee; but he was bound to say that no complaints had reached him as to the present working of the law, or the proceedings of the Public Works Loan Commissioners under it, whose assistance was most valuable.

It had never been the intention of the Government to refer to the Committee the question of harbours constructed by convict labour. Indeed, any proposal of that sort was not within the scope of his hon. Friend's Motion, which had reference solely to harbours constructed out of money advanced by the Public Works Loans Commissioners or by the Fishery Board in Scotland. It had been objected that if this Resolution passed in its present form there would be no future opportunity of discussing the question of harbours built by convict labour. His answer was that the Government would give them the fullest opportunity of discussing the relative merits of Filey and Dover. Estimates for them would have to be proposed, and on those Estimates the fullest discussion would take place. Complaint had been made that the Papers did not disclose the reasons why the Government were going to expend money on the larger harbour at Dover and upon a new harbour at Filey. As they were to be military harbours as well as harbours of refuge, some details in connection with their construction ought not to be thrown open to all the world. But when the Vote for the extension of the harbour at Dover was before the House, the Government would, on their responsibility, explain the grounds on which they proposed to carry out that extension, and it would then be competent for the House to disapprove the course which the Government wished to adopt. In like manner, when, not this year, but later on, the Vote for the new harbour at Filey was brought forward, that subject could be fully discussed. After those assurances, he trusted the Motion would be carried without further delay.

Mr. FRESHFIELD said, he was glad the Government had determined to construct a harbour of refuge at Dover, in accordance with the plan recommended by the Royal Commission many years ago. The Admiralty Pier, which was part of the plan, was compeleted some 10 years back; but it was soon found that the erection of a pier jutting out into the sea did not fulfil the conditions of a harbour of refuge, and that the entire design ought to be completed. Accordingly, a Vote was granted in 1873 for the completion of the second arm of the harbour; but the then Government went out of Office, and left to the Dover Harbour Board the execution of the work. The Board brought in their Bill, and proceeded with it up to a certain stage, when the Government of Lord Beaconsfield asked them to abandon their measure in favour of their own. The Government next brought in a Bill of their own; but were, unfortunately, prevented by financial considerations from carrying it out. The matter remained in abeyance till last year, when the Harbour Board again introduced a Biil, which was carried. In conclusion, he hoped the present Government would show a little more earnestness and consistency than the Government of Lord Beaconsfield, which took up the subject being convinced that it was a right one, and then dropped it on financial grounds.

Sir ALEXANDER GORDON said, he would remind the House that last year they had been informed by the Home Secretary that the construction of two harbours of refuge was projected —one in England, by means of English convict labour, and the other in Scotland, by Scottish convict labour. The President of the Board of Trade had now announced that the Government intended to employ convicts at Dover and Filey; but nothing had been said of Scotland. He feared that the project of employing Scotch convicts in Scotland had been abandoned. If that were so, it would cause very great discontent and dissatisfaction in Scotland. He feared that the Committee would end in very great disappointment. They were to inquire into the fishing harbours all round the Coast. There were thousands of such harbours, and it appeared to him that it would be three or four years before any Committee could do justice to the question. He would have much preferred a Royal Commission to a Select Committee. He hoped the Committee would inquire into the advantages of money being spent on harbours by the Scotch Fishery Board.

Mr. BIRKBECK said, he thought that after the discussion which had taken place the matter now under debate would be brought prominently under public notice. He did not, however, consider that sufficient attention had been directed to the importance of the fishing interest and the large number of vessels employed in the fishing between the Forth and the Thames. There were no less than about 4,600 vessels engaged in fishing in that district; and if Her Majesty's Government would only realize the number of lives that were constantly in such perilous danger for want of harbour accommodation they would not only be conferring a lasting benefit upon these poor men, but they would be doing still more—it would be the means of increasing the supply of food to the country, and satisfy the clamour for a cheaper supply of fish. He should have been very glad had the President of the Board of Trade informed the House of the number of lives that were saved by the Board of Trade rocket apparatus on the North-East Coast of England. He had the honour to be connected with the National Lifeboat Institution, which, during the last two years, had saved no less than 676 lives between the Thames and the Forth. Here, if it was required, was ample proof of the necessity of the harbours of refuge. He must say he was perfectly shocked that so large an amount of money was to be spent on Dover Harbour; and as regarded Filey, from a national point of view, it was the best situation; but he should have preferred it had a Royal Commission been granted and an inquiry held into the whole question. This would have been much more satisfactory than a Committee such as was now proposed. There were dangerous places on the Norfolk and Suffolk Coast, and the outlying banks of the Thames were matters of serious importance. They had no harbours of refuge for ships on this particular Coast, and he did hope the Government would see their way to give some consideration to this most dangerous portion of the Coast of the United Kingdom.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he rose to say a few words, especially with reference to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Dover (Mr. Freshfield). The hon. Member had made some remarks on the conduct of the late Government in declining to proceed with so important a matter as Dover Harbour; and he added, rather contemptuously, that he regretted very much that the scheme was abandoned on financial grounds. The hon. Member received a sympathetic cheer from Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite, who disliked extravagance much, but disliked Lord Beaconsfield's Government more, and with whom, if Lord Beaconsfield did anything in the way of economy, expenditure seemed to find favour. He (Sir Stafford Northcote) could only say, however, that the subject of Dover Harbour lay quite apart from this particular Motion. The Motion of the hon. Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks) had led to the Government mentioning their intention to proceed with Dover Harbour. When that proposal was made, it would be for the House to consider and approve it; but it had nothing to do with the question then before them. As to the Motion of the hon. Member for Berwickshire, it might be said that nobody had a right to object to a Committee which the Government were prepared to grant. If the Government considered that there was sufficient ground for an inquiry into the harbour accommodation on the Coasts of this country, and that a Committee could throw further light upon it, by all means let such a Committee be appointed. He could only say that he hoped the Committee would not be one which would call up false hopes, as some Commissions had done in former times, and particularly one dealing with this question, by making recommendations which were easy enough to make on paper, but which the Government found it impossible to take up. He was glad to hear the proposal as to the loans to be made by the Commissioners; but he wished to put in one word of caution. The Loan Commissioners were gentlemen who rendered considerable service to the country, and he hoped that it was not intended to set them aside either by the action of a Committee or of the House itself. Of course, whatever rules the House liked to lay down should be laid down; but it would be a bad example if they interfered with the complete responsibility of those gentlemen of administering the law when it was law. He knew quite well—and so did all those who had been connected with the Treasury—how hard was the pressure brought to bear on those gentlemen, and how conscientiously they discharged their duty. With regard to the question of Dover Harbour, that was a matter which rested upon different grounds, and he would not now discuss it; but he only rose to say that the present proposal was one which they might accept.

Motion *agreed to.*

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the Harbour accommodation on the Coasts of the United Kingdom, having regard to the laws and arrangements under which the construction and improvement of Harbours may now be effected.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—POLICY OF HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.—RESOLUTION.

[FIRST NIGHT.]

Mr. GORST, in rising to call attention to the position in the Transvaal of British subjects and persons of the Native race; and to move—

> "That, in view of the complicity of the Transvaal Government in the cruel and treacherous attacks made upon the Chiefs Montsioa and Mankoroane, this House is of opinion that energetic steps should be immediately taken to secure the strict observance by the Transvaal Government of the Convention of 1881, so that these chiefs may be preserved from the destruction with which they are threatened,"

said, he was afraid that he had, to some extent, earned for himself a bad character in the House, for bringing forward Motions which were calculated to embarrass Her Majesty's present Government; but he hoped the House would believe, and he was quite sure that the Prime Minister would believe, that upon this particular occasion the Motion he had brought forward was an exception to the general rule. He had no intention whatever of expressing any censure, or any implication of censure, upon the past conduct of Her Majesty's Government; and his desire was a sincere one, to lay before the House, and especially before the Prime Minister himself, the condition of affairs in Bechuanaland, to which he had on previous occasions repeatedly called attention. In doing so, he found he had placed himself in the way of a Motion which was about to be launched from the Front Opposition Bench, and, had he been able, he would gladly have avoided such a position; but he did not think anything he said would prejudice the Motion of the right hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach). He wished, first, to remind the House that the Bechuana Natives were not to be confounded either with the Kaffirs or with the Zulus. They were not a warlike people governed by despotic Chiefs, but a peaceful, pastoral race, governed by headmen and popular assemblies, and had, during the 50 or 60 years in which they had been in contact with the White race, made considerable progress in civilization and knowledge. Except during the years 1854 to 1857 they had been at peace, and *de facto* subjects of Her Majesty, although they had never been so *de jure.* A cession of their territory was made to the Government in 1878, and for two years the country was actually administered by English officers, under a provisional Administrator. In 1880, without any intimation to the Chiefs, or any explanation or reason assigned, the provisional Administrator was withdrawn, and Bechuanaland again became *de facto* as well as *de jure* an entirely independent country. In the cession of the Transvaal to the Boers, the Natives of Bechuanaland were not consulted. He had already called the attention of the House to the fact that the Chief Montsioa was to be punished by the Transvaal Boers for the assistance he had rendered to the English refugees during the Transvaal War, and he had been told the hostilities would be stopped through the intervention of the Government, and that the Natives would, if necessary, receive protection. The Prime Minister, on the 25th of July, 1881, insisted on the necessity of protecting the Natives outside as well as inside the Transvaal, and declared that that object would be secured by the retention of the Suzerainty. Shortly after the Convention was signed, attacks were made upon the Chiefs Mankoroane and Montsioa, avowedly because of their loyalty towards the British Government in sheltering the refugees from the Transvaal. The House must also bear in mind that after the Award of Governor Keat, the Boers never ceased to lay claim to a large portion of that which acquired the name of the Keat Award country, founding their claim upon certain Treaties made between themselves and Massouw and Moshette. It would be unnecessary, however, to go into details on the subject. Sir Hercules Robinson said that, during the hostilities between the Boers and the Native Chiefs, Montsioa and Mankoroane had scrupulously respected the Transvaal line. Not so their opponents, who, aided by Boer freebooters, had had the Transvaal territory as a place for organizing expeditions. So much for the war which had gone on. When Questions had been asked in that House about the war, they were told throughout the year 1882 that it was a war merely carried on by freebooters, and that the Transvaal Government had no complicity whatever in the matter. That was, in effect, the answer he had received to a Question put by him in that House to the hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on the 13th of April, 1882, which had been repeated in the following month, and confirmed on the 5th of June —that was, that no action had been taken by the Transvaal Government, and that everything had been done entirely by freebooters without their knowledge. Did the Government not now know that the Boers had never made the slightest pretence of keeping to the Convention? In March, 1882, Joubert himself had written most extraordinary letters to two Chiefs living beyond Moshette; and in those letters he spoke of the British officer, Colonel Moysey, as a poison-strewer, and that he made it his business to set one Chief against another, and the result was that all those fights had been set down to him. He had said, too, that it was the old policy of the English adventurers to cause discord and dissension all over the world. That was the spirit in which the Convention had been observed by the Boers. On the 3rd of June, 1882, the Volksraad had intervened in the matter, and adopted a Resolution that the existing boundary of the land established by the Convention was the cause of the disturbance, and appointed a Commission to put an end to the controversy, which Commission was to regard the boundary in accordance with the still existing Treaties between the Republic and Montsioa and Moshette—that was, Treaties made in dereliction of Governor Keat's Award. So far from their observing the Convention, they had announced at an early stage that the boundary line which it had fixed was the whole cause of the controversy going on. That, of course, was not the view of the High Commissioner, Sir Hercules Robinson, and he had made a most able and practical proposal, and he (Mr. Gorst) earnestly entreated the attention of the House to it. He had proposed that the war territory should be secured by mounted police, that the police should arrest all deserters and violators of the Neutrality Proclamations, and remove them for trial within their respective jurisdictions. As the cost of these police, about 200 of whom would be sufficient, would be but trifling, he proposed that the cost should be shared between the British Government, the Cape Government, the Orange Free State, and the Transvaal Government. The Cape Government had agreed at once, and the Orange Free State refused only on the ground that their Constitution forbade such a use of their forces. But when the proposal reached the Government of the Transvaal, the answer returned was that two of the Triumvirate were absent; but the one present took upon himself to express his surprise at the proposal of the British Government, and stated that the remedy was worse than the disease. Krüger said—

> "The cause of the evil is the boundary line fixed by the Convention, and no measure will avail so long as that is not remedied."

The High Commissioner at once pronounced an opinion which he (Mr. Gorst) thought would be the opinion of the House; he said—

> "It is manifest that if the Transvaal Government is to take advantage of the lawless proceedings of freebooters, it is not probable that the disorders will be long confined to the West Border; and, apart from the serious objection on this and other grounds, that Government has quite enough to do to despatch adequately its existing responsibilities, without adding to the wide extent of country under its jurisdiction."

About the same date, too, they heard from the British Resident, Mr. Hudson, who had visited the disturbed territory, that the condition of that part was a scandal to the Government, for bands of marauders plundered with impunity, while the Government were unable or unwilling to interfere. Now, about that date, the end of July last year, there was a peace made between Moshette and Montsioa. The terms included the repudiation of the English Government, and an agreement that in all future disputes they should call in the help of the "South African Republic." The evidence of complicity on the part of the Transvaal Government was very strong. On the 16th of October that Government themselves deliberately addressed letters to Mankoroane and Montsioa apart from the knowledge of the British Resident, and therefore contrary to agreement, and addressed them in those terms—that they had received the agreement relating to cession of their territory, and that they accepted it, and that they would send an official Commissioner to Christiana, outside the Transvaal boundary, to settle the matter of boundary. When these letters came to the knowledge of the British Resident, he immediately addressed a despatch to the Transvaal Government, asking them what they meant, and pointing out that they had violated three Articles of the Convention—the Article which made the British Resident the sole medium of communication between the Transvaal State and the Natives outside the boundaries; that the cession of territory was a violation of the Convention; and, finally, that they had violated it by undertaking to send a Commissioner to Christiana, which was beyond their boundaries and jurisdiction. On the 6th of December the Transvaal Government answered the despatch, and what did the House think the answer was? Why they said simply that they had violated the Convention—that what they had done was a violation. A more bare-faced answer was never written by one Government to another. So much for the Chief Mankoroane; and now he would say one or two words about Montsioa. That Chief did not fail to appeal to the Government from time to time to point out that these infringements of the Convention were going on. On the 22nd of June last he stated that—

> "After the messages he had received he expected to see the Boers go away from his country, but, instead of that, more Boers than ever came from both the Transvaal and the Free State; that they had come to join his enemies; that he hoped the English Government would not always allow their word to fall to the ground; and that they would take some steps to preserve him and his people from the Boers, whose intention was to steal their land and join it to their own country."

On the 28th of July, Montsioa instructed his European adviser to address a very remarkable letter to the Government, pointing out that—

> "He had four times driven his enemies into the Transvaal State, and he said that each time those freebooters crossed the line he could have followed them and destroyed them, but that he had trusted to the promises of Her Majesty's Government in the Convention."

Then he added a very significant sentence—namely, "I have now lost confidence in the promises of the Pretoria Convention." Montsioa not only pointed out the evil, but he suggested a remedy. He proposed to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister three courses to pursue, each of which he thought the House would admit was sensible and deserved consideration. The first course he proposed was the annexation to the British Dominions of all the country to the south of the local river in the Bechuana country. He proposed to return to the *status quo* of 1880, and suggested that the country should be governed by British officers, and that the expenses of these officers and of the police should be defrayed by the Natives themselves. He (Mr. Gorst) did not say this was a course which the Government ought to have adopted, but it was a reasonable and practical suggestion which was deserving of consideration. Montsioa also proposed the expulsion of the freebooters from the territory, and this might have been done by the 200 mounted police proposed by Sir Hercules Robinson. The third course Montsioa proposed was that, if they would not do either of those two things, they should at least allow him to buy powder and shot to defend himself. And this last proposal was as fair as it was simple, because Montsioa was in this unfair and unfortunate position—that while his enemies could get any amount of powder and any number of arms from the Transvaal State, which was free and open to them, so strictly and rigidly was neutrality enforced in the Orange Free State and in Griqualand West, that he could not buy any powder or arms at all. An effort had been made to get powder for this Chief, but the Cape Government had stated that they could not depart from the Griqualand neutrality. At last, when abandoned by the British Government, unable to obtain arms or ammunition, and overwhelmed by the freebooters, Montsioa had been compelled almost by his Tribe and his sons to make peace, and he sent an officer of the Transvaal Government to make that peace. So it came to this—that an officer of the Transvaal Government undertook on behalf of Montsioa to mediate and to settle the terms between those Boer freebooters and the unhappy Chief. Lord Kimberley might well say that he awaited explanations as to the action of the Transvaal Commission; but he did not know that the noble Lord had received that explanation up to the present day. If the allegations in Montsioa's letters were well-founded, it was obvious that the neutrality agreed upon had been broken. The Transvaal Government had refused, on a very frivolous pretext, to join a Commission appointed to inquire into the state of things complained of, and Mr. Rutherford had been obliged to go alone. In 1880 this unhappy country was in a condition of peace and contentment; now it was in a very deplorable state; and if any hon. Member desired to see to what the country had been reduced by two years of Boer aggression—contrary to the distinct terms of the Convention—he had only to read the Papers produced. Dreadful atrocities had been committed in the country from time to time; and though he did not, of course, blame the Government for refusing to accept as accurate the statements of cruelty made to them without first investigating the charges themselves, he earnestly hoped the Government would lose no time in making full inquiries. There was one other point. He asked once whether two cannon had not been brought from the Bechuana country, and whether these had not been supplied by a well-known Boer burgher? Mr. Rutherford actually saw those two cannon pointed at Montsioa's stronghold by the Commandant of the South African Republic. There was an almost affecting account given of the attempts which were made to induce Montsioa to renounce Her Majesty's Government, and how he had refused to sign the document of renunciation which was placed before him, in spite of the threats of the Boers that there would be no peace if he did not sign. At the end of his visit to the country, Mr. Rutherford was asked by the Chief Mankoroane a question which he would like to hear answered by Her Majesty's Government—

> "Why," said this old savage, "do you English take so much trouble and come down so far from time to time to make inquiries, and see with the eyes and hear with the ears, if nothing is to come of it?"

He felt quite certain that the Prime Minister did not like the contrast between the case of the Natives outside the Transvaal boundary, which he imagined and pictured to himself when he delivered that speech in the House of Commons, in July, 1881, and the picture of the condition of the same Natives which was drawn so graphically by Mr. Rutherford. But where was this to end? That question had been clearly and prominently brought before Her Majesty's Government by the High Commissioner, Sir Hercules Robinson. Mr. Hudson had made a suggestion, that if the terms insisted upon by the Transvaal Government were acceded to, and if the boundaries of the Transvaal were extended, arrangements might be proposed that would more effectively regulate its extension proclivities, and at the same time strengthen the power and authority of that Government over its own subjects. Sir Hercules Robinson said—

> "I confess I am unable to conceive what more effective treaty arrangements against extension proclivities can be devised than those which already exist. The Transvaal Government have already also quite sufficient power over their own subjects. What appears to be wanted is the willingness to exercise it. . . . The Convention line through the Keate territory was the best and fairest compromise between the two sides that could be devised. Mr. Keate had assigned the whole of the territory in dispute to the Natives. The South African Republic subsequently tried to get behind that award by cessions, the validity of which Her Majesty's Government refused to acknowledge. . . . If the Transvaal Government had been willing to control their marauding subjects, who almost immediately after retrocession began to cross the Convention line with the view of despoiling the Natives beyond it and the lands which had been assigned to them, that boundary would have answered perfectly; and so long as the Government are not willing to undertake such an obvious duty there will be the same trouble with any other line which can be laid down. If Montsioa and Mankoroane were now absorbed, Bonoquani, Mokobi, and Bareki would soon share the same fate. Gassisibi and Sechele would come next. So long as there were native cattle to be stolen, and native land worth appropriating, the absorbing process would be repeated. Tribe after tribe would be pushed back and back upon other tribes, or would perish in the process until an uninhabitable desert or the sea were reached, as the ultimate boundary of the State."

That was the picture of the Government's own Commissioner. He hoped some such cruel mercy as that indicated in the closing words of Sir Hercules Robinson's despatch did not commend itself to the Government. When Faust had determined upon the destruction of Marguerite, even Mephistopheles consented to shorten the period of her agony. He hoped the Government would not be more cruel than the Fiend himself, and that they would at least take no measures which would prolong fruitless contests, and would embark those unhappy Natives in struggles which could have but one end. It was no business of his—having laid before the House and the Government the deplorable condition of these unhappy peoples, who were once British subjects, amenable at least *de facto* to our rule, and loyal and friendly to Her Majesty to the last—to devise the remedy. He had heard it suggested that the terms of his Resolution pointed to a fresh South African war. He repudiated any such suggestion. The Resolution merely pointed to energetic action on the part of the Government. He had scrupulously endeavoured to take out of the Resolution everything which might seem to make it one of Censure on the Government, or which would in any way embarrass their action. The Amendment of the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Cartwright) embodied a truism which seemed in this connection to be out of place. He should have thought this was a case of "absolutely unavoidable obligations." He was grateful to the House for having allowed him, as temperately as possible, to indicate the plain facts of this most painful case. Such were the plain facts of this case, and he trusted they might have on the part of the Government an assurance that it recognized the serious nature of these questions to the Natives, and that they would immediately take some active measures to put a stop to the lamentable condition of things he had described.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER, in seconding the Motion, reminded the House that on the first night of the Session he had called the attention of the Under Secretary for the Colonies to certain statements which had appeared in a newspaper published at the Diamond Fields containing accounts of atrocities such as had seldom been seen in the history of the world. His hon. Friend answered that he was going to lay Papers on the Table of the House, and, having done so, the Papers were found to confirm the newspaper reports, and to rest upon no less authority than that of Mr. Rutherford, Assistant to Mr. Hudson, the English Resident. But it was said the argument was merely a *tu quoque* argument; that the Conservative Party had left a *damnosa hereditas* to the Liberal Party, and were themselves responsible for what had occurred. To that he replied that the annexation of the Transvaal by the late Government was a measure of which they were proud. Who were the Boers? They were a body of men who had left the Cape Colony in consequence of the abolition of slavery in that country, and from that time forward their career had been a career of rapacity, cruelty, and murder. He was aware that they had a patron in that House in the Secretary to the Treasury, and he wished the hon. Member had been present to defend them, because in the whole world there was nothing to equal the atrocities committed by the Transvaal Republic. Two years ago he had listened for two hours to the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone) on that subject, but without being able to discover that the hon. Member was aware that there were any but White inhabitants in the Transvaal, whereas its inhabitants consisted of 40,000 Whites at the outside, 5,000 being Englishmen, and 750,000 Natives; and he thought that to annex the State in which 750,000 Natives were oppressed by 35,000 Dutch Boers was a measure of which Her Majesty's late Government had every reason to be proud. Two years ago they were told a great deal about blood-guiltiness. Now, he was a man of peace, who detested war, but if ever there was a just and righteous war in this world, it was the war in the Transvaal. But the Prime Minister had been persuaded that it was not right to continue it, and had made an ignominious peace. He (Mr. R. N. Fowler) did not wish to put a question of this kind upon the same footing as a monetary transaction; but he was convinced that, as he predicted at the time, for the sake of saving 5,000 human lives, 50,000 had been sacrificed. It was all very well for gentlemen at home to suppose that the Boers thought they had not defeated the English. He had travelled through the Free State since the war, and he constantly heard it asserted that we were beaten in the war, and that we would never have surrendered if we had not been defeated at Majuba Hill. While that impression remained, while we were despised by our late subjects, the power of influencing the Boers was practically nothing. It was a miserable business; no Englishman could think of it without blushing. Two years ago the people were living contented and happy, and now they were being oppressed, driven from their homes, and murdered by the Boers; and where was it to stop? There was no prospect of such a thing unless the Chiefs consented to give up their land to the Boers and to retire towards the Desert, only to be driven out once more when it became convenient to the Republic to make fresh acquisitions of territory. There was only one course to pursue, and that was to take a decided line, and to vindicate the power of England. When they made peace with traitors, and those who believed in nothing but physical force, they must expect such horrors and atrocities as those which had been so forcibly depicted by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in view of the complicity of the Transvaal Government in the cruel and treacherous attacks made upon the Chiefs Montsioa and Mankoroane, this House is of opinion that energetic steps should be immediately taken to secure the strict observance by the Transvaal Government of the Convention of 1881, so that these chiefs may be preserved from the destruction with which they are threatened."—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

Mr. JOHN MORLEY said, he feared the House would think him somewhat presumptuous in venturing, so soon after his admission to that distinguished Assembly, to intrude upon its deliberations; but as he listened to the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), he could not help feeling that the sooner another side was represented to the House than the picture he painted the more advantageous it would be for the veracity of the discussion. The hon. and learned Member had told the House a great deal about the Native Chief Mankoroane, and he endeavoured to show that we had, in some way or other, bound ourselves to the protection of Mankoroane; but the fact was, that in the despatches of Lord Kimberley and Sir Hercules Robinson in April last year, the latter especially thought that Mankoroane was himself alone to blame for the troubles that had come upon him. In truth he left his home, where he was living unmolested, to take part in hostilities without reason. With reference to Montsioa, very much the same story might be told, and he was as little deserving of the sympathy of this House or of the English people as Mankoroane. In addition to this, the action of the Agents, both the Transvaal Agents and the Boer Agents, had produced bad results. One of our own Representatives wrote that he did not consider that our Agents were of any assistance to the Government; they were mainly active in egging on several of the Chiefs in hostilities which might result in very serious consequences. With reference to the attitude of the Boers, it was worth remembering that they had always held seriously, and not merely out of a desire to defy the British Government, that the disturbances arose from the impracticable way in which the boundaries were defined. [*A laugh.*] Hon. Members might laugh, but the Boers of the Transvaal were not the only persons who took that view; for when Sir George Colley, whose tragical death all Englishmen deplored, visited the territory, he made an official Report, which led Lord Kimberley to say that he believed Sir George Colley was of opinion that it was out of the question to maintain the boundary laid down in 1871. A new line of territory was required; and when we were responsible for the government of the Transvaal we had the same views of the impracticability of the Transvaal frontier line. [Mr. Gorst: The Transvaal Government had a new line.] After the disturbance arose which resulted in the war, it would be found that as late as February last Sir Hercules Robinson wrote to say that, up to that date, the Transvaal Government appeared to have done their best to maintain neutrality; and, so far as he (Mr. John Morley) had read and understood the transactions, from the beginning to the end the Transvaal Government did nothing of which we had any right to complain. ["Oh, oh!"] That he would seriously maintain. They published proclamations, they issued warrants for the arrest of marauders, they sent Joubert as commandant to the frontier, they stationed guards, they did all that a Central Government could do—a poor and weak Government—to maintain the peace on a difficult frontier, with a number of freebooters on the borders. Those freebooters were not all from the Transvaal; they came also from the Orange Free State, from Griqualand West, and from Cape Colony itself. He believed, moreover, that it was perfectly clear that most of the ammunition came from the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. In one place in the Blue Book it would be found that Mr. Hudson himself, the British Representative and Resident, said he should like to be allowed by Sir Hercules Robinson to make representations to the Orange Free State Government to induce them to act against the constant flow of ammunition. Now, it seemed a very bold thing to assert that the Transvaal Government on the whole had done its duty; but, in fact, all the terms of the Convention could not possibly be maintained. Here the fault lay not with the Transvaal Government, but with the Convention. He, for one, wished that the Convention had never been made. He wished that the present Government, within a month of their coming into Office, had come out of the Transvaal "bag and baggage." The fault of the Convention was that it imposed on the Transvaal Government the duty of maintaining peace on a borderland where nobody could maintain peace. Why did the Cape Colony refuse to accede to the proposition that they should take possession? Because they knew perfectly well the trouble and expense of keeping a peaceful frontier made it impracticable. The Transvaal Government found this incessant disorder on the frontier, and they found that the British Government were doing nothing, and they knew that practically nothing could be done by us. It was indispensable that the Transvaal Government should somehow get peace on the frontier. Letters were written that these Chiefs were willing to make peace and to cede their territory nominally to the Transvaal Government. But there could be no doubt to anyone who carefully read the letter of Mr. Bok to Mr. Hudson, on page 44 of the last Blue Book, that the Boer Government intended to submit these arrangements to the British Resident at Pretoria for the approval of Her Majesty's Government. Apart from all this, the question, after all, was what could be done to put an end to these disturbances in Bechuanaland? It seemed the High Commissioner tried to get the Free State, Cape Colony, and the Transvaal to institute some sort of police; but they declined, and therefore there was nothing left but annexation by Great Britain, or leaving it to be absorbed by the Free State, or else, finally, leaving it to its own devices. He hoped this country would not interfere in any way, and would not send a single man to clear away the marauders. It was not our affair. If hon. Members thought we were under any obligation to the Chiefs of Bechuanaland, he would refer them to the despatches of Lord Kimberley in July last year in reference to the proposal to send a joint force into the country, and it would be there found that Lord Kimberley expressly repudiated all obligations to these Chiefs or to the Transvaal Government. On July 13, 1882, Lord Kimberley, in his despatch to Sir Hercules Robinson, said that in consenting to take part in sending police, Her Majesty's Government did so only on this occasion as an exceptional measure to facilitate the action of the Local Government, and could not undertake the duty of preserving tranquillity, which properly belonged to the Government of the adjoining territory. Lord Kimberley thus expressly repudiated any obligation on our part, and he hoped that we should still maintain that attitude.

MR. GUY DAWNAY said, he felt bound by the interest he felt in South Africa and the Native races amongst whom he had spent so many pleasant years to raise his protest against the neglect of duty on the part of the Government, which had reduced this country to the despicable position we now occupied with reference to the Bechuana Chiefs. The hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) had laid down several premises without making deductions from them, and had drawn a variety of conclusions without premises. The fact was, we had remained during a year and a-half passive spectators of the outrages; and so far from our raising one finger to enforce the Articles of the Convention to restrain, or to force the Transvaal Government to restrain, the lawless bands of Boer Banditti — the scum of the Transvaal—who had attacked our old Bechuana allies, we had proved ourselves as helpless to save, and as powerless to protect, as if the Transvaal Convention had been so much waste paper, or as if Majuba Hill had brought about an unconditional surrender to the Boers. Not only had we been passively neutral, but we had been actively and malevolently neutral, for when these loyal Chiefs Montsioa and Mankoroane implored our assistance we simply sent them an official messenger. When they begged that, at least, the prohibition to purchase powder for the defence of their lives should be relaxed, we wrote them a page on neutrality and the intricacies of the Foreign Enlistment Act, and explained that ammunition could only be supplied to persons who did not require it for such an unrighteous purpose as the defence against freebooters of their lives, and the lives of their wives and their children. There was no more sickening and disheartening reading than that which was to be found in those Blue Books, which contained a long and dreary record of official impotence. What terms of reprobation would be too strong for a London magistrate to use to a big hulking policeman, who should be found to have confined the discharge of his duty to mere verbal remonstrance, while a brutal ruffian was robbing and beating to death some innocent man, woman, or child, before his very eyes? Well, our position as between the Transvaal Boers and those outlying Tribes was precisely that of a policeman. When our Government handed over 750,000 Natives within the Transvaal boundaries to the Boers, whose mode of dealing with them had throughout their history been written in three words, slavery, ill-treatment, extermination, it undertook to protect the Native Tribes outside those boundaries from the encroachments of the Boers and the Boer Government. If it was said that the Boer Government could not prevent those encroachments on the outlying Native Tribes, why, then, was the Transvaal handed over to a Government which was unable to govern? He appealed to Her Majesty's Ministers to shake off their apathy, and endeavour to repair the errors of the past. All these outrages would have ceased at once if they had only sent a few companies of soldiers last year to Montsioa's territory, to show that they were in earnest, and meant to maintain the Convention. If this could only be done by armed intervention, let it be done now. If those marauders were allowed to take any of that territory, they would only be encouraged to go on attacking other neighbouring Chiefs; they would extend their attacks to the lands of Secheli and Khame on the West, and then to the more fertile slopes of Swaziland and Zululand; in short, wherever there was grass and water to take and Boers to covet them we should have repetitions of those outrages, and, sooner or later, this country would be forced into intervention. If, however, the intervention came later, it would assume the proportions of a very serious Transvaal war. Was British honour, then, to continue to be dragged through the mud as it had been in South Africa? And not only was that the case with the honour of England, but also with the reputation of Christianity. Was Christianity, identified as it was in Bechuanaland with 50 years of English missionary labour, to be identified also with the cowardice of England and of Englishmen? Let Her Majesty's Government say at once whether they intended to abandon their allies, Montsioa and Mankoroane? If they grudged the expenditure which their own disastrous policy had entailed, and must entail on the country—if they refused that armed intervention which they knew that but for the expense they would adopt themselves, and which both honour and humanity demanded—let them at once say that they had neither the courage nor the resolution to repress with a strong hand those murderous marauders, and that filibustering and private warfare were in those regions to become the order of the day, or at least to have the tacit sanction of their impotence in its repression. Then, there was many an Englishman in the Diamond Fields, and throughout South Africa, and many a man also in England who, if he realized that national disgrace, would be ready to give up a few months of the London season or a few months' sport on the Rocky Mountains to become one of a band of volunteers in a righteous cause, of a band of volunteer allies of the Bechuana Chiefs, in order to do what an individual could do to repair the default of his Government, and to fire an English bullet in defence of that English honour which—none the less shamefully because done in that distant corner of the world—had been prostituted in so shameful a manner by the carelessness or by the cowardice of the Government.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT, in moving, as an Amendment—

> "That, in view of the very grave complication that must attend intervention in the affairs of the native populations on the Western Fontier of the Transvaal, this House is of opinion that the action of British authorities in those regions should be strictly confined within the limits of absolute unavoidable obligations,"

said, that the hon. Member who had just sat down had made a very valuable comment upon the speech of the hon, and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), who had said that in regard to these energetic measures which he called upon the Government to pursue he would not enter into any detail, but would merely indicate what should be done. The hon. Member had emphasized that indication with the word "intervention." It was desirable that the energetic action to which the hon. and learned Member invited the Government should receive some attention, and should be considered fully in its meaning and bearing. For himself, he held that the difficulty and the evils with which they had now to contend had arisen out of the Convention with the Transvaal Government. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham's description of the border warfare between the Transvaal and Bechuanaland was, he believed, quite correct with some unimportant exceptions. That land was a land of lawlessness, of warfare, and of robbery, peopled by freebooters; and the Native Chiefs, notwithstanding much that was said in their favour, were little better than the marauders who were invading that territory. Again, nothing could be truer than the demonstration given by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, that in regard to the Convention the action of the Boers had been in absolute violation of its terms. But the principal question which the House had now to consider was, what were the practical means at our disposal to cope with the difficulty which confronted us? The Convention was violated within 24 hours by the illegal raising of the flag of the South African Republic. The mode in which the boundary line was settled was illustrative of the manner in which our South African policy was carried out. That boundary line was drawn by Colonial officials who were ignorant of the subject with which they were dealing, and the result was the exclusion of a large number of Transvaal citizens. The Blue Book contained from first to last records of the protests on the part of the Transvaal Government and the impotent rejoinder of the Commissioner at Cape Town. The point at which they had arrived was the absolute violation of the Convention by an act perfectly illegal according to the terms of the Convention. The Transvaal Government had annexed portions of territory outside their boundary. The question was, what was to be done? The hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had asked the Government to take immediate steps to secure the safety of the Tribes on the borderland. But this involved serious responsibilities. It behoved the Liberal Party to be well upon their guard before they endorsed a political principle which must inevitably lead to the same consequences against which they protested two years ago. He was convinced that if they pursued the principle advocated by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, they must not only annex, but they would be obliged by the inevitable force of circumstances to establish a permanent police force; in other words, to assume the responsibility of an African Empire which would extend from sea to sea. It was not, however, possible to exercise any real restraining authority through a hollow Suzerainty; but they could still draw back, and if they drew back they must do so absolutely, and not in a half-hearted manner. If they did not seize this opportunity, they would be involved in further complications; and the course he recommended, which would be a far more dignified course for the Government to pursue than that proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), was that they should make a frank and free reversal of the policy of this country in that part of South Africa, that they should undo the Convention as 30 years ago the annexation of the Orange State had been undone by the Sand River Treaty, and wash their hands of any interference other than was absolutely unavoidable in those regions. The hon. Member concluded by moving the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the first word "the" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "very grave complication that must attend intervention in the affairs of the native populations on the Western Frontier of the Transvaal, this House is of opinion that the action of British authorities in those regions should be strictly confined within the limits of absolutely unavoidable obligations,"—(*Mr. Cartwright*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that, in his opinion, the speech just delivered contained the strongest possible arguments in favour of the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham. It was perfectly clear that three things had resulted from the mixture of sham sentimentality and pusillanimity which had been the policy of the Government towards the Transvaal —namely, the oppression of the Natives of the Transvaal and its neighbourhood, the breach of the Convention by the Boers, and the humiliation of the British Flag. In the speeches on the other side of the House no really successful effort had been made to deal with the case raised by the Motion. The statement of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), that the Boers had done everything in their power to maintain the observance of the Convention, was not supported by a single fact. The proposal of Sir Hercules Robinson that a force of 200 police should be organized to maintain order on the Western borders of the Transvaal had been called a reasonable proposal by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), and the Prime Minister had assented to that view. Yet the Transvaal Government had refused to join hands in such a humane and sensible plan, He agreed that it would have been better for the honour of the British Government and British Flag if the Government had, when they first came into Office, renounced the Transvaal rather than conduct so inglorious a war and conclude so ignominious a peace. But the Government were now bound to carry out the Convention, which they had assured Parliament in 1881 would protect the loyal Colonists and the Natives also. Was not the plighted word of the Government to bind the nation? The Convention had been violated in the grossest way by the Boers, and the men who had been loyal to the Queen had been abandoned to the grossest outrages. The Boers of the Transvaal were, as the hon. Member for the North Riding of Yorkshire (Mr. Guy Dawnay) had said, the scum of South Africa. They were adventurers, who trekked from the Cape Colony, where slavery was abolished, in order to continue the practice of slavery elsewhere. They had plundered and enslaved the Natives, and had been known to shoot them down for mere practice. They might be Protestant, as they were described to be in the Mid Lothian speeches, but only in the sense that they protested against right, justice, and mercy. They certainly were not God-fearing. Under the Sovereignty of the Queen, Bechuanaland was peaceful. The inhabitants lived undisturbed between 1877 and 1880, when a change of policy was effected in deference to the opinions of a few philosophical and academical Radicals, who were the friends of every country save their own. He wished to know why the despatches of the Royal Commission had not been fully published? Was the country not to know the evidence given by the Natives in the summer and autumn of 1881? To Lord Wolseley, one of the Chiefs, when he heard of the proposed surrender, said —"If the British rule dies, we die also." The Blue Book lately published showed how true those words were. A gentleman had told him that morning that in Pretoria, shortly after the capitulation, he met an old white-headed Kaffir weeping. On being asked the cause of his distress, the old man said—

> "My father was slain by the Boers; my brother was slain by them; and I have had my cattle stolen by them. I did hope that the Queen was going to protect me for the future; but now you are going to give me back to my enemies."

Another Chief said—

> "Our backs had been sore for 20 years, when our White Mother came and healed them. Now you are opening our sores again."

The honour of the country demanded that the Government should take efficient measures to secure these unfortunate Natives against the gross and unjust oppression to which they were being subjected in consequence of our ungenerous and inhuman abandonment of them. Chiefs like Montsioa had courageously sheltered and defended our brethren, British Colonists, in the Transvaal during the struggle in 1881. Thereby these loyal Natives had incurred the hatred of the Boers who were now exterminating them. It should not be forgotten that it was our intervention in 1877—an intervention which was not protested against by the present Prime Minister, and which was approved by many of his followers—which saved the Natives from oppression for several years, and which also saved the miserable slave-driving Boers themselves from bankruptcy and ruin. The present Government had reversed, wherever they could, the wise and statesmanlike policy of their Predecessors, and the consequence was to be seen in the state of Ireland, of Egypt, and of the Transvaal. Everywhere they had produced the same results—disturbance, anarchy, and ruin.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY said, he was able to begin by saying that, however he might have to controvert certain statements made by the hon. Member who opened the discussion, and by others, he could fully join in all the expressions they had given vent to in condemnation of the acts which had been going on on this Western border; and he had no desire, nor did he believe it to be necessitated either by his views or position to minimize the events which had there occurred. They were, undoubtedly, a disgrace to humanity. But they had not to consider them as abstract propositions; they had to view them in relation to the responsibilities, the capacities, the obligations, and last, though not least, in relation to the interests of the Empire for which they were, for the time, responsible. He would like, first of all, to very considerably modify the picture the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had presented to the House of the state and condition of Bechuanaland. The hon. and learned Member had represented it as perfectly Arcadian, and the inhabitants as a pastoral and industrious people who had never engaged in any warfare, and had at one time been loyal and peaceable subjects of the Queen. He (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) was sorry to be obliged, in the interests of truth, to shatter that picture. He must inform the House—which the hon. and learned Member for Chatham had not done—that the disturbances and internecine feuds of these Bechuana Chiefs had been going on ever since we had had any knowledge of the country, and that was since 1851; and it was the culmination of those disturbances which brought about the application to Governor Keate—of which they had heard to-day—to come forward and settle the difference among the Tribes and their neighbours by making awards. As to what the hon. and learned Member had said about the Natives having at one time been *de facto* though not *de jure* placed under the British Crown, he would, first of all, tell him that it was the act of Colonel Warren, who was in no way authorized by his superiors to enter into such negotiations; and he would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), who was in Office at the time, whether he had not declined to ratify what had been done. One of the causes which led to this subordinate officer interfering in these territories was that these peaceable friends of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham made war in 1878 upon Griqualand West, and were concerned in the murder of Mr. Thompson. The Tribe was dispersed by force, and then Mankoroane offered himself and his people as British subjects. The reason assigned for making that offer was that it was done in consequence of his having lost control over his people, so many of its Chiefs having broken out in revolt against him. In a great number of individual instances, however, the people, he was happy to say, had profited by the lessons of civilization. There was no doubt that missionary efforts had been to a considerable extent successful in this territory; but they had only been individual efforts, and they were like scattered drops in the ocean. The normal condition of this territory was one of perpetual struggle for pre-eminence, one Chief being banded against another, and availing himself of any assistance or any allies to carry on the war. Why, if these Chiefs were united, and they all formed one happy family, did anyone suppose that the Boers, even armed as they were, would be able to carry on successful invasions of this sort? No; the Boers were profiting by the condition of the Tribes themselves, and, as a matter which threw considerable light on this district, he would refer—if he would not be out of Order in quoting from a document which was not before the House—to a passage he had seen in the Report of the Civil Commissioner at Kimberley, written four months ago, and sent to the Secretary for Native Affairs at Cape Town. The Civil Commissioner, writing from a thoroughly impartial standpoint, complained very much of the state of things in Bechuanaland, but said his belief was that the Boers were so fearful lest the Tribes should combine together, and make a descent on the Transvaal, that they were taking the bull by the horns and going into this territory to stir up the Tribes and disturb Native domination. That was a striking opinion from an impartial observer. He wished to show that these Natives were a fighting race who did inspire some sort of terror in the Boers, and who, if they were united, would be able to hold their own much better than they did. The Chiefs had at their kraals European White advisers—alluded to by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham. Now, these White advisers were, in nine cases out of ten, not a whit better than the wandering Boers. They had been frequently charged with being the causes of these wars, and they were the gentlemen who signed those pathethic documents that were sent into the Colonial Office and the Cape Government, alluding in legal and Parliamentary language to the different clauses of the Convention of Pretoria. These men went into the country to make their fortune, and having attached themselves to the various Chiefs, were naturally most anxious for British intervention, because, as they well knew, the value of any land they might have acquired would instantly be doubled. The House must not allow itself to be misled by the language of these addresses. He did not wish to run down the Chiefs in question, but only asserted that one side was about as good as the other; that the allies of the Boers were neither better nor worse than those of the British. It was open to argument that the men mentioned in the Resolution had a special personal claim on the English Government, for he did not deny that some of our superior officers, including Sir Bartle Frere and Sir George Colley, had made certain promises to these Chiefs. The Government owned that, and hoped to be able to show in a substantial way their belief that the claim existed; but the moral claim of Mankoroane and Montsioa and that set of Native Chiefs was disposed of by the fact that they had not joined us with the intention of making sacrifices for the English Government, but because it was necessary for them to take one side or the other, and because they thought our alliance more likely to profit them than that of the Boers. Without following the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) into a discussion on the rights or wrongs of annexation and retrocession—a question for which neither the time nor place was suitable—he wished to say one word on the subject. The other day, in answering a Question in the House, he had frankly stated that during our occupation of the Transvaal these outrages on the Natives had ceased. That statement had been met from the other side of the House by a loud cheer, which expressed the view taken by hon. Gentlemen opposite, that the Government, having given up the Transvaal, were practically responsible for all that had since occurred there. But hon. Gentlemen opposite had entirely forgotten that the Transvaal was annexed while they were in Office, and in order to protect the Boers from the Natives. It was his opinion that the Zulu War, and that against Secocoeni had, by the destruction of the Native Forces, done more than anything else to hand over the Natives to the power of the Boers. It was the action of the late Government, not of the present, that had improved the condition of the Boers. Now, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had read a passage of the Blue Book, in which the High Commissioner had given certain pledges to certain persons at the time of the retrocession. He (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) wished to draw attention to this—that the address of Sir Hercules Robinson was made to refer only to the Natives of the Transvaal.

Mr. GORST: What I read was part of a speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, and not the address of the High Commissioner.

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY said, he referred to the earlier part of the hon. and learned Member's speech, in which the hon. and learned Member alluded to the pledges given when the Convention of Pretoria was signed. The terms of that Convention were familiar enough to the House; but that Convention, let him begin by asserting, imposed no obligations on Her Majesty's Government. There might be obligations on Her Majesty's Government in reality, but that Convention placed no obligation on Her Majesty's Government; it only gave them a right to remonstrate when circumstances justified it, and when our interests were imperilled. As soon as the Convention was signed, Her Majesty's Government appointed a Resident at Pretoria, and he would venture to assert that if the hon. and learned

Member looked at the Blue Book, he would find that the Resident had done his duty by reporting to the British Government all that occurred and remonstrating with the Transvaal Government. These remonstrances had not been entirely fruitless, because, as the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) had pointed out, the Government of the Transvaal, as soon as the disturbances broke out, issued a declaration of neutrality at the instance of our Resident, Mr. Hudson, in October, 1881. General Joubert went to Montsioa's frontier; and he (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) appealed to the fairness of all Members who had looked at the Blue Books which gave an account of the proceedings of General Joubert, to say whether they did not think that General Joubert was *bonâ fide* and straightforward in what he did. He (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) believed he was. He believed the General intended to enforce the programme of neutrality; but what happened? Why, directly he left the frontier, the very frontier guards he had left there turned round and joined in the fray. But they could not make General Joubert responsible for that. The fact was, that no one realized what the state of things in the Transvaal was now. The whole population, not only in the Transvaal, but their brethren in the Orange Free State and in the Cape, sympathized with the Boers in the Native territory—they had a small knot of men in the small capital of Pretoria, with no large population to create or foster a public opinion, struggling by themselves against the universal feelings of sympathy of all the people. Well, they could not hold men too tight when that was the case. At any rate, they could not go to war with them for not doing what they were perfectly unable to do. The Triumvirate at Pretoria, whether they were willing and desirous or not—and he would not enter into that question—of prosecuting the men subject to the State who were violating the law, had neither the money, nor the men, nor the power to do it. Her Majesty's Government had continued to make remonstrances; but they had not contented themselves with that. Sir Hercules Robinson suggested to the Secretary of State that a proposal should be made for a joint expedition of police. That proposal was made in all earnestness and *bonâ fides* by Her Majesty's Government; but how was it received? The Cape said—"Oh! yes; we will join with you, but only on the condition that the Orange Free State and the Transvaal will join also"—knowing perfectly well that neither of them would. They went to the Orange Free State, who said—"No; we do not think it constitutional to go beyond the border." The Transvaal followed up the example of the Orange Free State, and, as a matter of fact, they were in such a peculiar state that he did not suppose they could afford the money even for 100 policemen. That meant that there was no assistance to be got from any of these territories—that the Dutch element at the Cape, which was two-thirds of the whole, would not give Her Majesty's Government any assistance in carrying out any repressive measures. But they had made a second attempt since the Papers which had been laid on the Table of the House had been distributed to Members. Having found that they could get no assistance in the general suppresion of the marauders in Bechuanaland, they made another proposal three weeks or a month ago, to the effect that they would be willing to pay the whole expense of a mounted police force to go into this Bechuana territory in order to arrest any British marauders and bring them back to trial, and the Cape were asked to give facilities or assistance, not pecuniary, but such as allowing them to pass through their territory. The answer that came back was—

> "You will do no good by merely arresting your British subjects, because they are but a small proportion of the total number, and the effect would be inconsiderable."

Besides, Sir Hercules Robinson said—

> "You must not imagine you are going to do this with a small force, because the moment you come by yourselves into these territories and not joined by the Transvaal or the Orange Free State Government, it will be the signal for the Dutch element in every part of South Africa to flock in shoals to the assistance of the Dutch."

An hon. Member opposite (Mr. Guy Dawney) seemed to think that volunteers would go out from this country to fight on the other side. Well, it was not unnatural, if persons so many thousands of miles from the scene of the conflict were inspired with a desire to volunteer, that the Dutch at the Cape and in the Orange Free State should join those who were so much nearer to them who had sprung from the same race and who spoke the same tongue. It was clear that this was a large undertaking; therefore, Her Majesty's Government had said at once that they could not incur the responsibility of an enterprize of such magnitude, seeing that it would have to be supplemented by further operations. The Resolution of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham assumed the complicity of the Transvaal Government in the cruel and treacherous attack made upon the Natives of Bechuanaland—which assumption he (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) ventured to say and believe was far beyond what the evidence presented to them warranted in taking as proved, though there was ample evidence that the Transvaal Government had benefited by the action of the marauders, and were willing to take advantage of it. The failure of the Convention was a matter that commanded the serious consideration of Her Majesty's Government; but there was no evidence that the Transvaal Government had participated in any of the cruel and treacherous attacks made on the Natives. The hon. and learned Member asked them to resolve that the House was of opinion that some energetic steps should be immediately taken to secure the observance by the Transvaal of the Convention of 1881, so that the Native Chiefs might be preserved from the destruction with which they were threatened. He (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) wished the hon. and learned Member had the courage to tell them in definite language what were the energetic measures he would propose. The hon. and learned Member had very wisely and diplomatically left that alone; therefore it became necessary to ask the House what he could possibly have meant? He (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) could only conceive two operations. Did the hon. and learned Member mean that we should declare war against the Transvaal? It seemed to him that, independently of the rashness and the wildness of such a proposal, it would be rather a hard measure to go to war with the Transvaal for not doing that which, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, the Transvaal hitherto had not had the power to do even if they had had the will. It might be said, as the other alternative, "You could send up a force into this territory;" but would the House consider what that implied? We might send out a force at considerable expense; we might clear the country of these marauders; but when we had done that, could we retire? Could we do the work once for all? No; for directly we withdrew, the marauders would come back again. Therefore we should have virtually to maintain a force there, and that meant the annexation of the country. Well, it might not be a very terrific thing to propose to the country and the House of Commons that we should annex a tract, the fee-simple of which, he supposed, would not be worth more than a third or half what the expense of the expedition would come to. But did they suppose that we could go and virtually annex this Bechuanaland, and remain there? It would be the old story of being led on from point to point. If we were to go and virtually annex this Bechuana territory, we should be beginning again to do what we decided at the time of the Sand River Convention not to do. At that time we resolved, as our settled policy, not to entangle ourselves North of the Vaal River. We reversed this in the annexation of the Transvaal; but the country very wisely undid that. If we annexed the Bechuana territory, or established a Protectorate, which was tantamount to annexation, we should have again to go North of the Vaal, and begin the pursuit of other conquests. There was an illustrative case in point he might mention. When the Boers went first to Natal, to escape from British authority, we formed a sort of protectorate over a Tribe called the Amapondos, on the borders of Natal. In process of time the Amapondos got hungry, crossed the border, and plundered the cattle of the Boers. Very naturally, the Boers, in self-defence, and to retaliate and punish the Amapondos, crossed the border and attacked them; whereupon the Natives applied to the British Government for protection. At that time we were not so experienced in South Africa as we are now, and did not know how soon one step would lead to another. We replied to the application for protection, certainly; and we forebade the Boers to attack the Amapondos. The Boers replied that they were not British subjects, and would do as they liked. What was the result? War broke out; great loss of life and great expense occurred; the Boers were defeated, and we found ourselves obliged to annex Natal, and the Boers flew off, first to the Orange Free State, and then to the Transvaal, where we followed them. Well, if we established a Protectorate over the Bechuanas, and substituted Transvaal for Natal and Bechuanaland for Amapondoland, history would repeat itself in the parallel. He would appeal to no less an authority than Sir Bartle Frere, who was himself, as they all knew, the apostle of the forward movement, and who, in a despatch of September, 1878, referring to a Report sent by Colonel Lanyon about his proceedings in these very territories, wrote as follows:—

> "The narrative furnishes a graphic picture of the difficulty of our position along many hundred miles of the Colonial and Transvaal border. It will be seen by the Report that far beyond the Colonial boundary are to be found European settlements of traders, farmers, and missionaries, who have for years lived not only unmolested, but as honoured and valued guests of Native Chiefs. It is not till some time of exceptional excitement occurs that the protecting Chief finds his real power has long since departed; that, unless supported by the all-prevailing authority of the British Government, he has only the choice of taking part with the disaffected of his own class, who wish to plunder and drive out the White man, or of being punished for supposed complicity with the marauders and murderers. That, by some form of Imperial Protectorate, this painful dilemma should be avoided, is the natural desire alike of the extra-Colonial Chief and of the Europeans he harbours and is supposed to protect. How such Protectorate can be established, without indefinite extension of our responsibilities, is a problem difficult of solution."

So difficult, that he (Mr. Ashley) advised them not to try. If they once undertook it, they would find themselves carried further and further. He had already alluded to the fact that if we used force against the Boer marauders, we should find ourselves surrounded by people all sympathizing with those we were going to oppose; and he would further submit this. Suppose we went to the territory of the Bechuanas, and kept the Boers within their own frontier, preventing them from attacking the Natives, saying, "You shall have nothing to do with these people; we take them under our protection, and you shall not come forward and attack or punish them;" would not the correlative also be that we must, if necessary, prevent the Natives from attacking the Boers? He believed those who were familiar with South African history would say that it was most likely that before many years had passed there would be an attack on the Boers by the Native Tribes; at any rate, he felt certain that if such an attack were made, and we had interfered to prevent the Boers from punishing the Natives, the Boers would have a perfect right to call upon us to protect them. [Mr. R. N. Fowler: No, no!] The hon. Member who said "No!" belonged to the Corporation which possessed the best police force in England, and was perfectly willing to undertake the police management of the whole of the world. That was what it came to—that we must be prepared to undertake the duties of police throughout the whole of South Africa. Let them remember the peculiarity of these territories. None of them had natural boundaries—all the boundaries were artificial. There was nothing to stop us between Bechuanaland and the Equator, and if the hon. Member (Mr. R. N. Fowler) was prepared to go to the Equator with his constables, Her Majesty's Government declined to accompany him. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had made allusion to the powder question, and said there was great one-sidedness in the arrangement. He (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) would draw the hon. and learned Member's attention to the fact that the Colonial Office had thought that the embargo on the sale of powder should be taken off, and had said so to the Cape Government; but that Government had declined to remove it. But the hon. and learned Member, if he thought over the matter, would see that there was another reason why powder had not been obtained. Reference to the Blue Books would show that the Chiefs neglected to pay for the powder.

Mr. GORST: That applies only to Mankoroane, and not to Montsioa.

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY said, he had no evidence in Montsioa's case. Across the borders of such territories as the Transvaal and the Orange Free State there were always traders going about selling powder. The Chiefs would experience little difficulty in getting powder if they would pay for it. Her Majesty's Government had done what they could to get the embargo removed from the introduction of gunpowder from the

Cape; but the Cape Government had refused to remove it, saying that the policy of neutrality which they had adopted would prevent them as long as the war between the Native Chiefs lasted. The Home Government had said that they did not look upon what was going on in Bechuanaland as a war in the strict sense; but this had had no effect on the Government at the Cape. And now, he thought, he had touched upon all the main points of the hon. and learned Member's speech. He would sum up the case of the Government by saying that they did not think that either the interests of this country or the obligations they had imposed on them would justify their making an expedition into South Africa, with all its necessary consequences. They were of opinion that it would be unstatesmanlike, he might say almost a criminal act, to send out such an expedition. Taking the construction of the Convention in its most exaggerated sense, it only gave the right, and did not impose a duty, to interfere. These Natives, however strong might be our sympathies, had never been received under our rule, and had no claim to our protection beyond that which he owned appealed strongly —namely, our common humanity. But statesmen could not afford to yield to the natural impulses of humanity. [*Laughter.*] Well, hon. Members knew perfectly well what he meant. An irresponsible individual, when he saw wrong being committed, might very well follow natural impulses; whereas the man with responsibilities resting upon him was bound not to follow every unregulated impulse. If he did, he might be doing more harm than good; ill-directed impulses might lead to very great evil. The view of Her Majesty's Government, as had been laid down by the Earl of Kimberley in a despatch to Sir George Colley, of May, 1880, was that whereas in the South African Colonies there was no natural boundary, the complications incident upon the contact of White Colonists with Native Tribes must arise wherever the border line was drawn, and that if British jurisdiction was to be continually extended further and further into the interior, on the plea of such complications, there was practically no limit to the operation. Some plan should be devised whereby the Native Chiefs in these parts, who, it was admitted, had some claims upon the British Government, might be provided for with safety and comfort in some form or other. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members opposite seemed convulsed with laughter at every observation he made which was not strictly in accordance with what they had hoped he would say. The operation to which he alluded was a simple one, and had been carried out with regard to certain Chiefs at the time of the retrocession of the Orange Free State. They had been provided with a place in which they could live in peace in Her Majesty's Dominions. There was nothing ridiculous in that. Her Majesty's Government had already communicated with Sir Hercules Robinson, and had asked him to let them know what proposals he would like to make in reference to this question. The larger policy of the employment of force was one which they did not think they were called on to adopt. He would merely say, in conclusion, that the policy of the constant advance of British troops wherever there was suffering and wherever there was oppression, was a policy they could very well understand being advocated by those on the spot; but statesmen in this country were bound to take a broader view of the subject. Those on the spot, whose horizon was perforce narrow, were often inclined to parody Swift's advice to servants, and, having ascertained what were the resources of the Empire, claim to obtain the greater portion of them to be expended on their own concerns; but those who surveyed the scene from a more central standpoint were bound, unless they saw that they had obligations absolutely imposed upon them, and that they could do the thing effectually, not to imperil the interests committed to their charge by entering into ventures of this sort. There was, however, no such obligation, and those who were daily compelled to survey the burdens and responsibilities of the Empire would shrink from any such proposal. They would frankly acknowledge that we were only now reaping what we sowed by the original mistake of the annexation of the Transvaal, but they will decline to get out of one mistake by means of a greater. The Government had taken the measures which they thought best when they retired from the Transvaal, and remonstrances had been addressed to the Boers on this question, and as long as the Convention remained, remonstrances would continue to be made. Her Majesty's Government would not neglect their duties in this matter, but they would not go beyond them. He believed that the Boer Government were very much more amenable to the pressure of the public opinion of the civilized world than many people imagined; and it was a striking fact that during the 18 months or two years which had elapsed since they had been independent, there had been few or no complaints against them in connection with the Natives within their borders. The letter to which the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham had called his attention to on a former occasion, and on the subject of which a telegram had been sent to Africa, did not appear, when read with care, to contain any charge against the Boers that could be sustained. He had expressed his belief that the Boer Government were very amenable to public opinion in this country, and he believed they would be much more so if we, who condemned the acts of their irresponsible citizens on the border were, at any rate, just in our judgment. He deprecated above all things, both in the interest of South Africa and in the interest of England, any attempt to blow up feeling between the people of this country and the Dutch; and he looked forward to the time when amongst the Natives the terms "Dutch" and "English" would be forgotten, and allegiance would be paid to those only who treated them with justice.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. W. E. Forster.*)

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he would like to ask the hon. Gentleman one question. He gathered from his speech that the Government thought they would be able to provide for the Chiefs referred to in safety and comfort. He asked, when were those Chiefs to be provided for, and what was to be done with the lands on which they had hitherto lived?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he did not think he should be acting in conformity with the recently established Rules of the House, if he were to renew the debate on the Motion for adjournment now before the House. But the debate was likely to be adjourned, and there would be a further and more convenient opportunity of replying to the question of the right hon. Baronet when the debate was resumed. Explanations, he believed, had been given "elsewhere" on the subject. With regard to the adjournment, he wished to observe that the debate had been distinguished by its practical character, and the subject of it was altogether one of serious importance. That being so, he should be very sorry, as the debate could not be brought to a conclusion that evening, that it should drop. The House was aware of the difficulty in which it was placed with regard to Public Business, and the proposal he had to make was that there should be a Morning Sitting on Friday for the continuance of the debate, on which day, in view of the progress already made, he had no doubt that it would be practicable to bring it to a conclusion.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he should renew his question after the conclusion of the debate.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Friday,* at Two of the clock.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS (No. 2) BILL.—[Bill 73.]

(*Mr. Heneage, Mr. Duckham, Mr. Foljambe, Mr. Gurdon, Mr. Mellor.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. HENEAGE said, the principle of this Bill was similar to that of the Bill on the same subject read a second time last year and the previous year. He asked the House to allow it to pass the stage of second reading, and then if any misadventure were to happen to the measure which the Government intended to introduce, this Bill could be referred to a Select Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Heneage.*)

Mr. SIDNEY HERBERT said, he had no wish to interfere with the proposal of the hon. Member to introduce a

Bill in the interest of the agricultural community; but he thought it would be of advantage to the House that at some early date, if not that evening, they should have some information as to what were the views of the Government on the subject dealt with in the Bill of the hon. Member. The subject of compensation to tenants was mentioned in the Queen's Speech; but, from that day to this, the House had not been made acquainted with the views of the Government. There were, however, two or three Bills before the House introduced by private Members; and, under those circumstances, he thought it would be of advantage to the country if some indication of the Government intentions were given before the present Bill was read a second time.

MR. PELL said, he gathered from the remarks of the hon. Member opposite that the present Bill did not differ materially in principle from the Bills introduced in former Sessions. Having read through the Bill, however, he was of opinion that its provisions were extremely unpractical; and, moreover, they did appear to him to differ considerably from those of the Bills formerly introduced. As there was a Government Bill looming in the distance, he hoped the hon. Gentleman would not then press the second reading, but give the House and the country further time to consider the question. He did not think the hon. Member would lose anything by following his suggestion; because, although, no doubt, the question was of great importance, more information should, in his opinion, be afforded than they were then in possession of. A mere reference to what had been done or attempted before in this matter could not be a sufficient explanation to the House of what was contained within the four corners of this Bill; and he, therefore, renewed his appeal to the hon. Member not to press his Motion for the second reading.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he agreed with the hon. Member for Wilton (Mr. Sidney Herbert), that the opinions of the Government on this question should be made known as soon as possible; but he thought if the hon. Member would consider a little, he would see that it had not been in their power to take any opportunity for doing so. However anxious they might be to make known their views, there had not been a single opportunity on which they could have introduced the Bill on this subject which they were extremely anxious to lay before the House. It would be an extremely inconvenient course, when the Government themselves were attempting to legislate, that they should express their opinion upon Bills dealing with the same subject introduced by private Members. With regard to the Motion of the hon. Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage), he was not conversant with the contents of the proposed Bill; but he gathered from what had taken place, that in no part of the House was there so strong an opposition to the principle of the Bill as would justify the Government in opposing the second reading. He was, therefore, willing that this stage should be taken, on the distinct understanding that no further stage should be taken until the Government had been able to announce their own intentions upon the subject which the Bill proposed to deal with. On that understanding he hoped the House, if they were so disposed, would allow the Bill to be read a second time.

VISCOUNT EMLYN said, the noble Lord had given a very good reason why the Bill should not be read a second time, when he informed the House that he did not know what the contents of the Bill were. It was, however, under those circumstances that the noble Lord thought that this Bill, which so greatly affected the interests of the agricultural community, should be read a second time. For his own part, he did not think it possible at that hour (12.45) to go into the merits of the Bill. The hon. Member who introduced the Bill said it did not differ from other Bills which had been introduced in former Sessions upon the same subject. Now, as those Bills differed materially from each other, he was quite unable to understand to which of them the hon. Member referred. Under the circumstances, he thought it unnecessary to take the second reading that evening; and, with the object of allowing further time to those interested in the question to consider the hon. Member's proposal, he begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

MR. WARTON seconded the Motion for adjournment. The Government seemed to think it was a good thing to get a Bill read the recond time, although they had not the slighest idea of what it contained. He thought that was one of the worst reasons that could be put forward in favour of the second reading of the present measure.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Viscount Emlyn*).

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

WAYS AND MEANS.

Resolution [March 12] *reported*, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That it be an *Instruction* to the Committee on the Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill, That they have power to make provision therein pursuant to the said Resolution.

MOTIONS.

TITHE RENT CHARGE RECOVERY BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stanley Leighton, Bill for the amendment of the Law for the recovery of Tithe Rent Charge, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Stanley Leighton, Mr. Cropper, Mr. Pell, and Mr. Bulwer.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 119.]

UNDERGROUND RAILWAYS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Bill to render the use of Smoke Consuming Engines compulsory on the Underground Railways of London, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. Alderman Fowler, and Mr. Coddington.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 120.]

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, 14th March, 1883.

Their Lordships met this day for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

The Lord O'Hagan—Chosen Speaker in the absence of the Lord Chancellor and the Lords Commissioners.

House adjourned at a quarter past Two o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 14th March, 1883.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Ordered—First Reading*—Ground Game Act (1880) Amendment * [121].

Second Reading—Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment [14], *negatived;* Registration of Voters (Ireland) [24], *debate adjourned;* Free Libraries [85], *debate adjourned.*

Committee—Report—Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT (1881) AMENDMENT BILL.

(*Mr. Parnell, Mr. Healy, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Lalor.*)

[BILL 14.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. PARNELL, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said: The Bill has been drafted for the purpose of remedying several imperfections and defects in the Land Act of 1881, some of which were foreseen and pointed out by me and my Friends at the time of the passing of that Act, others of which have become evident during the working of the Act, or have arisen in consequence of a Judgment of a rather celebrated character—that in "Adams *v.* Dunseath." The Bill also provides for the inclusion of certain classes within the benefits of the Act of 1881 who were then left out of it—such as leaseholders, occupiers of town parks, and so forth. It further proposes to extend the operation of the Purchase Clauses. The chief provisions of the measures are—Firstly, the dating of the judicial rent from the gale day next succeeding the date of the application to the Court to fix the fair rent. Secondly, power to the Court to suspend proceedings in ejectment, and for the recovery of rent pending the fixing of a fair rent, and upon payment by the tenant of rent equal to the Poor Law valuation of his holding. Thirdly, the definition of the term improvement as—

> "Any work or agricultural operation executed on a holding, which adds to the letting value of the holding, or any expenditure of labour or capital on the holding which adds to its letting value."

Fourthly, a direction to the Court that, in fixing a fair rent, the increase in the letting value of the holding arising from the improvements effected by the tenant or his predecessor in title shall belong to the tenant; and that the landlord shall not be permitted to ask for an increase of rent in respect to such increased letting value. Fifthly, a provision that the use and enjoyment by the tenant of his improvements, or the forbearance of the landlord to exact an increased rent in respect of the improvements effected by the tenant or his predecessor in title, shall not be held as compensation for such improvements. Sixthly, the presumption as regards the making of the improvements is to be in future in favour of the tenants. Seventhly, power is given to leaseholders to apply to the Court to fix a fair rent, and the section of the Act of 1881 exempting the occupiers of town parks from the benefits of the Act is repealed. Lastly, the Land Commission is permitted to advance the full amount of the purchase money to tenants purchasing; and in case the tenant's holding is under £30 valuation, the Court is allowed to extend the period of repayment for 53 years, instead of, as at present, 35 years. I think I shall be able to lay before the House cogent and unanswerable reasons for all the principal alterations which the Bill proposes to effect in the Act of 1881. In many cases I shall show that the will of Parliament, and the expectations and desires of the Government expressed during the passing of the Act, have been clearly run counter to by the manner in which the Act has been interpreted in the Courts in Ireland. In other cases, I shall be able to show that it is absolutely necessary, for the smooth and speedy working of the Act, and for the protection of the tenants' improvements, that the alterations which I desire to effect shall be accomplished as speedily as possible. Take, for example, the provision requiring the judicial rent to be dated from the gale day next succeeding the date of the application to the Court. As the Land Act of 1881 was originally drafted and read a first and second time in this House, it provided that the new rent should take effect from the date of the application by the tenant; but during the discussions—whether in Committee, or on Report, or after the Bill came back from the Lords, I cannot remember—an alteration of a most important character in favour of the landlords was accepted, providing that the new rent should date, not from the date of the application, or the gale day subsequent thereto, but from the date of the decision of the Court. An alteration of a most important character in favour of the landlords, and against the interests of the tenants, was made in the Bill to the effect that the new rents should commence, not from the date of the application, but from the date of the decision, hence an obstacle of the most formidable character had been placed in the way of voluntary settlements out of Court. It was also stated by the Prime Minister, and those responsible for the Act of 1881, that one of their chief hopes was that the Act would lead to settlements out of Court. They apprehended that, as the result of the working of the Courts throughout the country, the landlords would come to mutual understandings and agreements with regard to the rent to be paid out of Court. Well, this has been so to a limited extent, but only to a limited extent. We find, according to the latest Returns given to us by the Land Commission Court, that something like 25,000 judicial decisions have been given in contested cases on the application of tenants to have fair rents fixed; and, speaking roughly, there have been something like an equal number of mutual agreements entered into between landlords and tenants for the fixing of fair rents. Considering, then, that the Act has been in working order since last October twelve months—for a period of very nearly a year and a-half—it cannot be said that the expectations of the Prime Minister, which were expressed at the time of its passing, that the working of the Act would lead to enormous settlements out of Court, have been realized. The number—22,000 or 23,000—of such settlements without the intervention of the Act is not what we might have expected, and certainly it was not what the Government led the House to believe they expected; and in my judgment, and in the judgment of many of those most competent to give an opinion on the subject, the chief obstacle in the way of settlement out of Court is the fact that, owing to this alteration of the original draft of the Act of 1881, the landlord is in a position to go on exacting the same old rack rent until the tedious action of the Court has compelled that reduction which he ought, in justice and in equity, to give without the action of the Court. The landlord is, practically speaking, in this position. He knows that the Court cannot hope, within any reasonable time, to reach the vast amount of cases which are before them for adjudication and decision. He sees that it has taken the Court 18 months to decide on 22,000 cases out of 500,000 holdings which came within the scope of the Act; and those of them who desire to extract the last penny of rent, and to stand upon their strict legal rights, can say to themselves with every confidence—" As far as this Act is concerned we are in a position to continue to demand our rack rent for many years to come." If, on the other hand, the alteration that this Bill suggests were carried into law, it would undoubtedly lead to many settlements out of Court; because, if the landlord were told and knew that the rent would take effect at the date of the application, he would have no inducement to maintain resistance and hostility to the manifest designs of the Legislature. Take the provision which I admit to be of a minor character to the one I have just explained—the power of the Court to suspend proceedings for ejectment, or for recovery of rent, where the tenant has applied to the Court to fix a fair rent, and where the tenant pays the Poor Law valuation of his holding. I may as well say at the outset that the suggestion which is made in the Bill to meet the particular difficulty in question is one of many which have been made. I do not wish to assert that it is absolutely the best one; but there can be no doubt that something should be done in order to prevent the landlords from ejecting and selling out the interests of their tenants for inability to pay the rack rents which were in many cases demanded. This evil was foreseen under the Arrears Act, and a provision was inserted in it giving the Court power, any way making it obligatory on the Court, to suspend proceedings for ejectment and for recovery of rent whenever the tenant had applied under that Act for its benefits; and the result was that many tenants were saved from the loss of their interests and from ejectment, and are now in possession of their holdings, the Court having decided that they were unable to pay the rent demanded by the landlords, and having granted the year's rent to the landlord required by the provisions of the Act. And what we ask is, that since that provision has been found to work so well in the case of the Arrears Act, that some provision of a similar character should be extended to the tenants throughout Ireland generally, who are anxious to obtain the benefits of the Land Act, but who are precluded in many cases from hoping to experience those benefits owing to the very tardy action of the Court, a tardiness of action which I do not deny arises from the inherent necessities of the case. It is not reasonable that the Legislature, on the one hand, should say to the Irish tenant, " We desire to protect you from rack rent, and to fix a fair rent for you;" and, on the other hand, should permit the landlord, before a fair rent was fixed, to sell out the interest of the tenant in his holding, and effectually to deprive him of the benefits of the Act. I do not say the provision contained in the clause of the Bill I am now explaining is the best one. You might provide, for instance, that the Courts should fix the general average of rent in the different counties for different descriptions of holdings—a general average of rent to be paid by the tenants pending the decisions of the Court. I think such a course as that would be perfectly easy to adopt. Anyone who has had experience of the letting value of land in different counties of Ireland would be able, by comparison between the rentals and Poor Law valuation, to approximate nearly the rent that ought to be paid. I do not say that they could fix, with the accuracy that the Land Act requires, what the fair rent should be; but they could do it approximately to meet the justice and necessities of the case. They would be able to say what the extreme rent should be that a tenant ought to pay to save himself from eviction. I now come to what is really the kernel of the Bill—the provision upon which, without exaggeration, it may be said the hopes of the Irish tenants are centred for the future. I allude to those parts of the Act which define the nature of the improvements for which the tenant can claim exemption from rent, the conditions under which he can claim the exemption, and the general tendency of the Act in protecting the tenant from rent upon his improvements. If there was one thing more settled in the opinion of this House than another, it was that, after the passing of the Act of 1881, the improvements of the tenant were to be his own, and they were to be protected from the infliction of rent, and were to be held to be his and his children's afterwards. But, unfortunately, the Irish tenant, in respect of this most valuable provision of the Act of 1881, has learnt to his cost that the landlords of Ireland have found a way to drive a coach and six through it. There can be no doubt that the result of the judgment in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath" has been completely and effectually to destroy the interest of the tenant outside Ulster in his improvements, and I am told by those who understand the law that the judgment in "Adams *v.* Dunseath" does not affect the Ulster tenant right custom. I do not know how far that may be true; but I cannot but think that the fact that that judgment has been given has had an effect upon the Sub-Commission Courts in the administration of the Act in Ulster, just as it has had a marked effect on the administration of the Act in the other Provinces of Ireland. I do not intend to go into any analyzation of the judgment in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath." I will leave it to my hon. and learned Friends from Ireland, who are better qualified to deal with questions of law than I am; but I think I am right in saying that the effect of that judgment was to put it in the power of the landlord, in a great variety of cases —in the case of almost every tenant applying under the Act—to call upon the Court to give him rent upon the improvements of the tenant, or of his predecessor in title; and also to introduce a definition of the term "improvements" which has been most injurious to the tenant, and wholly calculated to affect the outlay of the tenant on his land for the future. My Bill proposes, taking up the question of tenants' improvements, first, an alteration in the definition of the term "improvements." It proposes to define improvements as any work or agricultural operation executed on the holding which adds to the letting value, or in any respect added to its letting value. Then it goes on to declare that on the fixing by the Court of a fair rent, the letting value resulting from such belong to the tenants. We contend that our definition of the term "improvements" is the true one — namely, that the landlord should not be entitled to claim rent with respect to the increased value of a holding from the improvements of the tenant. But the Court, in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath," gave very different interpretations of the term "improvements." The Lord Chancellor said it meant suitable or ameliorating works on the holding, and rent made payable in respect to such works themselves; but the increased letting value of the land subsequently accruing to the land in consequence may be taken into account, so as to entitle the landlord to increased value in rent. Sir Edward Sullivan, Master of the Rolls, said the term "improvements" in the Act of 1881 does not refer to the increased letting value of the holding caused by making improvements, but simply the works that have caused the increase in the interest of the tenants who made them, as declared by the Acts of 1870 and 1881. Chief Baron Pallas said the improvements within the contemplation of the Act of 1881 mean works suitable to the holding, and adding to its letting value, and that the enjoyment and improvements before 1870 cannot be excluded in determining a fair rent. The fact is that, practically speaking, a tenant who borrows from the Board of Works, under the clause of the Act of 1881, to improve his holding, has no benefit whatever from his labours—in fact, he is rather a loser by 1½ per cent. He borrows money from the Board of Works at 6½ per cent, repaying principal and interest in 25 years; and he is entitled to claim benefit from his improvements only to the extent of 5 per cent on account of such money borrowed. Suppose he borrows to the extent of £100, in order to improve his holding, he will have to pay to the Board of Works £6 10*s.* per annum for the loan. He meant to increase the letting value of his holding by £20 a-year by the expenditure of this sum of £100. The landlord or he applies to the Court to fix a fair rent for the holding. The Court, under the judgment in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath," will be obliged to give to the landlord £15 a-year as extra rent upon the improvements effected by the tenant by means of this expenditure. The tenant will only have £5 a-year of benefit for those improvements, and at the same time he will have to pay £6 10*s.* a-year for 25 years to the Board of Works. This is a matter of the most urgent practical importance. I suppose in no country in the world are works of agricultural improvement so much required as they are in many parts of Ireland; but the tenants will not expend their labour, intellect, and intelligence in making those improvements if they are to receive no benefit whatever from them. As I have shown, the tenants proposed to be brought into the Bill are a large and important class. Well, I now come to the question of the limitations which have been placed on the tenant's right to his improvements by the judgment of the Court in "Adams *v.* Dunseath." The Court, in respect of improvements which were excluded before the passing of the Act of 1870, declared that they would be inclined to take into consideration the length of time during which such tenant had enjoyed his improvements, and would hold that the tenant had been compensated for those improvements by the length of his enjoyment of them. Now, if there was one thing clearer than another during the discussions on the Act of 1881, it was that the length of time during which the tenant had enjoyed his improvements was not to be held as compensation to the tenant for those improvements in the fixing of fair rent. On the 9th of August, 1881, after the first return of the Land Act from the Lords to the Commons, during the consideration of the Lords' Amendment agreed to by the Government, providing that the landlord's objection to the successor of a tenant, after the sale of his interest, should be conclusive in the case of a holding where the improvements had been made and maintained by the landlord, I moved a Proviso that the Lords' Amendment should only take effect where

> "the landlord, in the opinion of the Court, had not been compensated for such improvements made by him by increased rent or otherwise."

This Amendment was objected to—and, I admit, reasonably so—by the Prime Minister, in the following words:—

> "I am obliged to decline the proposed addition of the words of the hon. Member for the City of Cork on this ground. In the Act of 1870 we did, in respect of the tenant, recognize the principle that he might be compensated by reasonable lapse of time in respect of improvements he had made, and that the use and profit of those improvements for a certain time might be considered as compensation; but we do not recognize that principle in the present Act. None of the enactments of the present Bill are founded on that principle; and, not acknowledging it as respects the tenant, I do not think it would be quite equitable in our view that we should acknowledge it as respects the landlord."

And, further on, the right hon. Gentleman added—

> "But the main ground on which I should stand is, that we do not introduce that principle of compensation by engagement for a certain length of time, either as regards landlord or tenant. It is much better, I think, that those who make improvements should have the whole benefit of the improvements."—(3 *Hansard*, [264] 1393-4.)

Well, now, that is precisely what we claim for the tenants of Ireland; and I wish to point out that the statement of the Prime Minister was made before the unfortunate alteration in the Healy Clause, which allowed the Conservative majority of the Appeal Court in Dublin to drive a coach and six through the Act. It was on the 9th of August the Prime Minister made this speech from which I have quoted an extract; it was on the 10th that this most unfortunate Amendment was moved by the hon. Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing) and agreed to by the Government. The clause as it left this House was as follows:—

> "No rent shall be made payable in any proceedings under this Act in respect of any improvements made or executed by the tenant or his predecessors in title."

And the fatal Amendment of the hon. Member for Orkney was to the following effect:—"For which the tenant or his predecessors in title shall not have been paid or compensated by the landlord or his predecessors in title." This addition was the result of a compromise between this House and the Upper House, and by it the Bill was to be saved. All I can say is that it was a most unfortunate Amendment, and that it would have been much better if the Bill had been lost altogether for that Session rather than that a compromise should have been adopted of such a fatal and damaging character—a compromise giving rise to the absolute necessity for renewed and continual agitation on the part of the Irish tenants who have not been admitted to participate in the Act—an agitation which is bound to go on and increase until this most fatal addition has been expunged from the Statute Book

As a further proof of the wish of the Prime Minister, that the length of time during which the tenant had enjoyed his improvements should not be held as compensation within the meaning of the Act, I wish to point out that on the Amendment moved by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), that—

> "The Court shall take into consideration the time during which such tenant may have enjoyed the advantage of such improvements."

The Prime Minister said—

> "The doctrine accepted at the time of the Land Act of 1870, and which he certainly declined to accept the night before, was the doctrine that the enjoyment by the tenant for a certain time of his own improvements might have reimbursed him for the cost of those improvements, and by a natural process they passed over to the landlord. But that was not the basis upon which they proceeded now, and there was no occasion for it. The tenant's improvements were the tenant's own property, and he would not admit the principle that the time during which he had enjoyed those improvements was any reason for their passing away from him."—(*Ibid.* 1489.)

The House divided, and there was a majority of 130 against the Amendment of the right hon. Baronet, and in favour of the principle that the time during which the tenant had enjoyed the improvements should not be taken into consideration or held as compensation. Another provision of the Bill relates to the presumption in favour of the tenants as regards the making of improvements. It is notorious that in Ireland most, if not absolutely all, of the improvements on the agricultural holdings have been effected by the tenants. [" No! "] There is a celebrated speech by the late Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright), in which he described, in most eloquent terms, the state the land of Ireland would present if it was stripped of all the improvements made by the tenants; but, as the expression "prairie value" occurs in that speech, and lest I may hurt the susceptibilities of certain hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House above the Gangway (the Conservative) by repeating it, I will avoid all reference to it. It is an absolute fact known to everyone acquainted with the circumstances of tenant-holding in Ireland—it is a matter of notoriety that the vast proportion of improvements, from time to time, in holdings still in occupation of tenants have been effected by tenants themselves. Consequently, the Act of 1870 had provided that for the limited period of 10 years previous to the passing of the Act it should be presumed that the improvements had been effected by the tenants. It is proposed by the present Bill that this presumption shall be extended still further back than for 10 years. I and those who think with me propose, of course, that there shal be no limitation whatever, and that all improvements whatsoever shall be presumed to have been effected by the tenant. It may, however, possibly be that when the Bill gets into Committee some hon. Members will think that there ought to be some limitation of time; but that is a matter which had better be discussed when the Bill reaches the Committee stage. I can only say, speaking for myself, and wishing, as I do, for an immediate settlement of this Land Question, I would be ready to give away as much as possible of what I consider to be the tenants' rights in order to attain a permanent and speedy settlement. That some amendment is required of the Act of 1870 as regards the period during which the presumption of the authorship of improvements is to be held in favour of the tenant is unquestionable, and is a matter of which you cannot for a single moment lose sight. The inclusion of the leaseholders in the class of tenants who are to come within the provisions of the Act is, perhaps, one of the most important features of the Bill. The leaseholders who are at present excluded from the operation of the Act are 100,000 in number, and they occupy between 3,000,000 and 4,000,000 of acres of the best agricultural land of Ireland. The landlord party certainly did a very good stroke of business for themselves, when they persuaded the Prime Minister that it would not be desirable that a clause should be introduced into the Land Act giving the benefit of the Act to the flower of the Irish tenants, as they were called.

Mr. GIBSON observed that the Irish leasehold tenants were included in the original Bill.

Mr. PARNELL: It might have been in the original Bill; I do not for a moment dispute it; but I have no doubt, that were it not for the eloquence of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) and his

Friends, the Prime Minister would have seen which way the equity of the case lay. Now, by this good stroke of business the landlord party have practically saved for themselves at least half of the land in area which is subject to agricultural tenure in Ireland—I do not refer to grazing land—they certainly saved from the operation of the Act the best portion of the land so held, and they saved for themselves the most rack-rented farms in the country. ["No, no!"] It is a matter of notoriety that the tenants who have paid the highest rents are tenants on whom leases have been forced. The clause inserted in the Act of 1881 to meet the grievances of this class has proved entirely nugatory. Out of the 1,500 applications made to break leases there have been only 105 broken; and we have the authority of Judge O'Hagan and the other Judges that some amendment of this section is necessary in order to carry out even the limited intentions of Parliament in regard to this class of leaseholders, and that as the clause stands it is impossible to administer the Act in such a way as would carry out the intentions of the Legislature. Well, now, Sir, I hope that in the interval of two years that have elapsed since this Act was passed the public opinion of this country has advanced, as the public opinion of Ireland has advanced, in favour of affording leaseholders the protection of the Land Act, and that the House will be willing to take a considerable step in advance of the Act of 1881, and that the House will now not only amend the section so as to carry out the then intentions of Parliament, but will provide that every leaseholder should be entitled to apply for the protection of the Court for the purpose of fixing a fair rent, leaving intact the other covenants and provisions of the lease under which he held. That is a matter of simple justice. It is a question on which I have no doubt very strong feelings will be excited in the breasts of the Conservative Party, as their interests are involved in it; but I venture to think that this House will not long continue to tolerate a system of force and beggary which many of the landlords are inflicting on their tenants who have the misfortune to be leaseholders. They are the most respectable class of tenants, and until the bad times came on a few years ago they were the most solvent. I do not for a moment mean to assert that all the Irish landlords are pursuing this course; because the Marquess of Waterford and many other of the large landowners have freely conceded to their leaseholding tenants the advantages which their other tenants have obtained as a matter of right under the provisions of the Act. It is only the smaller and poorer classes of landowners who have absolutely refused to allow their leaseholding tenants to avail themselves of these advantages. Whether you go directly to the question as we propose, or bridge round it by some other way, it is absolutely necessary, for the good order, peace, and tranquillity of Ireland, that some attention should be paid to this most important class of sufferers by the Irish land system. The last provision in the Bill refers to the extension of the Purchase Clauses. We propose that the Purchase Clauses should be amended, so as to enable the Land Commission to advance the whole of the tenant's purchase money; and, secondly, that in the case of tenants under £30 yearly valuation, the Land Commission shall have power to spread the payments over 53 years instead of 35 years. I do not advance this method of dealing with the Purchase Clauses as absolutely perfect. I should be glad if the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. W. H. Smith) were to propound the system which he has in process of incubation. I have no doubt it would be a much better one than ours. But it would be most desirable, for the interests of a certain class of landlords—landlords who are now being compelled by their mortgagees to sell, and whose estates will be sacrificed to land jobbers, unless proper facilities, extending at lease to the advance of the whole purchase money, are provided—it is most desirable in their interest that some early step in the direction of amending these Purchase Clauses should be taken by this House. It is most desirable that what happened after the Famine of 1847-8 should not now be repeated. If you had had suitable Purchase Clauses in those days, it never would have been necessary for you to have brought in the Act of 1881, and a very large proportion of the land of Ireland would have been transferred to the occupying tenantry on fair terms—on terms much fairer to the landlords than those which they obtained from the land jobbers who purchased their holdings—and we would now have a class of peasant proprietors who would be a credit to the country, and be no source of dissension or trouble to the peace of Ireland. However, the advantage which was then presented was not taken, and the land of the country passed into the hands of a set of land speculators and land jobbers. Something of a similar kind, though on a much smaller scale, is now going on. Many estates are in the Landed Estates Court and must be sold. The tenants are unable to purchase, because they cannot pay the one-fourth required; and the result will be, instead of the present encumbered landlords, you will have a new class of landlords set up, who will combine all the worst features of the old landlords, without any of the redeeming features of the attachment to their tenantry which were doubly possessed by them. I trust the House will not consider we are too pressing in asking them to look over the the Act of 1881. After such a short interval I cannot think we are. It is useless for the Government to live in a fool's paradise, and to shout out that the Irish Land Question is settled for ever. The Irish Land Question is not settled, and I feel convinced that it can never be settled until the chief provisions of the Bill which I now propose have been made the law of the land. Until the tenants' improvements are protected beyond yea or nay—until he is certain that the labour and capital which he invested in the soil will be his, and that no legal quibble and no exertions on the part of long-robed gentlemen, whether they sit on the Bench or occupy the humbler position of advocates for the landlords, will be able to deprive them of the result of that labour and toil—you will not have the Irish Land Question settled. The Government cannot suppose that a question of such enormous intricacy can be hoped to be settled by a single enactment. Many of the provisions of the Act of 1881 were, undoubtedly, of an experimental character. Very much, as I have shown, has depended upon the unforeseen interpretation of the Courts in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath." The time of the House, in my judgment, could not be better devoted than in attempting to settle this great Irish Question. I should exceedingly regret if the present time of comparative tranquillity—a tranquillity, doubtless, brought about by the stern operation of your Coercion Act, and not from any willingness or ability on the part of the tenants to pay the rack rents which the Courts are fixing—should be lost. While Ireland is tranquil let this House show that it desires to attend to her just wants and requirements. We have an unanswerable case for the revision of the Improvements Clauses of this Act. Let it not be said hereafter that because Ireland is quiet therefore you will do nothing more. You cannot continue always to govern that country by means of a Coercion Act; and I venture to think it is quite as much in the interest of the Irish landlords to take advantage of the present time of tranquillity to help in permanently settling this question, as it is in the interest of the Government and of every class in that country. I beg, Sir, to move the second reading of this Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

Mr. CHAPLIN, in moving that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, that it was not until the last moment, when he found that no other Amendment was brought forward, that he placed his Notice on the Paper. The hon. Member for the City of Cork, in the opening of his speech, promised to bring forward unanswerable arguments in favour of the measure which he proposed. These arguments consisted mainly in the alleged failure of the Land Act, especially with regard to the number of voluntary agreements that had been made, and to the length of time that had elapsed, and must continue to elapse, before fair rents were fixed in a great majority of cases, and also by the decision in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath," by which the tenant, in a great majority of cases, was not thoroughly secured in his improvements. He did not intend to defend the Land Act of 1881, for in the discussions which took place in the House upon that Act he pointed out that it must inevitably fail in certain points, which were some of those now adduced by the hon. Member. But, whatever the failure of the Act had been or might be, he could not join the hon. Member in his declaration that, in the main, the tenant was not sufficiently secured in his improvements. On the contrary, he should say, if the Act had to be amended, that some consideration should be extended by the House to the landlords for the gross and cruel injustice inflicted upon them at the present time. With regard to the Bill submitted by the hon. Member, it seemed to him that it might be as properly opposed on the ground of the inexpediency of the re-opening of the Irish Land Question at the present time, in the direction proposed, as on the merits of the Bill itself. With regard to the provisions of the Bill itself, he was bound to say that they appeared to him to be of so extreme a character that, with the exception of Clauses 11 and 12, which related to the purchase of their holdings by the tenants, he doubted very much whether any of them were even entitled to any consideration at all. He had read the Bill of the hon. Member as carefully as he could; but he was still at a loss to describe any principle that it contained, unless it was this—to transfer at one swoop to the occupiers everything of any value which had been left to the owners of the land by the previous measures of the present Administration in Ireland. Whether that were its principle or not, that process was, at all events, accomplished by a series of clauses which he would endeavour very briefly to describe. In the first place, judicial rents—or, as the hon. Member called them, rack rents—were, in future, to obtain not from the date when they were fixed, but from the date when they had been applied for —a very considerable distinction, and extending, it might be, over a good many years. Secondly, all legal proceedings whatever for the recovery of the rent actually due were suspended altogether until that very indefinite period might happen to arrive that fair rents should be fixed. Thirdly, he found that where town parks and pastoral holdings were exempted from the Act of 1881, they were brought under the operation of the Bill which was now before the House. Fourthly, the Bill provided that at the close of a statutory term the rent was not to be raised beyond its previous amount, excepting on conditions which practically came to this—that the unearned increment of the land in future would belong to the tenant. He objected altogether to this novel proposition. It appeared to him to be a monstrous proposition, and a monstrous invasion of the rights of property, which had hitherto been held sacred in that House; and he was glad to be able to fortify himself by the views of a learned Member on this question which, he was sure, would commend themselves to the opinion of the House. He said that too much philosophy had been talked about land, and that the theories with regard to the unearned increment of land were so unjust and so absolutely philosophical, that they did not require refutation. He was content to believe that a man's right to land depended upon the same right that secured to him his coat upon his back—namely, that he had paid for it. He entirely subscribed to that opinion, which was expressed by Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State, who now presided over the affairs of the Home Office. Fifthly, it appeared that leaseholders, who were expressly excluded from the Act, were to be brought under its operation, so far as the fixing of fair rent was concerned, and the hon. Member for the City of Cork based his proposition on the ground of simple justice to the tenantry of Ireland. On that point he would say nothing, for he was able to quote the views of the present Prime Minister, who, so short a time ago as the 26th of April, 1882, said, with regard to the leaseholders—

> "At any rate, the question of altering rents under leases was very distinctly considered, and the Government very distinctly gave their judgment that they would not be warranted in asking the House to interfere with the covenanting leases in regard to land."—(3 *Hansard*, [268] 1492.)

That was the language of the Prime Minister, and after his unqualified expression of opinion he would say no more on the subject. So far he had dealt with what he called the minor provisions of the Bill, and no one could deny that they were sufficiently important in themselves. They involved great changes. They re-opened questions of magnitude which they were led to believe had been finally settled and disposed of at the time of the passing of the Act, and came so late as last Session, and they marked an entirely new line of departure from the professions of the hon. Gentlemen opposite with regard to some of the chief principles of that measure. But, important as they were, they were literally nothing as compared with some other provisions of the Bill—namely, those which related to, and dealt with, the questions of improvements when effected by the tenant or his predecessors in title. He would point out very briefly what they were. In the first place, improvements were defined as meaning any work or agricultural operation which had been executed, or any labour or capital expended which added to the letting value of a holding. Having so defined them, the Bill made it obligatory on the tenant—first, to ascertain if any improvements had been made by himself or his predecessor in title; and, secondly, to estimate the increased letting value to the holding arising from such improvements. It then proceeded further to enact that the whole of this value was the absolute property of the tenant, and that no rent at all, under any circumstances whatever, was to be paid, or payable, on account of this value, unless the tenant had been paid for his improvements, or otherwise compensated for them. And now he must ask the attention of the House to two points in particular which seemed to him to be, perhaps, the most artful, and at the same time most vital, provisions in the whole Bill. And the first of them related to this question—What was and what was not to be considered as compensation for improvements under the clauses of the Bill? In Section 2, Clause 5 provided—

> "The use and enjoyment by the tenant or his predecessors in title of any improvements executed wholly or partly by him or them, or the forbearance of the landlord to charge an increased rent in respect thereof, or to evict the tenant or his predecessors in title from the holding, shall not of itself, in the absence of an express contract on the subject, be deemed a compensation for such improvements within the meaning of the said Act or of this Act."

A contract, it should be remembered, which would require, where a predecessor in title meant a predecessor in occupancy, to extend over a period, for anything they knew, going back to the time of the Flood. Well, that was the first of those very remarkable provisions, and the other was not very different from it, for it enacted that—

> "On any application to fix the fair rent of a holding, and for the purpose of all proceedings under the said Act and this Act, all improvements on such holding shall, until the contrary is proved, be deemed to have been made by the tenant or his predecessor in title."

Which, again, in the case of a predecessor in occupancy, would require the production of records not less ancient than the contracts required by the section to which he had just referred. With regard to those two provisions, he had only this to say—that they appeared to him to have been devised for the single object of preventing the landlord, by any possibility, from showing that the only two conditions upon which the increased letting value from improvements could ever be considered to belong to him had ever been fulfilled. He was afraid that the simple upshot of the measure, stripped of all its disguises and specious pleas, came to this:—It was an attempt to take away the entire property which belonged to one class in Ireland at the present moment, and to transfer it to another class, without making the smallest compensation to the class from whom it was taken. The real effect, then, of the clauses dealing with improvements came to this—that unless the landlord was able to show, since the time when the land was first reclaimed and brought into cultivation from its native wildness, either that the improvements had been made by himself, or that, if made by the tenant, he had been compensated for them under an express contract for that purpose, all that would remain to the landlords—that was, to the present owners of estates in Ireland—would be just exactly what the soil was worth—and not 1*s*. more, as far as he could see—when the dry land first appeared after the subsidence of the Deluge and of the waters of the Flood in Ireland. He had now endeavoured, very briefly, to describe the general effect and purport of that measure, and the House, he was certain, would not be surprised at his opposition to it. But there were other considerations quite apart from the merits of the Bill which ought to weigh—and which, as he believed, would weigh—with the judgment of the House of Commons. Was there anyone sitting on either side of the House, except a Member of the Irish Party, who would be bold enough to say that, in the interests of peace and tranquillity in Ireland, this was a right or desirable moment to re-open legislation with regard to Irish land? He should shrink from such a course himself, even in the interests of his brother landlords at the present time, much and deeply as he sympathized with the gross, cruel, and unparalleled injustice under which they now laboured. Was there to be no finality in their dealings with that question? Was it for ever to be on the political *tapis* whenever a Liberal Government was in power? Was the value of that kind of property for ever to be depreciated? Was capital for ever to be banished from the country? And were landlords from now till the crack of doom, if Liberal majorities prevailed, to be annually harassed and hampered by these pilfering and plundering proposals in regard to that particular description of property in Ireland? Above all, he would ask—Were the tenantry and people of that country to be for ever tempted and debauched by the poison of the bait they were dangling now before them—that if they only recommenced their agitations, and committed murders and outrages enough, the day was rapidly approaching when they would reach the utmost summit of their aims, and would gain the land which they at present occupied for absolutely nothing from those to whom the land in truth and in justice and in reality belonged? All kinds of rumours had for days been in the air; but he put them one and all entirely aside. He had no right to assume—and God forbid that he should wrong him!—that the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government was about to make concessions to the employers and supporters of outrage-mongers in that country. And yet, when he remembered the surprises and startling incidents they had witnessed in past Sessions, the right hon. Gentleman must forgive him for reminding him and for re-assuring his political associates and himself by quoting the recent opinions of some of his Colleagues in the Cabinet on that subject. He had read, he must say, with unbounded satisfaction the opinions of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, when he stated, about two months ago, that the Irish problem was not one which could be settled by a stroke of brilliant legislation, but that, on the contrary, it was, in the main, a question only of administration—the firm and patient administration—both of the ordinary and the extraordinary law now existing, and that Ireland required some interval from exciting legislation, and, if possible, of needful rest. There were few people who knew Ireland who would not agree with those sentiments of the noble Marquess, who enjoyed, moreover, the advantage of having himself been Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant; and still more heartily would they endorse the language of another Member of the Cabinet—the Earl of Derby—its latest addition, who said, not two months ago—

> "One thing I trust the Cabinet will do; I hope they will abstain from encouraging proposals for large and fresh measures of legislation in regard to Irish land. I do not, of course, speak of petty amendments of detail, which may be necessary when unexpected difficulties crop up; but we cannot have the relations of owners and occupiers altered every year. Finality is as much the interest of one as of the other."

He submitted that they were not mere matters of detail that were dealt with by this Bill. They were questions of enormous magnitude and immense importance, involving neither more nor less than a social revolution in regard to the ownership and occupation of land in Ireland. The Act of 1881, passed by the present Prime Minister, was an enormous advance upon the legislation of 1870; but he made bold to say that this Bill of the hon. Member for the City of Cork was a vastly greater advance upon the measure of two years ago. That being so, he respectfully commended to the consideration of the Prime Minister the warnings of his Colleagues which he had just quoted. One word more, and only one, and he had done. He came into Parliament just at the time when the Irish policy of the present Prime Minister was begun; and it was his fortune and privilege then to hear the last speech ever made by one of the foremost and greatest among English statesmen, in which he foreshadowed and foresaw the results of a policy which he dreaded at the time. He was a man who had spent a lifetime in the service of his country and his Queen; and, while he reminded his audience of the age to which he had attained, his words, as far as one could recollect them, were as follows:—

> "My official life," he said, "is entirely closed; my political life is nearly so; and, in the course of nature, my natural life cannot now be long. That natural life commenced with suppression—the bloody suppression—of a formidable rebellion in Ireland, which immediately preceded

the union of the two countries. And God grant we may not witness a renewal of the one and a dissolution of the other."

That was the language of the late Earl of Derby, and he believed it was the last speech he had ever made. It was because he (Mr. Chaplin) thought that they had for years been steadily approaching nearer and nearer to that catastrophe which the late Earl of Derby dreaded and foresaw, under the ill-omened guidance of the right hon. Gentleman now at the head of the Government, that he hoped that the Prime Minister would that afternoon speak in language clear and unmistakable in Ireland, and that he had taken upon himself to move, as he now did, that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. T. A. DICKSON said, the hon. Member (Mr. Chaplin), in moving the rejection of the Bill, stated that a disagreeable task had fallen to his lot. He (Mr. Dickson) could not help feeling that the hon. Member found it very congenial to his taste. The Irish Members did not come before the House now to ask the House to venture on any fresh schemes of legislation. They came before the House to ask that the admitted defects of the Land Act of 1881 might be remedied. They were defects which never would have found their way into the Act at all had the opinions of, and the Amendments moved by, the Irish Members received the attention that they ought to have done from the Government. No Member of the House appreciated more than he did the labours of the Prime Minister in passing the Land Act of 1881; and, whilst he had never hesitated to admit its defects and to criticize its administration when necessary, he had always maintained—and he always should maintain—that the Land Act was one of the greatest blessings that was ever conferred upon Ireland. From the first part of the speech delivered by the hon. Member (Mr. Parnell), he was inclined to think that the hon. Member agreed with him in describing the Act as a very beneficial measure. He should vote for the second reading of the Bill if it went to a division, because, although he did not agree with the measure in all its details, it contained the resolutions and amendments adopted by the Conference of the Tenant-Right Association of Ulster at the meeting in Belfast last January, and which resolutions and amendments had been embodied in a Bill introduced to the House by the senior Member for the County of Monaghan (Mr. Givan), who, he regretted, could not be in his place that day. That Bill was down for second reading, and it contained the four great points advocated by the Ulster Tenant-Right Association, which he could read to the House. The first was that the payment of the judicial rent should commence at the date of the originating notice; the second, that no rent should be charged on tenants' improvements; the third, that leaseholds should be brought within the scope of the Land Act; and the fourth, that there should be a fair extension of the Purchase Clauses. The justness and fairness of the first resolution could not possibly be denied. Irish Members had spent many weary nights in the House over this question of the Land Bill, and the Prime Minister too. He would ask whether it was ever intended that the benefits of the Land Act, passed to give immediate relief to the tenants, should be delayed for years in reaching them? And, knowing the defects of the Land Act immediately after it was passed, and seeing that the benefits of the measure were not going to reach the tenants for some years, he asked leave last year to introduce to the House a Bill proposing that Griffith's valuation should be accepted as a fair rent pending the settlement of a fair rent. But he was sorry to say that he was never allowed even to introduce that Bill into the House; but had he been allowed to do so, and had the Bill become law, he thought it would have been not only to the advantage of the tenant, but very much more to the advantage of the landlord. The House should remember that the Land Act came into operation in October, 1881, and in a very few weeks thousands of applications to fix a fair rent poured into the Courts. From the county of Tyrone alone no less than 6,000 cases were entered; but after one year's operation only 1,000 had been decided, leaving 5,000 remaining cases, in which the tenants would not know the decision for one, two, three, or even four years. During the whole of the intervening time they were bound to pay, as the hon. Member (Mr. Parnell) had put it, the old rack rents under which, in the past, they had been hopelessly crushed. Would the House believe that of the 1,000 cases that had been decided during the first year of the operation of this Act they were all entered in one week? The Official Returns before the House showed that the cases decided were only those entered between October 24th and November 1st, 1881, and yet what did they hear? He had heard a noble Lord (Lord Carlingford), who was a Member of the Government, trying to appease angry noble Lords in "another place," respecting the reductions of rents now going on in Ireland, by saying that the worst of the cases were now over, and that the reductions were becoming less and less. He thought such statements were most mischievous. They were calculated to do a very serious injury to the cause of the tenants whose cases were now before the Court. Was it possible for anyone to say that the worst cases were over, when already in one county alone the cases entered in the first year of the operation of the Land Act were not yet heard? The cases decided—those of the tenants who entered during the first year—were the cases of tenants who had money in their pockets, and who were able to pay the preliminary costs. They were tenants in an independent position. But the cases of the poorer tenants who came under the Arrears Act, and who were only now escaping eviction, were not yet entered. It was, therefore, misleading and unfair to say that the worst cases were over. He hoped the Prime Minister would admit the fairness of this Amendment—that the judicial rent should commence from the date of the application when the decisions were arrived at. He gave the hon. Member for the City of Cork a second Amendment—that no rent should be charged on tenants' improvements. There was no doubt that it was accepted when the Act was passed that tenants' improvements would be free from rent; but, unhappily, this Act had not been so construed in the interests of the tenants, and hence the discontent and dissatisfaction now prevalent in every part of Ireland. He regretted very much the abolition of what was known as the "Healy Clause;" and, for his own part, he very much regretted that the hon. Member for Wexford was not able to be in his place to take part in the present discussion. He assured the House that the demands of the farmers of Ulster, in connection with this clause, did not go one iota beyond the statements of the Prime Minister. He had read the speech to dozens of meetings of Ulster farmers, and the universal response had always been that they wanted no more, and that they asked for no more, than that their own improvements should be absolutely free from rent. It appeared neither unfair nor unreasonable to ask the House and the Government to accept this vital Amendment, so as to put the question entirely beyond legal arguments and legal quibbles; for out of the ambiguity of these clauses, as they all knew, and out of the Land Act, the lawyers of Ireland had reaped a handsome harvest. No doubt, the grossest exaggerations were prevalent in this country as to the reductions of rent in Ireland. One of the leading journals—he believed *The Daily Telegraph*—had asked, What more was the Cabinet to do to please the Irish people? They had already wiped off millions of arrears and reduced millions of rents. The property of the tenants had increased in value, while that of the landlords had become depreciated. Could there be anything more exaggerated or more misleading? What was the fact? Except in one or two districts of Ulster, the value of the tenancy, instead of being increased, had declined 50 per cent; and in many counties of Ireland, notwithstanding the operation of the Land Act, the tenant right to-day was entirely unsaleable. As to the reductions of rents, he asked hon. Gentlemen to look at the Blue Books. They would there see that three-fourths of the rents were derived from tenants' improvements during the last 20 years. In County Antrim there was one case in which rent was, in 1870, £130. In 1875 it was increased to £148, and then the Commissioners came and reduced it to £145, leaving the landlord still £15 a-year more than he had in 1870. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) talked about "pilfering and plundering." He wondered on which side "pilfering and plundering" was. He had no hesitation in saying that the increase in rents in Ireland, especially since 1860, consisted of a confiscation and a robbery of the tenants' improvements, and that the "pilfering and plundering" had not been all on one side, but very much more on the other. In one case in County Armagh the rents in 1865 were £242 ; they were increased by 1881 to £304; the judicial rent was £224. In another, in County Donegal, the rent 20 years ago was £108 ; in 1881 it was £199; the judicial rent had been fixed at £154. In the third case, in County Tyrone, the rents 20 years ago were £294 ; they were increased to £455; the judicial rent was £350. He quoted these figures to prove that the reductions made in three-fourths of the cases were of increases during the last 20 years, and he considered that these figures amply justified the Land Act of 1881. Hon. Members opposite, and noble Lords in "another place," had expressed their horror at the idea of reducing the rents to Griffith's valuation, especially in Ulster. But what was Griffith's valuation? There was nothing on which more misconception prevailed. Sir Richard Griffith, in his evidence before a Select Committee of the House in 1869, said that the improvement of the Land in Ulster had been so great that the valuators had taken a very high view of it; and he added—

> "This was mainly owing to the improvements in agriculture and to the industry of the people."

Another gentleman, now a Land Commissioner, Mr. Vernon, in his evidence before the same Committee, said that in Ulster, Griffith's valuation approached closer to the intrinsic value of the land than in other parts of Ireland. Griffith's valuation, in many cases, included the tenants' improvements. The property of the tenants was not adequately protected by the Act as it now stood, and there was a good case for the amendment of the Act. It was impossible any longer to leave out the leaseholders from the scope of the Act, and they were a class of men who deserved every sympathy and the protection of the Act. He agreed with every word that had been said by the hon. Member for the City of Cork, that the leaseholders were the most thrifty and the most loyal and the most industrious of all the classes in Ireland; and, besides that, they were men who had a stake in the county, and an interest in its peace and prosperity. The proposal made by himself was that all the covenants of leases should stand, except that the Land Court should be at liberty to revise the rent in any case in which it was shown to be oppressive. He only wished the landowners of Ireland, in their own interest as well as that of their land, would follow the example set by some of the just owners, and allow the tenants to surrender their leases, as the father of the hon. Member for the County Armagh had done. That gentleman found the leaseholders were suffering so much that they were unable to cultivate the land properly, and in his own interest he allowed them to go into Court. As to the Purchase Clauses of the Act, that was a subject which would be more properly debated upon the Motion of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton). He recognized that there were many difficulties in the way of Irish Members coming to ask for an amendment of the Land Act. They would be told that Irish questions occupied almost all the time of the House. No one regretted that more than he did; but he asked the House to look back upon this fact—what legislation was granted between 1874 and 1881? Not one sensible Act, except the Land Act, was passed in all those nine years; and when they were told that, during the last two or three Sessions, Irish Business had occupied an immense amount of time, Irish Members ought to take that fact into consideration. He knew well the contempt that some Irish Members opposite had for remedial legislation and remedial measures; but as an Irish Member, having at heart the very best interests of Ireland, he asked the Government not to turn a deaf ear to their modest demands. Remedial legislation ought to go step by step with a firm administration of the law; and he hoped the Prime Minister would hold out a hope that some of the Amendments which had been suggested would be accepted and dealt with by Parliament.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I was very desirous, considering the nature of this Bill, and considering, I must also say, certain declarations contained in the speech of the Mover of the Bill, to follow his speech at once; but the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lincolnshire had given Notice of a Motion to reject the Bill, with which Notice I could not interfere, and, of course, it gave him precedence. When he had spoken, I felt that there was too great advantage in our hearing the speech of my hon. Friend who has just spoken for me to intervene; because, in truth, the Members of this House who took an interest in the Land Act may be divided into three classes—two of whom I may consider as opponents of the Act in the main, and the other as friends and supporters of the Act. The opponents of the Act, consisting both of Irish Members and Members sitting for other constituencies, were represented by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lincolnshire—I mean those opponents of the Act who opposed it in principle, and who, I believe, still continue to look upon it as a measure of confiscation, although we regard it alike as a measure of justice and necessity. But there was another class of opponents of the Act, with regard to whom I am not quite sure to what extent I should be justified in considering the hon. Member for the City of Cork to be among them. But, undoubtedly, some hon. Members among those sitting on the Benches where he sits, and who act in usual concurrence with him on political questions, are in that class Both these classes were, in a special and conflicting sense, opponents of the Act; but my hon. Friend behind me (Mr. Dickson) represents a large body—a portion of them Irish Members, a portion of them coming from Ulster, and a large portion from other parts of Ireland, including the South-West, who are not opponents, but supporters, of the Act, and with regard to whom—whatever proposals may be made—I feel perfectly certain that they are made in entire conformity with the principles on which they acted and the professions they advanced during the time we were engaged in the discussion of the Act. It is, therefore, with pain that I find myself in any case differing from them; because it is to them undoubtedly, more than to any other persons, that we were indebted for having been enabled by their aid, by the intelligent and active support we received from them at the most vital moment, to place upon the Statute Book a most difficult and a most important measure. I see in the House at this moment my hon. Friend the Member for the County Cork (Mr. Shaw), and many others whom I have in my eye in this declaration. To them especially, though not to them exclusively, but, on the contrary, to all those who are interested in the welfare of Ireland and in the questions raised by the Land Act, whether they regard that Act with friendly or hostile eyes—to all of them it is due that Her Majesty's Government should promptly and at once, and in intelligent terms, declare the course they intend to take, not only with regard to this measure, but to any other measure which has been or may be proposed during the present Session of Parliament with respect to the Irish Land Act. There is one important point of the speech of the hon. Member for the City of Cork, not directly connected with the Bill, which I wish to notice. He spoke of the very limited operation, as he conceived it to be, of the Land Act at the present time. I think, Sir, that the House ought not to form any estimate of the extent of that operation upon the basis described by the hon. Member. In my opinion, the operation of that Act is very far larger than appears to be supposed by the hon. Member. A part of it is visible and palpable; a part of it is contentious. The part of it which is not contentious is formal; but there is much of the operation of the Act which is wholly withdrawn from public view; and without taking that into account we cannot qualify ourselves to give an answer to the question—"How far has the Land Act, as is stands, met the purposes for which it was enacted; and how far is it a matter of urgent importance that further consideration should be given to the question?" The state of the case is most inadequately viewed through the figures that at once meet the eye. About 90,000 contentious cases, I think, have been entered before the Courts, of which 30,000 had been settled at the close of the month of January, and 60,000 remained to be disposed of. The settlement of the contentious cases was going forward at about the rate of 2,350 a-month; and another description of settlement by voluntary agreement — an equally formal mode of settlement, clothed, as it is, with public authority—was also going forward at the rate of 3,250 a-month. That rate of 5,600 agreements per month represents a progress which is large—very large—when you consider it as the result of a great number of judicial inquiries and judicial settlements; but which I submit to be small as compared with the total number of Irish tenantry coming within the scope of the Act. Let me comment, then, briefly upon these figures, and show how inadequate they are. You must not only look at the rate at which decisions are being arrived at; you must look at the increase in that rate. Obviously the task of the Sub-Commissioners became greatly easier as they proceeded, and that can be exhibited in a striking view by the very few figures which I will state to the House. From October 28, 1881—that is, from the commencement of the Act—to December 24, 1881, the average number of decisions per day was no more than 14—that is to say, of decisions upon fair rents fixed. From January 2, 1882, to April 1, 1882, the average number of decisions per day rose to 40. From April 17, 1882, to December 23, 1882, the number of decisions rose to an average per day of between 76 and 77. We have now got in operation the last improvements and additions to the system since the question of valuators was further considered; and from the middle of January to the end of February, 1883, the rate of decisions, which at the commencement of the Act was only 14 per day, has risen to 100 per day. That rate of 100 per day was more than 30,000 in the year. This represents a very great increase indeed; and what has taken place down to the present time justifies us in confidently expecting that by no undue haste, but with a perfect observance of all judicial and equitable principles, there will be a further increase of the rate, and that that large number will amount to a still larger sum. But in addition to this, the operation of the Land Act, out of the Land Court altogether, must be taken into view. Upon a very large scale, adjustments and reductions of rent have been made by landlords to the satisfaction of their tenants, without ever going near the Court at all, and those reductions, without doubt, may be set down to the operation of the Land Act, with hardly less justice than the reductions made in the Court itself by contentious proceedings, or the reductions which are fixed in the Court itself by voluntary agreement. But I should not be doing justice to the case, and certainly I should not express what has always been my own belief—most of all, I should not do justice to the landlords in Ireland—if I did not repeat on this occasion, what I have often stated in the House, that happily, in my own belief, there is a large portion of the tenants of Ireland who are perfectly satisfied with the equitable conduct of their landlords and with the rents they pay, and who practically neither have been, nor are likely to be, subjects for the intervention of the Court, direct or indirect, at any period. So that when we put together all these facts, I am not prepared to be content with asserting less than this—that, in the main, the scope of the Land Act, as it is now at work, is effecting the great purpose for which it was passed, and promises to deal with the vast majority of those cases of the tenantry and people of Ireland, for the sake of whom Parliament placed it on the Statute Book. The House will see that this is a very important consideration, with regard to the duty that may now be incumbent upon us, and which we have now to fulfil, in conjunction with our other duties, and with the means we possess of redeeming our engagements. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork has stated the provisions of his Bill with perfect clearness, and, I believe, with perfect fairness, and he has referred to certain declarations made, perhaps, by others, but certainly by me, at the time of the debates upon the Land Act, with regard to which declarations, I can only say that the words which he has quoted are a fair representation of the opinions that I expressed at the time, and of the opinions that I now entertain. I have no complaint to make in that respect. But I have now to consider very shortly what I must say upon the provisions of the Bill, and what I must say upon the speech with which the Bill was introduced. I am bound to say that we differ organically from the Bill as it stands. The Bill itself, as I look at it, amounts to a virtual re-construction of the Irish Land Act in its most important provisions. I will not say that any portion of an Act of that kind either is or can be abstractedly excluded from review. The complications of the subject, and the imperfection of human knowledge in such matters, must always leave it open to those who are so disposed to contend, and perhaps to prove, to some extent, that in this or that respect such a measure may be open to amendment. But I take the provisions of the hon. Member's Bill as they stand, and I am bound to say that they amount, as I have said, to a virtual reconstruction of the most important clauses of the Act of 1881. Nor does the hon. Gentleman, in his speech, at all attempt to disguise that fact, for he tells us plainly that the Land Question in Ireland is not settled. He invites us, by reading his Bill a second time, under cover of the speech, and with the illustration of the speech which has introduced it—he invites us to agree with him in the assertion that the Land Question of Ireland is not settled. But I said I must notice some words of his speech, apart from the provisions of his Bill, which I have described as a virtual reconstruction of the Land Act. In those provisions and in that virtual reconstruction it is impossible for us to concur. We have at no time since the passing of the Land Act used any word, or done any acts, which would justify, in any way, anyone in supposing that we were prepared to concur, or, so far as we are concerned, to allow any disturbance of its fundamental provisions. But the hon. Member had added words which, I confess, I heard with some degree of surprise from him, and with a great degree of pain; for he did not scruple to say that the Irish tenantry were unable to pay the rack rents which the Courts were imposing upon them. The hon. Gentleman is not in the habit of using words in this House which he has not well weighed. No man, as far as I can judge, is more successful than the hon. Member in doing that which it is commonly supposed that all speakers do, but which, in my opinion, few really do—and I do not include myself among those few—namely, in saying what he means to say. If the hon. Gentleman means to say that the rents which are now being fixed by the Court in Ireland in the honest administration of the Land Act—in the administration of the Land Act which has been sometimes, I think, though unsuccessfully, impugned from the quarter of the House in which the hon. Member sits, but which with regard to other quarters of the House is admitted to be an honest administration—if he says these rents are to be qualified as rack rents which the tenantry of Ireland are unable to pay, that declaration of itself, coming from a person in the position of the hon. Member for the City of Cork, and indicative probably of future policy, is of the nature of a most serious warning to those who occupy the place of responsible Ministers of the Crown, as to the language they are to hold, and as to the expectations which they are to encourage, with respect to the Land Act in Ireland. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) has quoted words used by the Earl of Derby, which appear to me to be very wise and just words. He drew a just distinction between amendments going to the root of the important provisions of the Land Act, and what he termed amendments of detail. On former occasions in this House, I have admitted that there were amendments of detail which might, in favourable circumstances, fairly claim the attention of Parliament. There was one point—not of very great urgency—which, in the course of the discussion of the Land Bill, was treated as a matter open to consideration, but a matter with which we were not able to deal satisfactorily at the time, and which might, on any convenient opportunity, be taken up. That was the question of the present state of the law with regard to what are termed town parks, and the question whether any part, and, if so, what portion of the provisions of the Land Act should be made applicable to that class of holding. There was a question touched upon to-day by my hon. Friend (Mr. Dickson) which I heard with a good deal of sympathy on general grounds—with regard to the date from which the judicial rent should run. That is a matter with respect to which, under favourable circumstances, we should have been glad to make a proposal, and as to which I do not hesitate to say it might have been made in perfect conformity both with the declaration and spirit of the Act. But even that question—which would fairly come under the distinction drawn by the Earl of Derby as a point of detail in contradistinction to a point of principle—even that question, I am bound to say, is immersed in serious difficulties by the provisions with which it is combined in the Bill of the hon. Gentleman. Again, with respect to leases, Her Majesty's Government have all along in these discussions adopted with decision the principle that they would not attempt to interfere with rents stipulated in leases, unless in certain special, strictly defined, and exceptional cases. I am inclined to admit there are certain cases with regard to which exceptions ought to be reconsidered—might be reconsidered with advantage—not in the least degree in the sense of departing from the principles and functions of the Act, but merely giving clearer and fuller effect to it. But it is quite obvious that that would not satisfy the object of the Bill now before us. The hon. Gentleman has, with perfect frankness and ingenuousness, told us that the Land Question in Ireland not only is not settled, but cannot be settled, unless the principal provisions of his Bill are passed into law. Among these unquestionably are the provisions with regard to the judicial reconsideration of rents payable under leases, just as much as the reconsideration of rents payable under yearly covenant or tenure, and the removal of the retrospective limits with respect to improvements. But neither of these propositions can Her Majesty's Government hold out an expectation of their finding themselves able to consider. They believe that the main work of the Land Act is being done. They do not deny—they cannot deny—that there may be, that there must be, cases of inequitable rents levied in certain cases under leases. But it is impossible, it is not within human power and wisdom, it is not within the scope of the work of the Legislature, to attempt to deal with all those cases individually. What we have to do is to attempt to strike an equitable balance between conflicting interests, to proceed upon principles of equity applied, as far as we can, with impartiality all round; and it would be idle, it would be charlatanage, on the part of any responsible Minister, to profess that he was able to devise a remedy, that he was able to recommend a remedy, in every case of possible unfairness or injustice that can be alleged. I think the reasons I have stated will show that we think it an essential part of our duty to make it clearly understood that we can give no encouragement, either on the ground of crime, as stated by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), or on any other ground, for entertaining hopes of the disturbance of the provisions of the Land Act contained in this Bill. And with respect to those ominous words of the hon. Gentleman, that the rents now being fixed by the Courts are to be regarded as rack rents, and that the people of Ireland are unable to pay them, I venture respectfully to differ from the hon. Gentleman, both upon the principle and upon the fact. I think it is rather hard that when Parliament has adopted a very strong and exceptional—although, in my opinion—a perfectly legitimate and justifiable—measure of appointing a public judicial authority to reconsider private contracts, the administration of that great function, the action of that judicial authority, should be struck at in its very root and principle by the declaration of a responsible popular Leader in Ireland, and that those whose absolute and solemn duty it is to do justice between landlord and tenant should be described in one sweeping sentence by that popular Leader, not as struggling to do their duty to the best of their ability, but as reproducing in a new form the old evils, and saddling upon the tenantry of Ireland rents which do not truly represent the interest of landlords and tenants in the value of the land. I also differ from the hon. Gentleman upon the fact. I do not believe that the state of Ireland at this moment, speaking generally, bears him out in the assertion that the tenantry of Ireland are unable to pay the rents which have been fixed, the rents which are being agreed upon, the rents which are likely to be fixed by the Court, and, in imitation of the Court, by voluntary agreement. But I go one step further, and say I not only do not believe they are unable to pay those rents, but I believe that they are not unwilling to pay them; that they are showing at this moment a laudable and general anxiety to fulfil the contracts into which they have entered, the provisions of those contracts being brought, in the peculiar circumstances of their case, within the limits of the powers they possess, and what may fairly be expected from them. I hope that the hon. Member for the City of Cork will, in one respect, not only firmly, but, perhaps, I may say indignantly, repudiate the imputation—if it were so intended—of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), and that he will give to him and the House an assurance—I am bound to say I should accept it with perfect credit—that that renewed crusade, which he may possibly be understood to announce to-day, will be conducted within the strict limits of legality and free discussion, and that no countenance will be given to those who may seek to disturb the peace of the country or to disobey the law of the land. I have already, I think, stated quite enough to warrant the conclusion of the Government, which hardly needs to be announced, that they can promise no support of the Bill of the hon. Gentleman, and cannot enter into an undertaking which would be entirely at variance with their positive declarations that they cannot assent to any proposals which would disturb the main provisions of the Land Act. But it may be said—"Do you intend to introduce any Bill with respect to matters of detail, such as those you have glanced at?" We do not intend to introduce any such Bill, and for two reasons, which, I think, will at once commend themselves sufficiently to the House. It is quite evident that, even if circumstances were otherwise favourable to such an undertaking, any proposal by the Government to alter in some unobjectionable manner the date from which the judicial rents should run, or deal with any other matter of that class in such a Bill, would be naturally fastened upon, possibly by opponents of the principle, but at any rate by those who, without opposing the principle, would endeavour to widen the narrow opening which it made, and to introduce into it every sort of important and organic change, going to effect a disturbance of the provisions of the Act. The need for such amendments of detail is, in my view, a secondary need; and I am not prepared to undertake to burden this House with an embarrassment such as that, in addition to its other embarrassments. In truth, Sir, it is our duty to consider not only what are the subjects it is desirable to deal with in this House, but, ere we give the slightest encouragement to any important proposal, to consider also what would be our means of giving effect to that proposal. I am bound to say, Sir, that I see no means by which we can, at this date, upon any matter of importance, add to the engagements we have already undertaken. It would be a delusion, I think, if we were to entertain or to cherish a hope of being able to add to those engagements. These are, in my opinion, very adequate reasons against our introducing any Bill ourselves with respect to those secondary questions of the Land Act; and it is quite obvious that it would be the very same thing if, instead of introducing such a Bill, we were to promise support to such a Bill of a secondary character in the hands of some other Member; because one knows what would happen. The Member would introduce his Bill. He would in vain struggle for an evening for the second reading; he would pass from one day to another without making any progress until, when the Session had made a considerable advancement, and he would have an irresistible case in the month of June for a demand upon our time, if we were committed to the substance of what he proposed. We should have to meet that demand exactly in the same way, whether we introduced the Bill ourselves, or whether we supported it in the hands of another Member. The House will feel that upon those secondary questions these practical and secondary reasons are quite sufficient. But with regard to the greater question, I need not do more than repeat that, although I am exceedingly sorry to have to meet such demands at this date, after such an Act as the Act of 1881, in regard to such a question as the Land Act of Ireland; though I am grieved that this amount of desire should exist on the part of a portion—perhaps a considerable portion—of the Irish Members for such a change; yet, looking at the interests of the Empire as a whole—looking especially at the interests of Ireland—looking at the sacrifices which we have demanded and exacted from certain classes in Ireland with reference to what we thought the demands of public justice required—it would be a violation of our duty were we now to give encouragement to a demand for new sacrifices, which we do not think, in the main, justice requires. While I am quite sure, as regards the people of Ireland, if it be true that, according to the judgment and the conscience of Parliament, we have done substantially that which is a just and real satisfaction to their demands, and made a fair and an equitable provision for their interests, we cannot be too clear in announcing to them that they will receive, from us at least, no encouragement to entertaining further schemes and further proposals of change, to which we are not prepared to give effect, and which we do not believe would be either for the honour or for the advantage of that country.

Mr. SEXTON said, that the Prime Minister had been pleased to compliment the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) on the rare faculty of being able to say exactly what he meant. He (Mr. Sexton) might, upon this occasion, return the compliment. It was a compliment that could not be always paid to the right hon. Gentleman; but, on the present occasion, he had left them in no doubt of his meaning. He had nothing to give them, and nothing to promise them; and they were perfectly satisfied with the nature of the position which he had taken up. And the right hon. Gentleman had not only said what he meant, but he had gained from a section of Members in the House, who did not usually admire him, the credit of being particularly eloquent. The Prime Minister might, perhaps, be pleased to hear that hon. Gentlemen on the Tory Benches were in raptures with his speech, and considered that he was never so eloquent in his life as he was to-day. The House would not expect him (Mr. Sexton) to pay much attention to the speech of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin). That hon. Gentleman was the evangelist of an obsolete creed; his view was that the land of the country, which was essential to the health of the people, should be allowed to be held under such conditions as pleased the landowners; but that theory could not find acceptance with responsible politicians; and landowners would have to understand that they held property subject to the rules of equity and the dictates of public interest. The assertion of the hon. Member that proposals with reference to Irish land were simply proposals to take it from one class and give it to others was one that had been made in that House ever since the first measure of agrarian reform was proposed, and by this time it was as dreary as a thrice-told tale vexing the ear of a drowsy man. The hon. Member's speech was an example of the axiom that a little knowledge was a dangerous thing. He certainly had very little knowledge of the Irish Land Question. His speech was full of those vague generalities, pathetic appeals, and declarations, which showed how far a little knowledge would go coupled with a large amount of self-appreciation. He (Mr. Sexton) declined to accept the accuracy of the statement of the Prime Minister, that the hon. Member for the City of Cork and his hon. Friends were opponents of the Land Act of 1882. They never took up a position in respect to that Act which entitled any person to accurately describe them as its opponents. That they were unwilling, considering the gravity and urgency of the interests at stake, to make themselves responsible for that Bill in the shape in which it left the House he admitted; but when once it became the law of the land their efforts had been—and he challenged contradiction — consistently and thoroughly governed by one spirit and one object, and that spirit was a regard for the public good, and that object was to endeavour to make the Act as effective for its purpose as possible. All their efforts in that House and elsewhere had been directed to the object of inducing the Government so to reform and make plenary the provisions of that Act as to make it an effective instrument for the amelioration of the condition of the people. The Prime Minister appeared to be conscious that no powerful argument on his side could be drawn from the operation of the Act. He had not only dwelt on the number of cases heard in Court, and on the number of agreements made outside, but he had also resorted to what he (Mr. Sexton) was bound to denounce as an illegitimate argument, for he had taken credit for what he called the unknown operation of the Act, which the knowledge of Members did not enable them to estimate. There were no agreements between landlords and tenants which were not registered in Court, and he declined to follow the right hon. Gentleman into the region of imagination. The right hon. Gentleman prided himself on the rate of speed attained by the Court; but the figures he cited described the experiment of the last month—the experiment of the double set of valuers—and did not furnish sufficient *data* for argument. If cases were being heard at the rate of 100 a day it was doubtful whether that was a matter for unqualified satisfaction, for in their eagerness to show a large tale of daily cases the Commissioners were said to be scurrying over the farms at breakneck speed, and declining to examine the improvements made by tenants. The right hon. Gentleman was never more egregiously in error than when he said that the large proportion of the tenants of Ireland were satisfied with their present position. If he had facts to justify that statement, why did he not give them to the House? Did he expect the House to rest satisfied upon that bare assumption? He maintained that there was nothing in any part of Ireland or in the current history of the country to enable the Prime Minister to declare that a large body, or even an appreciable body, of the tenants were satisfied with their position. Where, if anywhere, should content be looked for if not in Ulster, in the Province which gave the right hon. Gentleman followers like the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson), whom he complimented by contrasting them with other Irish Members. Yet the hon. Member for Tyrone would confirm him when he said that, at a meeting lately held in Belfast, attended by delegates from eight of the Ulster counties, constituting an assembly thoroughly representative of the opinions of the tenant farmers of Ulster, there was unanimous condemnation of the proceedings of the Land Commissioners, and unqualified discontent with the condition of the tenants. It was of no use speaking of the poor farmers of the South and West, who would be called disloyal and anti-English; but in the model Province, which alone sent the right hon. Gentleman any supporters, there was not even the smallest appreciable body of tenants who were satisfied with the working of the Land Act. The right hon. Gentleman referred in stern, and almost menacing tones to the statement of the hon. Member for the City of Cork, that the rents being fixed by the Land Courts were rack rents which tenants would be unable to pay. But was it not notorious that they were high above the level of Griffith's valuation? The Government appeared to be either ashamed or afraid to let the facts be known, for the last Returns that were available were for the month of August; and these showed that all over Ireland the rents were 15 per cent over Griffith's valuation, which was made 30 years ago, and then included all the improvements made by the tenants up to that date. Was the hon. Member for the City of Cork not, therefore, justified in saying that a rent which was 15 per cent above that was a rent which confiscated the tenants' improvements, and which was, therefore, deserving of being called a rack rent? If the Prime Minister would not believe the hon. Member for the City of Cork, perhaps he would believe one of his own Commissioners, Professor Baldwin, probably the only one of the nondescript and heterogeneous crowd of Sub-Commissioners who deserved a respectful hearing. Professor Baldwin had staked his reputation on the statement that the rents that were being fixed were such as the tenants would not be able to pay for a series of years. Let the Prime Minister, before he denounced the hon. Member for the City of Cork, show cause against Professor Baldwin. There were several reasons why this Bill should have commanded from the Government a different reception. In spite of the tone of the Prime Minister's speech, it was not a new proposal; it was a reproduction of the Bill brought forward last year by the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond.) There was an instructive contrast between the reception given to the Bill of to-day and the reception given to this identical Bill last year. Why did the Prime Minister hold out hope last year, and why did he deny it now? Last year outrages were being committed all over Ireland, and last year the Prime Minister had no stringent Coercion Act in his hand. He had simply the Bill of the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), which proved to be as complete a failure as a Bill as the right hon. Gentleman himself proved to be as a politician. Now, however, the case was different. Outrages had practically ceased in Ireland. The Prime Minister had an Act which practically placed in his hands all liberty of speech and action, and his speech that day pointed the sad and sinister moral that in seasons of quiet the people of Ireland were to expect nothing. In seasons when Ministers had no repressive measures in their hands they were ready enough to promise; but when a condition of tranquillity returned, and they had in their hands the engines of repression, they were ready enough to meet the Constitutional demands for reform with stern and even with menacing language. On behalf of this Bill there was such a union of Irish opinion as had not been behind any measure in that House for many years. It was the Bill of the whole body of the tenant farmers of Ireland, and of their Representatives in the House of Commons. Hon. Gentlemen from Ulster united with those below the Gangway on the Opposition side in demanding the main proposals of this measure; and it was idle for the Prime Minister to attempt, by equivocal compliments, to separate the Home Rulers from the Representatives of Ulster on this question. The Prime Minister had described this Bill as a virtual reconstruction of the Land Act. He denied the correctness of that description. He said it was nothing more than a logical and irresistable development and completion of the Land Act of 1881; and although the Prime Minister told the House that he could hold out no hope, he (Mr. Sexton) asserted that every clause of this Bill would one day become law. The reply they had received from the Prime Minister would have a healthy influence—it would teach the Irish people once again the lesson that their reliance must be not on the convenience of Ministers, nor on a sense of justice in that House, but on that quality of self-reliance in themselves which was the sole final force in politics, and that force would alone be strong enough to beat down the prejudices of Ministers and the hostility of classes. The Prime Minister had never before made a speech dealing with an argumentative subject in which he so obstinately forbore to approach the merits of the question. It was admitted that the subject of town parks was in a state of chaos. Not even the lawyers knew what a town park was. On the 6th of March last year the Prime Minister thought some legislation might be desirable on the question of town parks; but he did not seem to think so now. They were endeavouring by this Bill to obtain the admission of leaseholders within the pale of the Land Act, and it was impossible to exaggerate the importance of this point. The leaseholders of Ireland were considerably over 100,000 in number, and they held nearly half of the most valuable of the arable land of the country. Up to a few years ago they were the most solvent and best protected of the Irish tenantry; but now while the tenant-at-will, who a few years ago was the slave of the landlord, had the protection of the Land Act, the leaseholder found himself bound hand and foot in the ties of an oppressive covenant. There never was a more egregious fallacy than the idea that a leaseholder in Ireland had freedom of contract. Mr. Justice O'Hagan had made the significant statement that the Land Court had not broken a single lease which could not have been broken in a Court of Equity—in other words, that the Land Act had added nothing in the case of leaseholders to the previous state of the law. That being so, after the Act had been in operation a year and a half, they were told that the provisions which had proved so ineffectual did not require amendment, and that the leaseholders, suffering from higher rents than were imposed on tenants-at-will, were to be left outside the operation of the Act. So long as that continued, it was absurd for hon. Members to profess to believe that the Irish Land Question was settled. It was not settled, and it would not be settled until the claims of the leaseholders were satisfied. Let him remind the Prime Minister of what he had said on the subject last year. He said—

> "The question of the Lease Clauses was one of those I had in view, when I said that, at a certain time, the Government would think it right to state their intentions with respect to the various points of importance connected with the Land Act. These points are the Purchase Clauses, the Lease Clauses, and the clause with respect to labourers. I do not, however, think it would be of any advantage to make a statement on the subject until we see our way to the conclusion of the proceedings connected with the two Bills now before the House—namely, the Prevention of Crime Bill and the Bill dealing with Arrears of Rent."—(3 *Hansard*, [270] 1589.)

Those Bills were passed into law last year; and now, after the lapse of the greater part of a year, when a state of affairs had arisen that the Government had some control over the Business of the House, and the relief also by the delegation of part of the Business to Committees, the Prime Minister had practically falsified the pledge he gave by informing the House that he would not take any steps in the matter of the leaseholders. He would remind the House that the Bill brought in by the Irish Members last year contained certain clauses dealing with the question of arrears. The Government admitted that these clauses were well and carefully drawn, and they embodied these clauses in a Bill of their own. That Bill, in spite of the debilitating Amendments introduced in the House of Commons and the House of Lords, had contributed much to the tranquillity of Ireland. The Prime Minister, in his speech to-day, carefully avoided any reference to the judgment in "Adams *v.* Dunseath." He (Mr. Sexton) was not a lawyer any more than his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), and he did not profess to be able to state with more accuracy than the hon. Member for the City of Cork the effect of that judgment; but he could state it in a manner that the House would understand it. The effect, to his mind, was that if the tenant made improvements in the soil they were not to be regarded as his property, but only as giving a right to a certain percentage in respect to the money expended. The miserable position of the tenant was that if he borrowed £100 from the Board of Works for the purpose of improving his holding, he had to pay the Board interest at the rate of £6 10*s.* per annum, whereas the landlord only paid him £5 per annum. The skill, labour, and time of the tenant went all for nothing. The second disastrous result of that judgment was that in regard to improvements executed before the year 1870 usage would be held to compensate the tenant for improving the soil. That theory was obviously immoral, as was any theory which would take away from the tenant the capital he put into the soil in the shape of his time, his labour, and his skill; and no lapse of time, even until the crack of doom, could make the property of the tenant become the property of the landlord. They took their stand on that fundamental principle, and the provisions of the Bill brought in by the hon. Member for the City of Cork were intended to carry that principle into effect. If a tenant, by the expenditure of £100, should make the land worth £20 a-year more, that £20 should belong to him, and not to the landlord. Before he passed from the judgment in "Adams *v.* Dunseath," he would say of it, in the words of the Prime Minister, that it had virtually destroyed and pulverized the intentions of the framers of the Act. The present Lord Chancellor of Ireland, who was a Member of the Government when the Act was passed, ought to be a judge of that, and he had said so. He was Attorney General when the Bill was passing into law, and he ought to know the intentions of the Government in regard to this matter better than the six Judges who opposed him in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath." The Lord Chancellor held that a tenant should not be rented upon his improvements. The words of the Prime Minister on the 9th of August, 1881, had been quoted in the debate already; and he would take leave to quote the words of the Prime Minister in reply to a Question of the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy). He said it was perfectly clear, as had been correctly stated by the hon. Member, that it was not the intention of the framers of the Bill, but directly contrary to their intention, that the interest of the tenant in his improvements should ever lapse or be impaired by his enjoyment of them. What had the Prime Minister to say in his own defence? The Court of Appeal in Ireland, the six Judges of which were landlords themselves, had decided that after a tenant had enjoyed his improvements for a certain time the landlord might charge him rent upon them. They gave this decision against the vote of the Lord Chancellor, who was the only man with a knowledge of the intentions of the framers of the Act. Here there was a radical contradiction; and no reference by the Prime Minister to the state of Public Business, or the recency of the Land Act, could save him from the very serious charge of allowing the Court of Appeal to override his own declared intentions, and thus to render the Land Act useless for the purpose he himself declared it was brought in. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) had spoken of pilfering and plundering from the Irish landlords; but this showed them the stealthy and subtle process by which the tenants had been pilfered of their improvements in the soil. It was not merely pilfering and plundering, it was picking and stealing, the most disgraceful and complete system of petty larceny that ever existed on the face of the earth. ["Oh, oh!"] The hon. and gallant Member for Dublin County (Colonel King-Harman) might say "Oh, oh!" He was not astonished at that, for the hon. and gallant Member, not content with doubling the rents of his poor tenants on the mountain sides, inaugurated a new *régime* by charging them for the turf his ancestors had allowed them to cut free of charge.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: That is not true.

Mr. SEXTON: I did not catch the observation of the hon. and gallant Gentleman.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: The statement is absolutely untrue.

Mr. SEXTON: I speak from the authority of the Special Commissioner of *The Freeman's Journal.*

Colonel KING-HARMAN: Who was absolutely contradicted by me in *The Freeman's Journal* at the time.

Mr. SEXTON said, his recollection was that the letter of the hon. and gallant Gentleman was not an absolute contradiction. He endeavoured to show that the rate paid on the turf did not result in any profit to himself; but he did not deny that the rate had been imposed; and the fact was undeniable. Lord O'Hagan had admitted, in the case of the two tenants Dillon and Hanrahan in the West of Ireland, that he was obliged to lower the rents fixed by the Sub-Commission, in one case £4 a-year, and in the other £3 a-year, in consequence of the decision in the "Adams *v.* Dunseath" case. That was only one instance; but how many cases were there of the kind scattered all over Ireland in which the tenants would be robbed of their property? He passed from that part of the subject to say a few words on the Purchase Clauses. He should have thought the House, and all Parties in the House, would have been eager to carry out some such development of those clauses as would have been likely to render them effective; but it did not appear likely to prove so. It was certain that the clauses of the Act of 1881 dealing with this matter had proved a complete failure. He did not know how much money had been paid out now; but he found that the total sum advanced up to June, 1882, was £10. There were, no doubt, several causes which led to this failure. He believed that the unsatisfactory reductions made in the Land Court were one cause; but he also believed that as long as the tenants were obliged to advance one-fourth of the purchase money, so long would no appreciable advance be made in the question of purchase. The Prime Minister, some time ago, when challenged on this subject, said he was unwilling to make any proposal until the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) was disposed of. The proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster had hung fire. He had placed a very remarkable and formidable Notice on the Notice Paper of the House, setting forth the necessity of dealing with the question of purchase in Ireland. For one reason or another the right hon. Gentleman had, however, retired from the position he had taken up, and the Tory Party had done nothing on the subject, although that Party, in "another place," had lately made a very remarkable and significant declaration. He (Mr. Sexton) should have opined that now the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister would have been able to deal with the subject. The people of Ireland had lately passed through a period of very great misery, the state of things in some parts of the country amounting to famine, and many of the tenants had been reduced to a condition of absolute pennilessness. The result was that those who had the most need of purchasing and escaping from the grip of their landlords were exactly the men who, by the operation of the rack rents, had been deprived of all their money, and were absolutely unable to pay any part of the purchase money. That being the case, the proposal of Irish Members was that the whole of the purchase money should be advanced to such tenants, at the discretion of the Land Commission; and it could be trusted to exercise that discretion wisely, and with a view to provide that the security should be ample. But it was impossible to do anything in the matter so long as the law made it necessary for the tenant to advance any portion of the purchase money. However, in spite of the action of the Tory Party, in spite of the declaration of the Prime Minister last year, in spite of the unanimity with which both Parties in the State recognized that something was required to be done on this question, in spite of the agreement of Lords and Commons, Whigs and Tories, Irishmen and Englishmen, the Prime Minister on this question maintained the some obstinate and chilling silence as he had observed on other parts of the subject. The right hon. Gentleman had a strong Coercion Act in his hand and a tranquil Ireland; but still he thought it consistent with his duty to turn a deaf ear to their arguments. The Irish people, however, thrown back upon the resources of the national intelligence, would be able to advance such constant and persistent appeals as would, at no very distant date, make every clause of the Bill the law of the land. They had been told, in reply to appeals for Irish legislation, that the relative importance of the various measures before the House must be considered. He (Mr. Sexton) said that no legislation required for England—a rich and prosperous country—could possibly be as urgent as the legislation required in the interests of the fortunes and of the very lives of the people of a poor and struggling country like Ireland. As long as there remained in any part of the Queen's Dominions large bodies of men who were not sure from day to day of a home, or even of the means of maintaining life, so long would measures of primary necessity and absolute urgency occupy the attention of the House, and no other measures required by the English people could equal them in importance. The demands put forward in this Bill, extravagant as they might seem, were the least that could be made, and every day Parliament delayed to meet the requirements of the case increased the difficulty of the final settlement—a difficulty which would be felt by landlords as well as by tenants. Landlords who would be driven by the Land Courts to sell their estates would presently have to appeal, *ad misericordiam*, to their tenants, and ask them to buy. Unless some arrangement were made to assist purchases, the condition of these landlords would be grievous and miserable indeed. It was in the ultimate interest of the landlord, as well as of the tenant, that the present proposal was made; and he deeply regretted the unsympathetic and, as he thought, unstatesmanlike attitude assumed by the Prime Minister on the question. He foresaw that much difficulty and confusion would arise in the country in consequence of the right hon. Gentleman's refusal to consider the Bill. If the right hon. Gentleman had made a considerate and encouraging reply, promising that this year or next year he would give adequate consideration to the question, he would have taken a course which would have been more consistent with the dignity of Parliament, and more conducive to the economy of public time.

MR. BRYCE wished to state, on behalf of some of the independent supporters of the Government, that while their feeling was one of sympathy with the difficulties in which the Government found themselves, it was also one of regret that the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government had not found it possible to say something more encouraging, not only to those Members from whom the Bill proceeded, but to those Members who were bringing in an Ulster Bill. The Bill before the House was undoubtedly open to the objection that it was almost a reconstruction of the Act of 1881; but while he would not go so far as to say that those who sat on the Liberal side of the House below the Gangway were prepared to support all, or very nearly all, the proposals of the Bill, still there were in it some extremely valuable provisions, and particularly those which also found a place in the Bill of the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson). There were three points of the utmost consequence dealt with in these Bills—the question of leases, the date at which the judicial rent should begin, and the question of improvements. The question of leases did not stand on the same footing in Ireland as in England or Scotland; for the same principles, the same moral, equitable, and historical considerations which led the House to pass the Act of 1881, were applicable in the cases of Irish leaseholders. The right of the tenant to his own improvements had been fully admitted by the Prime Minister when the Act of 1881 was being passed; and it was obviously right and just that the judicial rent should date from the time at which, but for difficulties not attributable to the fault of the tenant, his application ought to have been entertained. It was true that English constituencies were anxious for English legislation; but nothing was so important as that the work of 1881 should be brought to its proper completion. Parliament was in the position of persons who had built a great ship and fitted it up for a distant voyage. When the ship started it was found that she leaked, or that the machinery failed to work properly. The fact that the ship was so valuable, and the profit expected from her voyage so great, furnished an excellent reason for stopping at the first port and repairing these defects. In addition to this circumstance, great consideration must always be due to the complaints of hon. Members from Ulster, that portion of Ireland which had always been attached to the English connection, and where law and order had not been endangered during the late crisis. He regretted the doctrine that nothing was to be done for Ireland until she had remained for some time quiet and peaceful. We were bound to look upon the three countries as one united nation, and to pay the greatest attention to that part of the nation which most needed it. From that point of view Irish questions had still the first claim on our attention. England would not suffer in the long run. She had suffered in the past from neglecting Irish questions. It was a reflection, so often repeated as to have become a truism, that concessions and benefits to Ireland invariably came too late, and that if they had come in time they would have had infinitely more good effect. He submitted that they should not give occasion again for the repetition of that reflection; and he ventured to express a hope that in spite of the difficulties which the Prime Minister had stated, and others which they must be prepared to encounter, the questions raised in the Bill would be taken up and dealt with either in the present Session, or, at latest, in the next.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down had expressed regret at the manner in which Her Majesty's Government had determined to overlook the claims of that portion of the United Kingdom called Ireland. He (Mr. O'Donnell) looked at the matter in a somewhat different light, and he was glad that the Premier had cast aside the mask, and that to-day Her Majesty's Government had furnished the Irish Party with indubitable and irrefutable proof that the policy of that Party would have to be much firmer in order to obtain proper influence over the counsels of the rulers of the British Empire. He was also glad to see that the Government had treated with marked contempt and neglect Ulster and the other portions of Ireland. The English Government long played the part of patron of Ulster in order to thwart the national claims of Ireland; and he was glad to see now that the English Government were ready even to sacrifice Ulster to British prejudice and British caprice. He ought to remind the Liberal Representatives of Ulster that he had always warned them that if they severed themselves from their brethren of the South they would be left in the lurch. He thought it was a very fortunate thing for the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland that he would not require to woo the suffrages of the electors of Londonderry for some time to come; and he thought that even the placard of "Vote for Porter and fair rents" would fail to induce these canny Northerners to renew their confidence in the Attorney General and a Liberal Ministry. For a long time past, while approving the spirit in which Irish agitation had been carried on, he (Mr. O'Donnell) had not failed to lay stress on the necessity of widening and strengthening the national agitation; and he was quite sure what had taken place that day would brace up the nerves and sinews, and rouse up the energies of the Irish people throughout the world to a much more resolute, systematic, and effective maintenance of Irish national rights. He congratulated the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) that he would be able to present himself before the representatives of the Irish race in America with such a report of that day's deliberations that would be most dear and welcome to the representatives of their race in all parts of the United States. The Government had taken a new departure. He conjured his countrymen to take a new departure also. What the Prime Minister had said on the occasion of the Bill brought in last year by the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond) was now given to the winds. It was now a case of the Irish nation against all who might choose to challenge its right; and if that nation was only true to itself, to-day would be the beginning of the decisive victory of their demands.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir Farrer Herschell) said, he wished to correct one or two misrepresentations which had been made by the hon. Member who had just sat down, and also by hon. Gentlemen sitting near him. The hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) represented that the opposition to this Bill by the Prime Minister was a new departure. Anyone would suppose from language of that description that the Prime Minister, when a Bill similar to this was introduced last year, had welcomed its introduction, and expressed his approval of its provisions. The contrary was the fact. When a Bill similar to this was introduced last year, the Prime Minister said he could not support it, and that he felt bound to oppose it. That Bill contained two matters independent of the Tenure Clauses, which the Prime Minister thought were matters that might be separately dealt with—the question of arrears and the Purchase Clauses; but the right hon. Gentleman expressly excepted these two matters from the general provisions of the Bill, saying that while they might properly be dealt with without disturbing the Act of 1881 he could not support the other clauses. He had said—

> "While considering that the Tenure Clauses of the Bill ought not to be disturbed at the present time, there were matters outside them in respect of which the objection does not hold."

The hon. Member opposite had said that the Bill was opposed because Ireland was not in a disturbed state. Why, at that time last year when his right hon. Friend opposed the Bill, and pointed only to two matters having reference to arrears and purchase which he made exceptional, crime in Ireland was at its maximum. As to the Bill before the House, what were its main principles? It was, in effect a complete revolution of the provisions of the Act of 1881. He might claim to know something of that Act, as he was present during the whole of the discussion that took place upon it; and he said that the Bill was deliberately brought forward for the purpose of reopening matters which were settled by the Land Act, and to completely revolutionize the character of that settlement. Why was it that that House was induced to pass the Land Act? It was because they believed that as between landlord and tenant, under the existing law, injustice was being done to the tenant. He was not going into the question as to whether they were right or wrong in that; but he would say that they would do an absolute injustice and wrong to the landlord by giving to the tenant that which he could never properly claim as his. It was said that the tenant improved the land, and that the landlord raised the rent upon those improvements and confiscated them. But the question was, What were the improvements which belonged to the tenant? In that Bill they were seeking to declare that that was the property of the tenant which could not in any sense be called his. The proposition that a law, however unjust in itself, should be passed in order to satisfy the tenantry of Ireland or the Representatives of Ireland, was one that he hoped would never be admitted for a moment in that House. What were the main substantial provisions of this Bill? There were four sections of it that must be read together in order to see what the real drift of the Bill was. Those were the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th sections. The 4th proposed to define as an improvement every act of agriculture which improved the letting value of the land. Every increase of letting value resulting from an improvement so defined was all to be the property of the tenant. That was the next provision. In Clause 6 they were to presume that, from a time indefinitely back, every improvement made had been done by the tenant or his predecessors in title. And, in the last place, they were to include as a man's predecessors in title any man who, with title or not, had before him occupied the land. They had heard about the prairie value. Hon. Members opposite had contended that all the landlord was entitled to was the prairie value, and this was a Bill for depriving him of anything but the prairie value. It proposed that prairie value should be the test of fair rent, and that anything beyond that should be the property of the tenant in occupation of the land. Would any hon. Member say that was a provision to be accepted as a necessary, just, and righteous provision? It was said, supposing money was spent upon a tenancy which increased the letting value, then that increase was necessarily the property of the tenant, which they should compensate him for as his improvement. He denied that proposition. The Court of Appeal in Ireland had, not by a majority, but unanimously, held that that was not the true view. The Court of Appeal had not held that which the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had represented. They had not held that if a tenant borrowed £100 to improve his holding, he should be allowed only 5 per cent interest upon his improvements. They had never said anything of the kind; it would be ridiculous if they had. But suppose a tenant spent £100 upon his land, and by reason of its improvable character—which was part of the value of the land—made it worth £20 a-year more, that was not all to be regarded as the property of the tenant, because it was not all produced either by his money, his industry, or his skill; it resulted from that which was the property of the landlord—the improvable character of the land itself. Suppose two tenants spent each £100 upon his tenancy, and applied equal skill and energy to the work. In the case of the one the £100 so invested made the land worth £20 more; but in the case of the other it enhanced the value only by £5. What made the difference? Simply the inherent qualities in the land. That gave the extra value, and these no more belonged to the tenant than the land itself. Therefore, the judgment in "Adams *v.* Dunseath" on that point was perfectly correct. He maintained that the provision in Clause 5 was not only opposed to the decision in that case, but was manifestly unjust. They must take this scheme as a whole, and, taking it in that way, it came to nothing but this—that everything beyond prairie value would be deemed, unless the contrary was proved, to be the property of the tenant, and on the basis of that alone ought fair rent to be fixed. It was said that the decision in "Adams *v.* Dunseath" had seriously affected the interest of the tenant. He believed, on the contrary, that, as regards this point, the effect had been but small. The hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) said—"Why not go on and complete the Land Act?" If this were only a Bill for amending imperfect details in that measure, there would be something to say for it; but there was something a great deal vaster in it than amending the details of the Act of 1881—it would be making a vital, substantial, and enormous change. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had urged that the landlords ought to hold their property according to the judgments of equity. Yes; but so ought the tenants; and they must hold the balance fair and straight between them. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) declared that the Land Court even now was fixing rack rents. He would remind the hon. Member that someone or other must, between different parties, be left to judge. It was quite impossible to leave the tenants to fix their own rents. No doubt, the probability—nay, the certainty—was that the rents which had been fixed had not all been exactly what they should be; but that was inevitable in any tribunal. But how was this matter ever to be dealt with if the hon. Member for the City of Cork was thus to seek to discredit every tribunal that was striving fairly to act between all parties? Suppose this Bill were passed to-morrow, the hon. Member might say exactly the same thing still. He (the Solicitor General) supposed he proposed to go on saying it until rents were reduced to nothing at all, and then, probably, he would admit they were not too high. In spite of anything that hon. Members below the Gangway might say, he believed that the present Government had given sufficient proof, during the last two or three Sessions, of their earnestness of purpose to give to the Irish agricultural tenant everything that might in fairness be deemed his due; and he protested against the notion that on every occasion on which the Government did not see its way to adopt views put before them by hon. Members opposite, they were to be told that the House was hostile to Irish interests and Irish ideas, and was determined to give no satisfaction to the Irish people. But beyond granting the just demands of the Irish tenants it was impossible for the Government to go; and, indeed, no Government with any respect for themselves could yield to the demands which had been put forward on behalf of the Irish agriculturists. The Prime Minister had resisted this Bill also on the ground that it involved details raising points of enormous difficulty, which could not be considered at the present moment without interfering with much-needed and long-deferred legislation for England and Scotland; and, for his own part, he saw no reason why the attention of Parliament should be entirely occupied in legislating for one portion of the United Kingdom, to the exclusion of the other and larger portion.

MR. SHAW said, he thought that those who had opposed this Bill had greatly exaggerated its scope—to talk about its depriving the owners of any but the prairie value of their land was absurd. For his own part, he would not support the Bill if he thought it revolutionized the measure of 1881; but the fact was that it dealt with two or three points which all men of practical knowledge in Ireland agreed ought to be dealt with. To his mind, there could be no more suitable time than the present for dealing with the question raised by the Bill, for if there were defects in the Land Act they ought to be remedied at once. The one class in Ireland which should endeavour more than any other to hasten a final settlement of this question was the landlord class. The hon. Member who introduced the Bill made a menace, somewhat unwisely, of renewed agitation in Ireland, and thus marred a moderate and useful speech. But who provoked agitation? Decidedly the parties who set themselves resolutely to oppose anything like reform. Nevertheless, the hon. Member had made out a very good case for the amendment of the Act, and had put forward a very moderate proposal with the view of remedying its defects. Many things which hon. Gentlemen had said in the course of this discussion they would never have thought of saying if they were merely sitting round a Committee table. But it was astonishing what an amount of folly a man would talk when he was on his legs. In the opinion of the Prime Minister, the present Bill merely proposed to amend the Act on points of detail; but the fact was that those points of detail involved considerations of great importance. He (Mr. Shaw) confessed that, although he should vote for the second reading, he was not in love with the Bill as it was drawn up; and if it went into Committee, he should propose several Amendments, and probably one on the question of tenants' improvements. He fully admitted the difficulties that existed in the way of measuring the respective interests of the landlords and the tenants where there was a joint ownership of the land; but he believed that this measure would carry out the spirit of the declarations of the Prime Minister, that tenants' improvements were in no case to be made the subject of rent. In reference to the decision in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath," there could be no doubt that it had considerably disturbed the tenants of Ireland, and shaken their confidence in the Act. So far as he could learn, the interpretation which, in that case, had been put upon the Act was against the opinions of many Members of the House who had supported the Act. The tenant farmers of Ireland had no desire whatever to appropriate the property of their landlords; indeed, he had been struck by the fairness of the view which had been taken of this subject by the former. He suggested that the present Bill should be divided into two parts, and that that portion of it which related to tenure should be submitted to a strong Committee, on which both the landlords and the tenants should be represented. If this were done, and legislation were to be based upon the Report of such a Committee, the tenant farmers of Ireland would learn that no further agitation on their part would be successful. He hoped that the right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) had by this time matured his proposals with regard to the Purchase Clauses of the Act. There was nothing that the Treasury liked so little as paying money out. Yet he was sure that no money could be more wisely advanced than that which was advanced to Ireland. There was no money which had been spent in Ireland that had not come back again. ["Oh!"] He repeated that all the money lent to Ireland had come back to this country. There ought to be an independent body to whom the working out of that clause should be intrusted. He hoped that the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) would have an opportunity for bringing on his Motion, and that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster would soon be able to enunciate his scheme. Upon the purchase question there was a practical unanimity of opinion in all Parties, which even extended to the noble Lords in "another place." Although he did not think that peasant proprietorship would solve the Irish Land Question, still it would do great good, especially in the West of Ireland, and would be of immense service to the small and heavily-encumbered landowners. He certainly did not accept the doctrine of wholesale emigration. If money were laid out properly, and the resources of the country thoroughly developed, Ireland could maintain a much larger population than she did at present.

Mr. S. SMITH said, that to his mind some of the defects of the Land Act which had been clearly pointed out deserved the serious consideration of the House. A point which struck those who had not a minute acquaintance with the Irish Land Law was the very hard case in which the leaseholders were placed. He admitted that it was a very difficult thing to interfere with leases; but, considering that these leases had been entered into in Ireland before the Land Act had been passed, he thought it was a hard case that these 100,000 leaseholders should be deprived of all advantage from the recent land legislation, passed for the benefit of the whole country. It seemed to him a great pity that this cause of soreness should remain to fester in that country, and be the means of fostering agitation. He also considered that a case had been made out for stating the judicial rent from the date of the application to the Court. It did seem hard to him that these tenants, who were simply suffering from the law's delay, should be deprived, perhaps for three or four years, of the benefit of the Act.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 63; Noes 250: Majority 187.

AYES.

Arnold, A.
Barclay, J. W.
Biggar, J. G.
Blake, J. A.
Bright, J. (Manchester)
Broadhurst, H.
Byrne, G. M.
Callan, P.
Campbell, Sir G.
Carbutt, E. H.
Collins, E.
Commins, A.
Corbet, W. J.
Cowen, J.
Daly, J.
Dawson, C.
Dickson, T. A.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Edwards, P.
Gabbett, D. F.
Gray, E. D.
Henry, M.
Holden, I.
Illingworth, A.
Kenny, M. J.
Kinnear, J.
Labouchere, H.
Lalor, R.
Lea, T.
Leahy, J.
Leamy, E.
Macfarlane, D. H.
M'Carthy, J.
M'Coan, J. C.
M'Kenna, Sir J. N.
Martin, P.
Marum, E. M.
Molloy, B. C.
Morley, A.
Morley, J.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Donnell, F. H.
O'Donoghue, The
O'Gorman Mahon, Col. The
O'Shea, W. H.
O'Sullivan, W. H.
Parnell, C. S.
Peddie, J. D.
Power, J. O'C.
Richardson, J. N.
Russell, C.
Sexton, T.
Shaw, W.
Smithwick, J. F.
Storey, S.
Sullivan, T. D.
Synan, E. J.
Taylor, P. A.
Thomasson, J. P.
Thompson, T. C.
Williams, S. C. E.

TELLERS.
O'Connor, A.
Power, R.

NOES.

Acland, C. T. D.
Agnew, W.
Ainsworth, D.
Alexander, Colonel C.
Allen, H. G.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Armitstead, G.
Ashley, hon. E. M.
Aylmer, J. E. F.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Balfour, Sir G.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Balfour, J. S.
Baring, Viscount
Barnes, A.
Barran, J.
Bateson, Sir T.
Baxter, rt. hon. W. E.
Beach, rt. hon. Sir M. H.
Beaumont, W. B.
Biddulph, M.
Blackburne, Col. J. I.
Blennerhassett, Sir R.
Boord, T. W.
Brand, H. R.
Brassey, H. A.
Brassey, Sir T.
Brinton, J.
Broadley, W. H. H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brown, A. H.
Bruce, rt. hon. Lord C.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burrell, Sir W. W.
Buszard, M. C.
Butt, C. P.
Buxton, F. W.
Cameron, C.
Cameron, D.
Campbell, J. A.
Campbell, Lord C.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Cartwright, W. C.
Causton, R. K.
Cavendish, Lord E.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Cheetham, J. F.
Christie, W. L.
Churchill, Lord R.
Clive, Col. hon. G. W.
Coddington, W.
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Corry, J. P.
Cotes, C. C.
Courtney, L. H.
Cowper, hon. H. F.
Creyke, R.
Crichton, Viscount
Cropper, J.
Cross, J. K.
Cross, rt. hon. Sir R. A.
Cubitt, rt. hon. G.
Davenport, W. B.
Davies, W.
Dawnay, hon. G. C.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Digby, Col. hon. E.
Dodds, J.
Dodson, rt. hon. J. G.
Donaldson-Hudson, C.
Duff, R. W.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Eaton, H. W.
Ecroyd, W. F.
Egerton, hon. A. F.
Egerton, Admiral hon. F.
Emlyn, Viscount
Evans, T. W.
Ewart, W.
Ewing, A. O.
Fairbairn, Sir A.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Feilden, Major-General R. J.
Fellowes, W. H.
Fenwick-Bisset, M.
Ferguson, R.
Ffolkes, Sir W. H. B.
Filmer, Sir E.
Finch, G. H.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Flower, C.
Foljambe, F. J. S.
Forester, C. T. W.
Forster, rt. hon. W. E.
Forster, Sir C.
Fowler, W.
Fry, L.
Fry, T.
Gibson, rt. hon. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gladstone, W. H.
Goldney, Sir G.
Gordon, Sir A.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Gower, hon. E. F. L.
Grafton, F. W.
Grant, A.
Grant, Sir G. M.
Greene, E.
Greer, T.
Gregory, G. B.
Grey, A. H. G.
Grosvenor, Lord R.
Guest, M. J.
Gurdon, R. T.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, I. T.
Harcourt, rt. hon. Sir W. G. V. V.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.

Hay, rt. hon. Admiral Sir J. C. D.
Hayter, Sir A. D.
Heneage, E.
Herbert, hon. S.
Herschell, Sir F.
Hicks, E.
Hildyard, T. B. T.
Hill, Lord A. W.
Hill, T. R.
Holland, Sir H. T.
Hollond, J. R.
Holms, J.
Holms, W.
Hope, rt. hn. A. J. B. B.
Hubbard, rt. hon. J. G.
Inderwick, F. A.
James, C.
James, Sir H.
Jenkins, D. J.
Jerningham, H. E. H.
Kensington, Lord
Kingscote, Col. R. N. F.
Knight, F. W.
Lambton, hon. F. W.
Leake, R.
Leatham, W. H.
Lefevre, rt. hn. G. J. S.
Leigh, hon. G. H. C.
Leighton, S.
Levett, T. J.
Lindsay, Sir R. L.
Long, W. H.
Lowther, rt. hon. J.
Lusk, Sir A.
M'Arthur, A.
Macartney, J. W. E.
M'Garel-Hogg, Sir J.
Mackie, R. B.
Mackintosh, C. F.
M'Lagan, P.
Maitland, W. F.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Manners, rt. hn. Lord J.
Mappin, F. T.
Marjoribanks, E.
Martin, R. B.
Maskelyne, M. H. Story-
Matheson, Sir A.
Mellor, J. W.
Mills, Sir C. H.
Monckton, F.
Monk, C. J.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mulholland, J.
Mundella, rt. hon. A. J.
Muntz, P. H.
Murray, C. J.
Nicholson, W. N.
Noel, E.
Northcote, rt. hon. Sir S. H.
Paget, T. T.
Palmer, G.
Palmer, J. H.
Parker, C. S.
Patrick, R. W. Cochran-
Pease, A.
Pease, Sir J. W.
Peel, A. W.
Pemberton, E. L.
Pender, J.
Percy, Lord A.
Philips, R. N.
Playfair, rt. hon. L.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Porter, rt. hon. A. M.
Pulley, J.
Ramsay, J.
Rankin, J.
Repton, G. W.
Richardson, T.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, C. T.
Rogers, J. E. T.
Ross, C. C.
Russell, G. W. E.
St. Aubyn, W. M.
Salt, T.
Sclater-Booth, rt. hn. G.
Scott, M. D.
Seely, C. (Lincoln)
Seely, C. (Nottingham)
Sellar, A. C.
Severne, J. E.
Shaw, T.
Shield, H.
Simon, Serjeant J.
Smith, Lt.-Col. G.
Smith, S.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Stanhope, hon. E.
Stanley, rt. hn. Col. F.
Stanley, E. J.
Stanton, W. J.
Stewart, J.
Talbot, C. R. M.
Talbot, J. G.
Tavistock, Marquess of
Tennant, C.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Trevelyan, rt. hn. G. O.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Walter, J.
Warton, C. N.
Waugh, E.
Welby-Gregory, Sir W.
Whitbread, S.
Whitley, E.
Wiggin, H.
Williamson, S.
Willis, W.
Wills, W. H.
Wilson, C. H.
Wilson, I.
Winn, R.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolff, Sir H. D.
Woodall, W.

TELLERS.
Chaplin, H.
King-Harman, Colonel E. R.

Words *added*.

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to*.

Second Reading *put off* for six months.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) BILL.—[Bill 24.]

(*Mr. William Corbet, Mr. Callan, Mr. Dawson, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Gray.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. W. J. CORBET, in moving that the Bill be now read the second time, said, the measure was substantially the same as a Bill which was passed by the House of Commons two or three Sessions ago, and afterwards thrown out in the House of Lords. Its provisions were so well known that it was not necessary for him to explain them; and he would simply content himself by moving that the Bill be now read a second time.

Colonel KING-HARMAN asked if it was in Order to proceed with the second reading of a Bill which had not yet been printed?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has obtained leave to introduce the Bill. It has been brought in and laid on the Table of the House. He is in Order, therefore, in proceeding to move the second reading, although it is an unusual course to adopt when the Bill has not been printed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. W. J. Corbet.*)

Mr. ION HAMILTON said, the course taken by the hon. Member was most unusual; and as he did not know what the measure contained, notwithstanding that the hon. Member said it had already passed the House, he begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Ion Hamilton.*)

Mr. CALLAN said, the Bill was printed and circulated two years ago, and was adopted by the House of Commons. Its provisions were perfectly well known to both the Members for the County of Dublin, who had strong local Party interests in defeating it if they were able to do so. No doubt, the Bill, if passed, would render the voting in the County of Dublin very different from what it was.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he hoped they would have some expression of the views of the Government with regard to the Bill. It might be a very proper thing to alter the system of voting in Ireland. He understood that there were some defects in the system, and that the Chief Secretary for Ireland himself had some intention of proposing legislation on the matter. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman if that was the case; and, in any case, whether he thought it fair to the House, on the part of the Government, that a Bill which had not been printed should be read a second time? As far as he (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) remembered, such a course was without precedent, and he thought it was one which would be repudiated by the House.

Mr. PARNELL said, the Bill had been printed and circulated amongst Members every Session during the past nine years, since 1874. It had been regularly introduced by Irish Members; and in 1880 it went through all its stages with very little opposition from any Party in the House. He did not think there was even a division taken on it by the Conservative Party. No division was taken against it either on the second reading, on the Motion for going into Committee, or on the third reading stage. Finally, it went to "another place," and was there thrown out, to the very great regret of the Government, who pledged themselves to introduce a similar Bill in the following year, which they failed to do. The Government stated now they were going to introduce a Bill on the subject. He would suggest that the present measure should be allowed to pass the second reading, and that they should avail themselves of the time that would be left to them before 6 o'clock to forward a stage of a measure that the Irish Government admitted to be desirable.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, that the Government, like everybody else, were certainly placed in a very embarrassing position. There were, he understood, two Registration Bills before the House, one of which had been printed, and its contents were extremely familiar to the Government. The Bill which had been printed, and which was entitled the Registration of Voters (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill, was in substance the same Bill as that which went up to the House of Lords two years ago. The Government not only supported that Bill, but they had every intention, as had been previously intimated to the House, of bringing in themselves a measure very much of that nature, the Bill being, as they believed, a very well-considered one. [Colonel King-Harman: That was the No. 2 Bill.] Yes; but with regard to the Bill which the hon. Member had just moved, he was not aware what it was; but it was extremely unlikely the Government would entertain another Bill so different from this Bill that hon. Members had thought it worth while to bring it forward as a separate measure. He could not but think that if the Government now pressed the House to read the present Bill a second time without having seen it, that course would not tend to mature the question of the registration of Irish voters. A Bill of this importance ought not to be discussed when it had not been properly submitted to the House. The Government had before them one Bill which they would substantially support; but without seeing the contents of the present Bill they were certainly not disposed to consent to support its second reading.

Mr. MACARTNEY said, he thought the House ought not to be called upon to express its opinion on a Bill that had not yet been printed. If that principle were once established there would be no end to the Bills which would be so introduced, and with long discussions as to whether they should be read or not.

Mr. R. POWER said, that this Bill was exactly the same as the No. 2 Bill. One, in fact, was copied from the other, and if the Chief Secretary was so anxious to pass that measure he could not understand why he opposed the one now before the House.

Colonel KING-HARMAN said, he thought the House ought not to be called upon to give a second reading to a Bill of which they knew nothing. He was under the impression on the previous day that the No. 2 Bill was the one which was on the Paper; and, if this kind of thing were to be allowed, there was nothing to stop the introduction of any number of Bills of a similar nature in precisely the same way.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, he thought it desirable that the House should consider whether it was justifiable that the second reading of a Bill should be moved before copies of it had been placed in their hands. He did not remember any occasion on which the mere fact that a particular Bill was the same as one introduced in a former Session was held to be a ground for dispensing with its being printed. He hoped it would be understood that, in voting for the adjournment of the debate, they did so without going into the merits of the question.

Mr. SEXTON said, he would remind the House that the Speaker had ruled a few minutes previously that his hon. Friend was in Order in moving the second reading. There was no person who was more severe on the Irish Members than the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. Lowther) for doing what he was himself now doing—questioning the ruling of the Speaker. It was a fact that a Bill which was substantially the same as the present had been introduced, printed, and read for several successive Sessions, and every hon. Member must, therefore, have been acquainted with its contents. There was no material difference between the two measures. He did not blame the hon. and gallant Member for Dublin County (Colonel King-Harman) for not knowing the contents of the Bill, as he was not lately in a position to study the records of Parliament, although in the last Parliament, indeed, he voted for the measure. He was, however, very much surprised to hear the speech of the Chief Secretary and his plea of ignorance as to the contents of the Bill, when there was no material difference between it and the Bill he promised to support. He thought they had little more to thank him for than they had to thank the Prime Minister for in his speech that day. He thought the Chief Secretary had not taken a very straightforward course. He found a Bill before the House possessing a chance of success; he declined to support that Bill, and compounded with his conscience by offering to support another Bill.

The Attorney General (Sir Henry James) contended that the Chief Secretary had been perfectly right in the course he had taken. He had pointed out the grave responsibility the House might incur in this matter. If a Bill were allowed to pass the second reading without having been printed, what would prevent any Member introducing a Bill containing an important clause, such as one abolishing all registration, unknown to the House, and then, when objection was afterwards taken to it, saying that the objection was too late, for the House had voted for the second reading? His right hon. Friend had taken up a perfectly consistent position; not having seen the Bill, he could not assent to the second reading on the mere assurance of an hon. Member that it would contain the same provisions as another Bill.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that, after the statement of the hon. Member for Wicklow (Mr. W. J. Corbet) that this Bill was identical with the Bill which had already passed that House, the Attorney General was not justified in suggesting that his hon. Friend might introduce into it clauses not contained in the former Bill. His hon. Friend was incapable of such a trick.

Mr. PLUNKET asked, as a question of Order, whether the House ought to be required to take a Bill upon trust; and whether it was in accordance with the practice of the House to proceed with a Bill which had not been printed, merely on the ground that it was the same as a Bill which had already been printed and submitted to the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: I am unable to give a satisfactory answer to that question, not being in possession of the Bill itself.

Mr. GIBSON said, he thought it absurd on the face of it to ask a Legislative Assembly to consent to the second reading of a Bill which had not been printed. The Bill with which the present Bill was said to be identical was a two-year-old Bill and was now forgotten by the House. But the hon. Member for Sligo had said this Bill was the same as another Bill of this Session.

Mr. SEXTON: No; I said there was no material difference between them.

Mr. GIBSON said, he understood they were asked to read this Bill a second time because it was the same as No. 2 Bill. The hon. Member said it was "materially" the same, while the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power) said it was "identical." Now it was said it was the same as the Bill of 1880. The House ought to know what the hon. Member for Sligo thought material and what immaterial. A Registration Bill was a Bill bristling with technicalities. The hon. Member might consider a particular point immaterial, while other Members might think it very material. He made these observations entirely in a friendly spirit; and he hoped the hon.

Member for Wicklow (Mr. W. J. Corbet) would postpone his Motion until the House was put in full possession of the subject.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 219; Noes 39: Majority 180.—(Div. List, No. 35.)

Debate *adjourned* till *Tuesday* next.

FREE LIBRARIES BILL.—[BILL 85.]

(*Mr. Hopwood, Mr. Birley, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Slagg, Mr. Summers.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Hopwood.*)

MR. WARTON, in rising to move the rejection of the Bill, said, that the rates for education purposes were already too high. Those who had literary tastes could in these days gratify them at a very small expense, and there was no need to multiply free libraries.

And it being a quarter of the hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood *adjourned* till *To-morrow*.

QUESTION.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

In answer to Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR,

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, that on Monday the Government would proceed with the Court of Criminal Appeal and the Bankruptcy Bill.

MOTION.

GROUND GAME ACT (1880) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Sir ALEXANDER GORDON, Bill to amend "The Ground Game Act, 1880," *ordered* to be brought in by Sir ALEXANDER GORDON and Mr. BORLASE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 121.]

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 15th March, 1883.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—National Gallery (Loan) (18); Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) (17).
Report—Payment of Wages in Public-houses Prohibition (1-21).

The Lord O'HAGAN—Chosen Speaker in the absence of the Lord Chancellor and the Lords Commissioners.

House adjourned during pleasure; and resumed by the Lord Chancellor.

NATIONAL GALLERY (LOAN) BILL.

(*The Earl Granville.*)

(NO. 18.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

EARL GRANVILLE, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that the National Gallery was an institution in which the country felt a just pride, for its merits were on a level with the most distinguished galleries in the world. The object of this Bill was to enable the Directors and Trustees to make loans of pictures to Provincial museums and institutions, and to extend the present buildings. With regard to the works by the Old Masters, there were very few of them which could be lent, for they were either of intrinsic value in themselves, or, what was just as important, were instructive as furnishing a history of Art and representing different schools. But as to modern pictures, to which his observations would more particularly apply, there were a certain number that might be dispensed with, and it was quite clear that to lend to galleries in the Provinces pictures that were not wanted in the National Gallery would be a gain to all parties concerned. With regard to the extension of the National Gallery, he might say that the Government proposed to ask the other House to grant a sum of money, £5,000, for the purpose, in order that more space might be provided for the National Collection. He would now move the second reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl Granville.*)

VISCOUNT HARDINGE, as one of the Trustees of the National Gallery, said, the Bill would be a great boon, because it would give some room for the re-arrangement of the pictures it contained. At present it would be difficult to carry out that re-arrangement, owing to want of space. The weeding-out, however, would not give the Trustees much more room, as it must not be supposed that they would part with any of their gems of art; but they would lend what modern pictures they could spare. What they wished to do was to distribute to Provincial museums as many pictures of the British school as they could, thus benefiting the artists, the museums, and the public. As for the enlargement of the Gallery, he was glad that a Vote for the purpose was intended to be proposed by the Government. That extension could be very well made in the rear of the present building, and he would suggest that the barracks at present existing in that quarter should be removed, as they only accommodated three companies, and they could easily be provided for in other barracks in the Metropolis, especially at Chelsea, where there were very extensive ones. On behalf of the Trustees, he heartily thanked the Government for the measure.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow.*

PAYMENT OF WAGES IN PUBLIC-HOUSES PROHIBITION BILL.—(No. 1.)

(*The Earl Stanhope.*)

REPORT.

Amendment *reported* (according to Order).

LORD BRAMWELL said, he rose for the purpose of calling their Lordships' attention to one or two obvious defects which existed in the provisions of the Bill. For instance, in one of the clauses the prohibition extended to every house for the sale of spirituous or fermented liquors, "or other house of entertainment." This, as he understood, would even include coffee-taverns—an effect which he imagined was not contemplated by the promoters of the Bill. Again, by the prohibition of payment of wages in public-houses, a public-house keeper would be prevented from paying his own servants in his own public-house; besides which, a beershop keeper, who might himself be in the employ of another person, could not receive his earnings on his own premises. It might also include the case of a labourer laid up with illness in a country public-house. He would suggest that it might be advisable that justices of the peace should have power to overrule the operation of this provision in certain cases. He really could not help thinking that their Lordships had had very imperfect material on which to base this change in legislation. The noble Earl who introduced the Bill (Earl Stanhope) seemed to have simply applied to this matter the law passed in respect of miners, and to have concluded that what was good for miners was good for all mankind.

EARL STANHOPE said, that the noble and learned Lord who had just spoken (Lord Bramwell), while objecting to some of the provisions of the Bill, had not brought forward any counter proposal. The words quoted were intended to apply to places attached to public-houses, and not to coffee-taverns; and it was certainly not contemplated that a publican should be prevented from paying his own servants. He hoped their Lordships would agree to the Report, and allow the Bill to go to the other House, where, no doubt, it would receive revision in Committee, and possibly some of the noble Lord's objections might be removed, if they were there thought to be really valid defects.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, it would not be creditable to their Lordships' House to send a Bill to the Commons on the chance of its being amended there. He thought the words referred to must have got into the wrong place. The clause clearly could not remain in its present form, and he would therefore move, as an Amendment, the omission of the words "or other house of entertainment," in order that wages might be allowed to be paid in a temperance house.

Moved, in Clause 3, page 1, line 25, to omit the words ("or other house of entertainment.")—(*The Earl of Kimberley.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he cordially approved of the Amendment, and hoped it would be agreed to.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, that, in his opinion, the criticisms of the noble and learned Lord (Lord Bramwell) deserved careful consideration. He (the Marquess of Salisbury), as he had previously stated, could not approve of the principle of the Bill, and he therefore hoped the Amendment before their Lordships would be accepted, for the purview of the Bill ought not to be extended beyond what was absolutely necessary.

EARL STANHOPE said, he would accept the Amendment.

Motion *agreed to;* words *omitted* accordingly.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, he would further point out the inconvenience arising from a sick workman lodging in a public-house, or of one who might be taken ill therein, being prevented by the Bill from receiving his wages therein. Some alteration ought to be made in the Bill in order to remove this objection.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, that under the Bill as it stood the noble Earl himself could not receive his official pay, if he happened to be staying at the time it was due at an hotel.

EARL STANHOPE promised to consider the point suggested by the noble Earl (the Earl of Kimberley), and to endeavour to meet it on the third reading, though it would be very difficult to find words which would have the effect desired.

Bill to be read 3ª *To-morrow;* and to be *printed* as amended. (No. 21.)

SALE OF LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 17.)

(*The Lord Privy Seal.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRIVY SEAL), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that their Lordships would remember that the existing Irish Sunday Closing Act passed through that House and became law in 1878, and it would expire in the present year. The object of this Bill was to perpetuate the Act, and to remove from it the exception of the five enumerated towns. The Bill of 1878 was introduced by a private Member; but, although it was greatly favoured by the Government of the day, it experienced in "another place" a very troublesome and difficult course, having met with a very strenuous resistance from a small minority. It had been represented to the Government, and they were themselves convinced of it, that public opinion in Ireland was very strongly, indeed, in favour of the continuance of the measure, and the Government, having been requested to take it into their own hands, had thought it their duty to do so. It was therefore as a Government Bill that he asked their Lordships to give the measure a second reading. As to the success of the Act, which had been in operation a sufficient time to give it a good trial, there had been a war of statistics carried on between the friends and the opponents of the Act; the Irish Temperance Association on the one hand, and the Dublin Licensed Victuallers' Society, representing the trade, on the other. With these statistics he should not attempt to trouble the House at any length. They were not very clear in their effect, and they had, at all events, been pushed beyond the reason of the case by both the friends and the opponents of the Bill. For instance, the friends of the Bill had pointed out that, within the last few years, there had been a decrease in the consumption of spirituous liquors in Ireland to the amount of £2,000,000, and that fact was claimed, more or less, as a result of the Act. He did not himself doubt that the Act had contributed in some measure to that result, neither did he doubt that, on the whole, the effect of the statistics was decidedly in favour of the operation of the Act. But it was equally certain that there had been other causes which had contributed to the result; a growing general feeling in favour of temperance, and also the distress of the country which had led to a smaller consumption of spirituous liquors. But, then, the opponents of the Bill had pointed out that, for two or three years, a similiar diminution of consumption had taken place on this side of the Channel, especially in Scotland. In Scotland, however, the consumption had, he believed, risen again to its original rate; whereas, in Ireland, nothing of the kind had occurred, and the diminution held its ground. The opponents of the Bill then said that the apparent diminution must be accounted for by an increase in the production and consumption of illicit spirits. But the Government had satisfied themselves that that was an entire mistake, and that the Act had not led to any increase of illicit distillation, as was predicted when it was about to pass. He would not go any further into the statistics of general intemperance in Ireland, although they had been much made use of on this subject on both sides; but he would like to tell the House the figures as to Sunday intemperance, which, of course, had more immediate bearing on the Bill. So far as this came within the province of the police by arrests for Sunday drunkenness, these figures appeared to him to be very decidedly in favour of the operation of the Act. It had been ascertained roughly that during the three and a-half years preceding the enactment of this law the number of Sunday arrests in all Ireland, except the five exempted towns, amounted in round numbers to 16,000, and that in the three and a-half years since the Act came into operation, the number had been only 6,000, or a diminution of 60 per cent. Taking the five exempted towns, which, however, were subjected to the very important change of losing the last two hours they formerly had for keeping open in the evening, the Sunday arrests had diminished from 10,000 to 6,500, or 33 per cent. So much for the statistics of the case. Now, as regarded the general success of the measure, and still more as to its increasing and now prevailing and preponderant popularity in Ireland, he thought there could be no doubt whatever. The Government had not failed to use all the means in their power to ascertain the effects of the Act all over the country and the public feeling on the subject, and they had satisfied themselves that upon every point upon which prophecies of evil had been made when the Act was passing those prophecies had not been fulfilled, and that in the general results, with very trifling exceptions, the Act had been highly favourable to the cause of sobriety and good order. They had satisfied themselves that the Act had not had the effect of increasing the number of so-called "shebeen" houses, which was confidently predicted; that the amount of unlawful sales had gone on to a very limited extent; and that the most confident prediction of all—namely, that illicit distillation would increase—had not been fulfilled. On the whole, the Irish Government were satisfied that, all over the country, the preponderant public feeling was in favour of the continuance of the Act, and that that was the feeling of the working classes themselves. Then came the only practical question which he thought would be at issue in the two Houses of Parliament—whether the Act should be extended to the five exempted towns? There was every reason to believe—and that formed the strongest possible argument for the extension of the Act—that, if it had originally included the exempted towns, there would have been the same amount of feeling in its favour in those towns as in the rest of Ireland; and that, in those towns, the great weight of public opinion was on the side of the extension of the Act. It was asserted at the time by its strongest opponents in the other House that there was no reason for exempting those towns, and that every reason given for the Bill applied at least as strongly, if not more strongly, to those towns than it did to the rural districts and the smaller towns of the country. But the exemption was admitted for the sake of peace, and as a matter of precaution and prudence, and to secure the passing of the Bill. Great pains had been taken to ascertain what was the general opinion entertained by the inhabitants of the towns which would be affected by the measure—by a house to house canvass, for instance, and by a circular addressed to all the clergy and the various leading classes of the respective cities and towns—and making every possible allowance for any amount of uncertainty or misconception there might be in such a mode of ascertaining public opinion, the enormous preponderance of the opinions given against the exemption left no doubt at all that the exempted towns were in favour of being brought within the operation of the Act. He submitted that the Act, after a considerable trial, had proved itself to be a success, and that it was viewed with favour by the great majority of Irish Members of all Parties, because in this case no division of Party whatever was to be found; and he trusted, therefore, that their Lordships would give the Bill a second reading, and that it might become law during the present Session, *Moved*, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Privy Seal.*)

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, he was satisfied that the Act had proved beneficial to Ireland; and he hoped that, in renewing it, steps would be taken further in the direction either of repealing or modifying the *bonâ fide* Traveller Clause, which, at present, rendered the Act a mockery, delusion, and a snare, and had proved a stumbling-block alike to the public, the police, and the magistrates. That clause had been differently interpreted in different localities. The Act provided that no one was to be deemed a *bonâ fide* traveller who had not lodged more than three miles by the shortest road from the house where he obtained his refreshment; and the consequence was, that persons who resided in villages could proceed to other villages beyond the three-mile range, and could enjoy themselves to their heart's content in public-houses during the whole of the Sunday, because the clause had been generally interpreted to mean that anyone who did so reside was thereby constituted a *bonâ fide* traveller. He did not think there was any advantage in retaining the clause, or that it was the intention of the Legislature that such persons should be regarded as *bonâ fide* travellers; and, accordingly, when the Bill reached its Committee stage, should it be thought necessary to retain it, he should move Amendments in it, with a view of making certain modifications as regarded it.

THE EARL OF BELMORE said, he was not a new convert to the policy of the Act, having been all along a warm friend of it, and was glad the Government had taken the question of its amendment and perpetuation, a proceeding he most heartily supported. He quite agreed with the noble Lord the Lord Privy Seal, that the sort of statistics put forward for and against the measure were not very trustworthy; but perhaps he might be allowed to refer to the opinion of a gentleman who was well qualified to speak on this subject. He referred to Mr. J. N. Richardson, who was a very large employer of labour, and had erected, in connection with his linen mills, a large village called Bessbrook, near Newry, in which there was not a single public-house, and who had thought it his duty quite recently to address a letter to the Prime Minister, which he had printed and circulated to Members of both Houses of Parliament. This was what he said—

> "I am firmly convinced that if the Ministry had done their first work, and had braved the opposition of the spirit trade, they would have had a greater blessing on their labours for Ireland as well as England. It is a well-known fact that not a meeting for rapine and murder takes place in Ireland at which whisky does not play a prominent part, and that our poor countrymen would be incapable of committing the outrages which have taken place without the stimulus of whisky. It is well known, too, that the amount drunk in whisky and beer at least equalled the rental paid during the last three years, and we have proof that where least rent was paid, most whisky was sold. God only knows how many murders were hatched in public-houses, or how many publicans licensed by the Government have taken part in the disturbances."

And then in another letter, which Mr. Richardson had addressed to a well-known Member of the other House who took great interest in this matter, the writer said—

> "Did it never strike you, in connection with the temperance cause, that Parliament, having for the public benefit considered itself justified in depriving Irish landlords of not less than one-fourth of their income, ought, as a special duty, to consider those who have suffered by its action in these cases? For the serious taxation necessary to support the lunatics, paupers, and criminals manufactured by the drink traffic falls with undiminished weight upon those whose incomes have thus been lessened, and who have been thereby rendered less capable of sustaining it. Why should the brewers, distillers, and publicans be more tenderly dealt with than these Irish landlords, especially as the former are the direct means of this expenditure?"

Now, he (the Earl of Belmore) knew from his own knowledge, sitting as a magistrate in petty sessions, that that was undoubtedly quite true. He often presided in a town, where the sessions were held once a week, and after the weekly fair day an appalling number of cases of drunkenness came before the bench. They were generally undefended, and did not take long. He should vote for the Bill as a step in the right direction; and he hoped that, at a future date, the licensing laws might be further considered by the Government. With regard to what the noble Earl behind him (the Earl of Milltown) had said as to the *bonâ fide* Traveller Clause, he believed he was right in describing its effect, and that the magistrates were right in interpreting it as they usually did. This question, however, affected Sunday closing not merely in Ireland, but in England, and was a very large subject. If his noble Friend moved the Amendment he had foreshadowed, he should probably support him; but he wished to reserve himself to see what the proposal really was. He cordially supported the second reading of the Bill.

LORD O'HAGAN said, that, in his belief, the Irish Government had had the fullest possible opportunity of knowing what was the real state of the case, both with reference to opinions and to facts. He knew that protestations had been made very earnestly, on one side and the other; and he thought that, in fulfilment of their duty to the country, the conclusion to which the Government had come when they determined to introduce the Bill was a wise conclusion, and one which would be for the benefit of Ireland. He remembered very well the opposition with which the last Bill was received when it was first brought in in the other House of Parliament. It was a most violent and a most persistent opposition. Riots, they were told, would occur if the Bill was passed. They were told that it would be a Bill fraught with the most injurious consequences to Ireland, and that if it were passed it would be productive of all manner of discontent and disturbance in the country; above all, illicit distillation would be certain to ensue. Well, those predictions had been entirely falsified. There was no discontent, no disturbance, no rioting, and no increase of illicit distillation. In point of fact, nothing had occurred since the passing of the Act that would warrant that House in departing from the principle of the measure. On the contrary, everything tended to show that its operation ought to be continued and extended to the exempted towns. The Act had undoubtedly a most beneficial effect on that portion of the country to which its operation extended, and, *a fortiori*, there was no reason whatever to believe that its effects on the places exempted would not be equally beneficial. They had the best possible evidence that the public opinion of Ireland was in its favour. The result of the inquiries made by the Government, and the large number of Memorials that had been presented to the Government from time to time, showed that in Ireland there was a most marvellous unity amongst men of all classes and creeds in favour of the Act, asking that it should be continued and extended to the exempted towns. The Protestant clergy, the Roman Catholic clergy to a very large extent, and the Presbyterian ministry, had declared in favour of the measure; and their opinion was sustained by the considerable diminution in the consumption of liquor during the time the Act was in operation, and also by the diminution of those peculiar crimes produced by drunkenness in the districts in which Sunday drinking prevailed. There could be no stronger evidence that the measure as it stood was successful, and every consideration that could be presented was now offered to the House to show that it would be successful if it were extended. It was impossible to contend that opinion so expressed should not command the respect of Parliament, and he hoped that the unanimity which that House exhibited when the Bill was before them on the former occasion would be repeated on this, and that it would have an effect on its fate "elsewhere." He gave his most hearty support to the Bill.

THE EARL OF LIMERICK said, he did not rise to oppose the second reading of the Bill, but to express his regret that the House had not before it more decisive statistics, one way or the other, on a matter which affected considerably the freedom of the working classes. But, as the noble Lord the Lord Privy Seal had said, the statistics could be made to prove anything in favour of either party. They certainly appeared to have been made to prove anything on this occasion, for there were statistics on one side to show that the Act had increased drunkenness in the protected districts, while, in the unprotected towns, it had decreased; and, on the other side, there were statistics to prove the exact reverse. As it was, they must make the best of the somewhat conflicting statistics which they had before them. He could speak from a personal knowledge of the ill effects of Saturday night's drinking, and he could say that the Sunday drinking in a Militia regiment with which he was connected was larger than on any other day of the week, except Saturday. Experience showed that drinking was commenced on Saturday, and continued on Sunday; and, if possible, more drinking and disturbances took place on the Saturday night than on Sunday. In fact, if he might be allowed to say so, the Sunday drinking began on Saturday night. There was one most essential point which he desired to press upon Her Majesty's Government, and that was the horrible length to which adulteration was carried. In his opinion more drunkenness, or rather poisoning, arose from a small consumption of bad spirits than from that of a larger quantity of wholesome drink. He had known men to leave barracks, and in a quarter of an hour to be found in the streets in a state of absolute madness, arising from the bad liquor they had drunk. In the lower sort of public-houses there was no doubt that adulteration of a most injurious kind was carried on to an enormous extent, and to a degree that was positively injurious to health. He hoped that at some future day the Government would seriously take into consideration this question of adulteration.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Monday* next.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE MILITIA.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY, in rising to call attention to the disastrous results to recruiting for the Militia caused by the changes in the mode of training instituted by Mr. Childers in 1881; and to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, whether it is owing to the 20 per cent diminution thus caused in the strength of the fourth Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers that it has been just officially decided to reduce its establishment by two companies or 200 men, and officers and non-commissioned officers in proportion, from the 1st of April next; also, if any other Militia battalions are to be similarly reduced; also, to move—

> "For a Return showing the loss in numbers occasioned to Militia battalions trained at the brigade depôts under the new system compared with those Militia battalions detached from depôts, and, in consequence, permitted to train as heretofore,"

said, he must remind their Lordships that it was not yet two years ago since he brought before them two special points connected with the Military Service. One was with regard to the then impending re-organization of the Army, which had since become an accomplished fact; and the other was in regard to the waste of the Army. On neither occasion did he receive any support from the Government side of the House, nor on his own side, except from his lamented Friend the late Lord Airey. But now that he had read the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting for this year, and the article of Sir Lintorn Simmons in *The Nineteenth Century*, he could not say that he had any cause for regret in having troubled their Lordships, and he thought also this present Notice was more than ever desirable. Much had been said in one place and another with regard to the immense benefits the nation had derived from the re-organization introduced within the last three years by Mr. Childers; but he thought there were only three points on which that right hon. Gentleman could be congratulated. The first was for having been induced to increase the term of service for the Army; secondly, having permitted the re-engagement of non-commissioned officers; and, thirdly, having seen fit to increase the strength of the battalions forming the first *Corps d'Armée*, so as to keep it always ready for foreign service. For those measures the country was indebted to Mr. Childers; but he would remind their Lordships that those three points were recommended by Lord Airey's Committee. He should like to have been able to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the success of a fourth point—namely, in having raised the age of recruits from 18 to 19. As had been anticipated, however, the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting showed that the alteration had not answered, and that there was a difficulty in obtaining recruits. The subject of the waste in the Army and the Militia was also a matter for most serious consideration. It had been ascertained that, in the three years previous to the Report of Lord Airey's Committee, there was an annual waste in the Army of an average of 9,000 men, at a cost of £500,000. That Committee made two recommendations with regard to waste in the Army. One was, that there should be established large training centres, the object being to check the large amount of fraudulent enlistments; and the other was, that of unlinking the battalions so as to obviate the shifting of soldiers from one battalion to another. He was sorry to say these recommendations had not been carried out, and that the authorities, while neglecting the recommendations of the Committee, had created a number of phantom battalions of Militia. Of about 30 fourth Militia battalions, only half were as yet formed. He wished specially to call attention to the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting. Last year, that officer wrote of the system of drilling Militia recruits on enlistment, that it was too early as yet to form a correct opinion of the probable results of the plan. He stated, however, that, during 1881, there had been a diminution of the waste of the Militia, and that the saving had occurred chiefly among the absentees, and among the men discharged as invalids. He added, however, that it was anticipated that, as the new system of drilling became more general, the waste would be still further reduced. It was to be regretted that this anticipation was not realized, and that, in the following year, the Inspector General should, on the contrary, have had to report a considerable increase of waste. The figures with regard to deserters in the Army again were by no means satisfactory. In the five years 1876-1880, the average number of deserters was 2,631; in 1881, the number was 2,560, and in 1882, 2,612. The statistics of invalids in the Army were as follows:—In 1876-1880, the average number of recruits was 27,614, of whom there were discharged as invalids, in 1876, 408, or 14·7 per 1,000; in 1881, 287, or 10·9 per 1,000; and in 1882, when only 23,801 men were enlisted, 284, or 11·9 per 1,000 were discharged as invalids. Bearing these facts in mind, it seemed to him most unwise to reduce the number of the Militia at present. It appeared from the Inspector General's Report that, according to an actuarial calculation, the number of recruits required for 1883 would be 18,000; and, if the demands of the Service did not exceed its normal requirements, the number would probably be obtained; but the deficiencies from last year, and the increased waste, made it necessary to obtain as many as 22,500 recruits. It was to meet the admitted deficiency that some special measures were necessary; and therefore the manner in which to solve the problem, the Secretary of State for War appeared to think, was to reduce the number of the establishment they already had. According to actuarial calculations of the number of recruits really needed, there must be a deficiency at the end of the year of 5,720; for we were told they had been coming in at the rate of 330 a-week, when the number ought to be 440. This, therefore, was not a time to throw away what we had got, and to reduce the number of the old Constitutional Force of the country. It was, as he had said, a most unwise proceeding; and what he was certain of was this, that they would have to come to in the end, not an Army Reserve, but a Militia Reserve. The Inspector General appeared desirous of doing what he could to bolster up the new mode of bringing recruits on the roll; and he fell into the error of alluding to recruits trained immediately on their enrolment, as being thoroughly-trained soldiers, whereas they had hardly got beyond squad-drill, and had had no opportunity of learning thoroughly how to use their arms. As to the preliminary drill, it appeared that 9 per cent of the recruits failed to present themselves, or to account for their absence. Men would not join the Militia, and there was no increase of Line recruits, nor was there any actual increase of men going to the Army from the Militia, although the Returns would make such appear to be the case, because the men who went to the Army from the Militia as recruits were those who had only enrolled in the one, in order to enlist in the other after receiving the bounty allowed to the recruit entering the Militia, but not allowed when enlisting into the Army direct. In one paragraph, the Inspector General practically admitted that the present system could not be pursued with advantage. The Secretary of State for War was reported to have said that recruits were henceforth to be asked at exactly what time they would be likely to attend drill; but this could hardly be done except in special cases. It was to be regretted that, in one sentence, the Inspector General had insinuated that any want of success in the new scheme was partly attributable to officers commanding regimental districts not doing their best; and some officers had written to him resenting this innuendo. Indeed, there was no reason whatever for such remarks upon a body of gentlemen who had the interests of the Service at heart, and whose only desire was to keep up the recruiting. One of the officers wrote—

> "The new scheme has been successful only in the Metropolitan and other large districts, in which a Militiaman proper—viz. a working man (not a tramp or loafer), with a settled habitation and home—never existed."

Another wrote—

> "I am told on all sides that the Army Reserve is what scares men from enlisting. The calling out of the Reserves during the last Russian panic has had a most prejudicial effect on recruiting. Reserve men were thrown out of work, and found it hard to get employment afterwards."

But, in addition, the difficulties must be attributed to the effect of the new system of recruiting and of drilling Militiamen in barracks, which was intended so far to popularize the Army, and familiarize it with Militiamen and the working classes, as to render the Militia more than ever a feeder for the Line. Its first effect, on the contrary, was to reduce the feeding source two-tenths nominally, but actually one-fourth, in about a year, in the case, at any rate, of some regiments. It appeared also that, in another part of Scotland, the class of men who did come forward were altogether different from those who formerly filled the ranks. One sergeant, specially told off to recruit in one district, made this significant remark—"Men say they would rather join the Army at once, as the Militia no longer exists." He (the Earl of Galloway) thought that one reason why it was so difficult to obtain recruits was the short-sighted policy of the Secretary of State for War last year in keeping out several Militia regiments for two months, and only allowing them one month's bounty. He should like to quote from the Report which he had been already referring to, the number of effectives given by the Inspector General of Recruiting. The numbers were 118,310 on the 1st of March in 1881, and 112,953 in 1882; while in 1883 they were only 106,054. Therefore, there had been a diminution of upwards of 12,000 men in the effective strength of the Militia in the last two years, and yet this was the time when the Secretary of State for War proposed to reduce the number of the Militia establishment still further. Everybody who read the Report would admit that the natural conclusions to draw were these. First, that, in order to keep up the flow of recruits in the Army, we ought to return to the age of 18 for enlistment, and, consequently, to increase the term of service in the ranks; and, secondly, that it would be necessary to increase, instead of reducing, the numbers of both the Militia and the Militia Reserve. With regard to the proposed reduction in the 4th Battalion of the Royal Scotch Fusiliers, he wished to know whether it was caused by the diminution in the numbers in that battalion last year, caused, as this had been, entirely by the unfortunate changes made in the mode of training the recruit to which he had already adverted? In conclusion, he would move for the Return of which he had given Notice.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Return, showing the loss in numbers occasioned to Militia battalions trained at the brigade depôts under the new system compared with those Militia battalions detached from depôts, and, in consequence, permitted to train as heretofore."—(*The Earl of Galloway.*)

THE DUKE OF MONTROSE said, he must endorse every word that had been uttered by the noble Earl (the Earl of Galloway) as to the difficulty of obtaining recruits under the new system. He (the Duke of Montrose) had the honour to command a battalion of Militia, which required recruits in a great degree, and he put down the difficulty to two new arrangements which were made under the new system. One was that they did not pay the bounty to the men at the time they entered the regiments. In Scotland, the best time for recruiting was the first or second weeks in the New Year. That was the festive season, when men were in need of money to meet the necessary expenses of the time, and, in his case, they never had any difficulty before the new system came in force. Instead of giving the men the bounty at the time they enlisted, as under the old system, they were now given it at the end of the term, which was not a sufficient inducement to them to come forward, because they wanted their money at the time they joined, The other reason of the difficulty was owing to the fact that masters would not keep open employment for the men a second time; and he should be glad to see that difficulty met in some way. The result was that men went to the battalions where the old system was in operation, thus showing a distinct preference for it.

THE EARL OF POWIS also complained of the operation of the new system of drilling and training the Militia recruits as it affected regiments in the Midland counties of Shropshire and Staffordshire, mentioning, among other things, that the Shropshire regiment was now 200 under its number. He hoped commanding officers would have the option of having their recruits drilled as heretofore.

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, that if the noble Earl who introduced that subject (the Earl of Galloway) had given Notice that he was going to call attention to the general state of the Army, or to the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting, he should not have had any right to complain of the speech he had made; but almost the whole of the first part of that speech was devoted to an elaborate vindication of the speeches which the noble Earl had delivered two or three years ago. As, however, the noble Earl had admitted that those speeches had met with scant encouragement from either side of the House, or from the Cross Benches, it was unnecessary for him (the Earl of Morley) to repeat the arguments which he had used on former occasions in answer to the noble Earl. But, before sitting down, the noble Earl referred to the Question he had had on the Paper for some time; and he (the Earl of Morley) would now endeavour to answer the Questions addressed to him. The first object for which the new system of drilling the Militia on enrolment was introduced was to enable recruits to drill whenever it was most convenient to them. When the noble Earl, last year, called attention to the results of that system, he promised to cause an inquiry to be made into them before another season, with the view of adopting any improvement which experience might render desirable. The noble Earl talked of the disastrous results of the system—rather strong terms to use with the Report, from which he had quoted so largely, before him. He would admit that there had been a falling off in the number of recruits for the Militia in the last year, and that falling off in some cases was considerable. The number of recruits for the Militia, between the trainings of 1881-2, was about 2,500 fewer than in the corresponding time of 1880-1; but the diminution affected not only those battalions which had their head-quarters at the depôts of their territorial regiments, but those which were detached from head-quarters where the old system of holding preliminary drill immediately before training was maintained. The system of drilling on enrolment was only applied to the Militia battalions which had their head-quarters at the depôts of their territorial regiments; all the other regiments were drilled on the old system, receiving 10*s.* immediately on enlistment, and the remaining sovereign at the end of the preliminary drill and training, which were continuous. He did not think it necessary to give the figures in great detail on that subject, because they were put with extreme succinctness in the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting, to which reference had been made. He quite agreed that the co-existence of the two systems might be undesirable, and that, in some instances, it might act prejudicially on the regiments which had the less popular form of enrolment. But in the view of the War Department it required some wide experience—not an experience confined to single regiments or single districts—to enable them to judge of the results of the system. In some districts it might be more convenient for the men to come into drill when they were out of work; or it might be more popular, both with the commanding officers and the men, that they should come in as they formerly did, and have the preliminary drill of 63 days and the training continuously. It was now proposed that the recruits should have the absolute option in all the regiments of doing as they liked, of drilling either immediately they were enlisted, or at a later period. The object of the Secretary of State for War was to make service in the Militia as convenient and as popular as possible. Under the new system, the recruit would be able to suit his preliminary drill to the requirements of his civil employment. It was rather a remarkable fact that, although the Militia recruits who enlisted between the raining for 1881-2 were somewhat less numerous than those who enlisted in 1880-1, yet the actual number of recruits in the calendar year 1882 were about 1,000 more than the recruits in the year 1881. Therefore, looking at the general effect of the system introduced last year, the number of recruits had not materially diminished. It was not intended to give the 10*s.* bounty immediately on enrolment; and on this point he disagreed with the noble Duke (the Duke of Montrose), because, if it were given to the Militia, it would stop almost every other avenue of recruiting to the Army but that one. If they gave it to the Militia, they must give it to the Army recruits also, or the men would enter the Army only through the Militia. One of the results of giving that sum immediately on enrolment was that a vast number of recruits took the 10*s.* and never appeared for the preliminary drill, and there was a consequent loss to the country; but last year there were absent from preliminary drill only 200 of those who drilled on enrolment—that was, 1·30 per cent. Of those who drilled immediately before training, 9 per cent were absent from preliminary drill. In 1881, 13 per cent of the recruits were absent from preliminary drill. So, admitting a diminution in the actual number of recruits, the number of those who went through preliminary drill was not very different in the two years. In 20 cases the regiments in which the recruits were drilled on enrolment showed better recruiting than in previous years. In 14 cases the recruiting was much worse, and in the remainder it was about the same. These figures required some allowance; but it must be remembered that waste was always going on, and, in spite of whatever was done, would continue to go on. He admitted the great importance of making every endeavour to reduce the waste to a minimum. It was now proposed to grant a larger sum to those who did not divide their services into two portions. One pound was at present given for preliminary drill, and a second £1 was given for the annual training; but if the preliminary drill and training were continuous, it was now intended to give 30*s.* in addition to the £1 at the beginning. As a proof that the Militia was not decreasing in popularity, he desired to call attention to the large number of re-engagements, which were nearly double what they were in former years. In 1880 the number of re-engagements was 4,790; in 1881, 6,000; and last year they rose to 9,000. He believed he had now dealt with most of the points raised by the noble Earl on the subject of recruiting and the methods by which the Government proposed to meet some of his objections. The noble Earl had referred to a paragraph in the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting, in which he said that success under the new system depended upon the officers commanding regimental districts; and the noble Earl suggested that this was intended as a back-handed blow at these officers. The Government repudiated any such intention. It was, however, quite true that the success of any system depended on the zeal and efficacy of those by whom it was carried out. The last point raised by the noble Earl was as to the reduction in the establishment of a regiment. In answer to that, the reduction of the 4th Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers by two companies was to take place in conformity with the territorial organization of the Forces. It was intended by degrees to give all Militia battalions a uniform strength of eight companies, and to carry out in its entirety the territorial scheme. The Government were gradually adding second battalions of Militia affiliated to regiments in which they did not exist; and they trusted that in a very few years there would be very few districts where there would not be two battalions of Militia as well as of the Regular Forces. It was proposed to complete the system laid down by Lord Cardwell, and continued by Mr. Childers, of attaching to each regimental district one Line and two Militia regiments, each with its eight companies. The present change was merely part of a system now being carried out in all the Militia regiments throughout the country. The noble Earl had moved for a Return. Of course, it would be granted, if it were insisted on; but he deprecated its being given, on account of the considerable time and expense which would be occasioned without any adequate result. In his opinion, the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting would furnish the noble Earl with all the information that was desirable.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, he could not refrain from expressing the regret he felt that the reply just given had not indicated that more encouragement would be given to recruiting in the Militia. He did not, however, agree with the noble Earl (the Earl of Galloway) in his remarks upon the Army, because he was, for one, strongly in favour of the Militia Force being made as efficient as possible under the new system. As to the preliminary drill being undergone at the option of the recruits, he strongly objected to such a system, as it would affect discipline at the very onset. If some recruits preferred to drill at one time and some at another, how could any system be properly carried out? The system, moreover, would entirely do away with the retention of Militiamen under the orders of their own officers, which it was so important to secure. He was glad to see that the subject had received the attention of the Government since the discussion last year, and he hoped that next year they would be able to come to their Lordships and say they would revert to the old system. He thought that the Militia should be drilled by their own officers; and he also thought that the men should be paid 10*s.* on enlisting. There was another point which did not appear to have received the attention of the War Office—namely, that the class of men who went into the Militia were not at all the same class as went into the Army. With respect to the Militia Reserve, he was in favour of providing as strong a Force as could be got; but he thought that the present system of giving bounties in connection with it was a great waste of public money. Their Lordships could not expect the Government to do more at this moment than they had; but, if they continued in the same road, he felt perfectly certain that everything would be found entirely satisfactory next year.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK said, that he did not intend to follow up the arguments that had been so ably advanced by the noble Duke (the Duke of Montrose) and others on the Militia generally in the course of the debate. When the Militia Reserve was last called out he was strongly impressed in its favour, and he thought it should be kept in a much higher state of numbers than it was in at present. It struck him that when one looked at the slow growth of the Regular body of the Army Reserve, there ought to be some stronger Force than that was. That Reserve had, no doubt, increased in recent years, but not to anything like the extent anticipated by Lord Cardwell, who expected that in a very few years it would have amounted to 81,000 men. A more complete delusion never existed; and it was rather based upon arithmetical than practical calculations. When he (Viscount Cranbrook) was at the War Office, great efforts had been made to get additional force into the Reserve, and with considerable success, as had been tested by experience. When the Militia Reserves were called out in his time, he well remembered that the illustrous Duke at the head of the Army said, after inspecting them, that in a short time it would be difficult to distinguish them from the Army Reserves, showing what excellent drill they had received. He thought that some steps should now be taken to keep up that Reserve. It was probably some 23,000 or 24,000 strong, though, according to the books, it consisted of 27,000 men. After deductions, the 27,000 would be brought down to the number he had named. If the Militia Reserve were increased and kept up, it would be most useful to fall back upon in times of trouble; and it seemed to him that a greater number might very easily be procured. The point, however, which he wished to impress upon the Government was the necessity for giving both the Army and the Militia alike some period of rest, so that men might know what they had to expect. Nothing had more checked recruiting than the continual changes that were made, and which were so rapid and so constant as to cause the utmost disquiet, people having only the most indistinct notion of what was ultimately to become of them. He hoped that they had at last come to the time when the Army and the Militia might understand that they were upon a footing which would not be disturbed for many years.

THE EARL OF LIMERICK said, he also must be allowed to express his regret that the Government had decided to permit Militia recruits to drill at any time they chose, and trusted the Government would re-consider their decision upon the point. From his experience as the commanding officer of a battalion detached from the depôt, he did not think the plan would work, for the men would come in in small numbers at different periods, and that would be detrimental to good discipline. They now had about 150 or 200 recruits drilled together; but, in the event of there being only a few men, it would be impossible to teach them anything but the most elementary squad-drill.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY, in reply, said, that, after the discussion which had taken place, he would withdraw his Motion.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

AFRICA (EAST COAST)—THE ISLAND OF IBO.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD BALFOUR asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can give the House any information as to a visit of the French ship "Eloise" to the Island of Ibo, alleged to have taken place early in February, for the purpose of procuring "labourers" for the French colonies; whether, in consequence of the visit, a considerable number of the natives assembled armed, and the Portuguese military authorities intervened, killing or wounding seventy-five of the natives and putting the remainder to flight? A telegram to that effect appeared in the newspapers about a month ago, and he had seen neither contradiction nor confirmation of it since that time. Suspicion would naturally be raised by such a description as this, that the Natives were afraid the labour market was not to be one conducted fairly on both sides, and that the labourers would be practically slaves. The Island of Ibo, about 500 miles from Madagascar, was conveniently situated in regard to the mainland of the African Continent, and from the coast there was a route into the interior towards Lake Nyassa, where it was conjectured some slave gangs had been taken.

EARL GRANVILLE, in reply, said, that until the noble Lord's Question appeared upon the Notice Paper, he had heard nothing about the incident referred to. The Portuguese Government itself knew nothing about the matter, but information had been telegraphed for.

House adjourned at Seven o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 15*th March,* 1883.

MINUTES.]—COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (Special Report).

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—NAVY ESTIMATES, 1883-4; CIVIL SERVICES (Vote on Account, £3,606,800); CIVIL SERVICES—Class I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS; Class II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS; Class III.—LAW AND JUSTICE; Class IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART; Class V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES; Class VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES; Class VII.—MISCELLANEOUS; REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee*—£6,240,100, Consolidated Fund.

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Ogmore Dock and Railway *.

PUBLIC BILL — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Crown Lands * [122].

Second Reading—Bills of Sale (Ireland) Act (1879) Amendment [105].

Considered as amended — Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *.

QUESTIONS.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY—THE OLD LAW COURTS.

MR. R. H. PAGET asked the First Commissioner of Works, If he will be good enough to place in the Library of the House an architectural elevation, showing the proposed treatment of that part of Westminster Hall which will be opened to view by the removal of the Old Law Courts?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Until the whole of the buildings of the Royal Law Courts are entirely removed, it is impossible to form any opinion as to what should be done with the West Front of Westminster Hall. Whenever a decision is arrived at I will take an early opportunity of informing the House of any works that are in contemplation.

TREATY OF WASHINGTON—THE ALABAMA CLAIMS.

MR. KENNARD asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What steps, if any, have been recently taken to recover the sum of £2,000,000, and increments, paid by Her Majesty's Government to that of the United States in excess of the requirements of the "'Alabama' claims," which sum remains over and above all known claims, and is now held in suspense in the Exchequer of the United States? The hon. Member said, that, before putting the Question, he would like to know whether the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had had his attention called to a statement in the public Press, to the effect that the fund was insufficient to meet all the claims outstanding, and that the probability was that when the claims were decided upon they would be apportioned *pro rata.* He believed it was an open secret that very large commission. —["Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is at liberty to put a Question, and to give any explanation that may be necessary to make the Question plain; but he is not at liberty to enter into new and debateable matter.

MR. KENNARD said, his only object was to make the Question plain and intelligible, and, after the ruling of the Speaker, he would simply put the Question as it stood upon the Paper.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I assure the hon. Member that his Question is an exceedingly plain one and does not require any explanation. In reply to the hon. Member's Question, I have to say that her Majesty's Government has not made any such inquiries or demands.

MR. KENNARD gave Notice that he would call attention to the matter on going into Committee of Supply.

JUDICATURE AMENDMENT ACT, 1875 —THE JUDGES' RULES—JURISDICTION OF ENGLISH HIGH COURTS OVER DOMICILED SCOTCHMEN.

MR. BUCHANAN asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he can give any further information as to the alteration of the Rule under the Judicature Act to prevent domiciled Scotchmen being summoned to the English Courts, which he stated to be in draft on February 22nd; whether that draft alteration has been submitted to him; and, whether the proposed alteration is sufficient in his judgment to remove the hardship complained of; and, if not, whether he will take steps to induce Her Majesty's Government to insert in the Bill they propose to introduce in the other House for the amendment of the Judicature Act a provision to render the recurrence of such encroachments on the jurisdiction of the Scottish Courts impossible for the future?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): The only additional information I have to give is, that the Rules in course of preparation by the English Judges will probably be presented to Parliament immediately after the Recess. I have not seen the draft of the proposed alteration upon the particular Rule referred to in the Question; but there will be full opportunity for considering the Rules when they are laid upon the Table of the House.

LIGHTHOUSES AND BEACONS—THE NORTHUMBERLAND COAST.

SIR WALTER BURRELL asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it be not possible to obviate, or at all events to lessen, the danger attendant upon the position of the Knavestone Rock, off the coast of Northumberland, to seagoing vessels, either by replacing the beacon formerly standing upon that rock, or by blowing away so much of it as will insure a deepwater channel over it?

MR. J. HOLMS (for Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): I am informed by the Trinity House that the beacon on the Knavestone Rock appears to have been discontinued about the year 1826, when the light on the Longstone was built which, when in line with the light of the Inner Fern, indicates the position of the Knavestone. The rock being thus marked by night and by day it is considered that there is no necessity for a beacon, more especially as the Trinity House are not aware that there have been any casualties which can be attributed to this particular rock.

SCOTLAND—PRECOGNITIONS IN CASES OF SUDDEN DEATH.

MR. BROADHURST asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he is in a position to state if any progress has been made towards the establishment in Scotland of a public inquiry into all cases of sudden death?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): Public inquiries are frequently held under special statutory provisions into certain classes of accidents—namely, accidents in mines, shipwrecks, railway accidents, and boiler explosions; but sudden deaths, generally, and fires, are investigated by the Procurator Fiscal, and the results reported to the Crown Office. Greater publicity is, however, now given to sudden deaths by the Returns, which are published monthly in the localities, according to instructions given about a year ago. There is no present intention to make legislative provision for public investigation regarding all sudden deaths and fires in Scotland, as there does not seem to be any prevalent demand for so large a change in the law—a change which could only be carried out by the creation of a new staff of officials, who would be substantially Coroners, throughout the country, at great cost.

POST OFFICE—THE PARCELS POST.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Postmaster General, If he will lay upon the Table an estimate of the proposed increased expenditure which will be involved by the introduction of the Parcels Post?

MR. FAWCETT: The information which we have as to the details of the expenditure connected with the Parcels Post are not sufficiently complete to enable me to lay before the House, at the present time, the Estimate asked for by my right hon. Friend. I have every reason to expect that the Parcels Post will be in operation by the beginning of July, and it is my intention to lay a detailed Estimate upon the Table before it comes into operation. I may state that it is anticipated that in the first year the expenditure will be covered by the receipts, and in the expenditure many items will be included which in ordinary business would be charged to capital.

STATE OF IRELAND—DESTITUTION AT LOUGHREA.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his intention has been directed to the destitution in the town of Loughrea and its immediate vicinity; if it is contemplated to take any steps, further than the proffer of the workhouse, to relieve this distress; and, if a sworn inquiry into the state of a department of the workhouse has been demanded of any of the guardians of that union?

MR. TREVELYAN: The attention of the Local Government Board has been directed to the distress in Loughrea Union; but they do not consider it necessary to take any further step than to afford to all destitute persons the relief provided under the Poor Law Acts. The Local Government Board have called upon the Guardians to appoint two additional relieving officers, in order that such officers may be within easy reach of all persons in different parts of the Union who may require relief. A sworn inquiry into the management of the workhouse has been held within the present week; but the Inspector's Report has not yet been received.

ENGLAND AND SPAIN—GIBRALTAR—THE ANCHORAGE GROUND.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any demand has been made on Her Majesty's Government by the Government of Spain with respect to the anchorage ground at Gibraltar; whether Her Majesty's Government have proposed that the questions involved should be submitted to the decision of a Commission similar to that which adjudicated on the "Alabama" claims; whether such proposal has been accepted or rejected by the Spanish Government; whether the Spanish Government are intending to build forts at San Felipe which will command the Gibraltar anchorage; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will present to Parliament Papers on these subjects, including any Correspondence that may have taken place at former times in respect thereto, and the Papers recently laid before the Spanish Cortes?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No demand has been made by the Government of Spain with respect to the anchorage ground at Gibraltar, nor have Her Majesty's Government made any proposal of the kind suggested by my hon. Friend. Her Majesty's Government have no definite information as to the intention of the Spanish Government to build a fort at San Felipe; but they are fully aware of the importance of the subject. The Correspondence referred to by my hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth dates from the year 1825; and, as at present advised, Her Majesty's Government do not consider that they would be justified in incurring the expense which their publication would entail.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked whether any Correspondence had been laid before the Spanish Cortes; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government had been consulted on the subject before it was so laid?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he should require Notice of that Question.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he would ask the Question to-morrow.

INDIA—PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

Mr. CARBUTT asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If there is any intention on the part of Her Majesty's Government or the Government of India to withdraw from the position taken up by the Government of India, in the Resolution of the 29th of November, 1881, by which it was determined, after the 1st of January, 1882, to separate the Military from the Civil Branches of the Public Works Department?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: I think that my hon. Friend has misunderstood the effect of the Resolution to which he refers. It does not separate the Military from the Civil Branches of the Public Works Department, but simply transfers, for administrative convenience, to the Military Department the business in connection with military works previously conducted in the Public Works Department. There is no reason to suppose that the Government of India intend to withdraw from this Resolution, and the Secretary of State for India has no intention of interfering in an administrative detail of this kind.

In reply to Mr. Onslow,

Mr. J. K. CROSS said, the whole matter of the Public Works Department was under the consideration of the Government of India.

LAW AND JUSTICE—COUNTY COURTS—ASSISTANT BAILIFFS.

Mr. STEWART MACLIVER asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If his attention has been called to the suicide of John Walter, aged seventy, for thirty years an assistant bailiff to the Shoreditch County Court (as reported in the "Standard" of 24th February); whether deceased, being previously disabled by accident, had been refused an allowance by the Treasury; and, whether any consideration can be given to the repeated memorials of assistant bailiffs of County Courts, supported by the judges under whom they act, for a superannuation allowance such as is given to others in the public service?

Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE (for Mr. Courtney): My hon. Friend has seen the paragraph referred to, and can only say that the facts of the case, as regards the question of pension, were not before the jury. Assistant bailiffs of County Courts are appointed and paid by the high bailiffs, who can dismiss them at pleasure. They are, therefore, in no sense Civil servants; and it was no more possible to give Walter a pension from public funds than it would be in the case of any other private person not in the service of the State. With reference to the last paragraph of the Question, I am informed that the point has been considered, and that it is thought better, in the interests of the Public Service, that assistant bailiffs should remain outside the Civil Service, as at present.

BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND) — APPOINTMENT OF GENERAL JAMES.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether General James, lately appointed Assistant Commissioner of the Board of Works, Ireland, to take charge of the loans to Irish tenants for improvement of their holdings, is a superannuated English officer of Engineers; whether such officer, General James, has had any special opportunities of becoming acquainted with the wants of Irish tenants in relation to their holdings, or whether there are any special grounds for his selection as Assistant Commissioner; and, if he has not had such experience, what are the special grounds upon which he was selected to fill the post?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) (for Mr. COURTNEY): Colonel James was an officer of Royal Engineers who elected to receive retired pay when his period of service in Ireland as Commanding Royal Engineer expired. On retirement, he was allowed the rank of Major General. He was for 13 years on the Ordnance Survey, and has been specially employed on other analogous duties, and in 1879 and 1880 he was selected to assist the Irish Board of Works in examining works presented for the purpose of affording relief during the earlier period of distress, and subsequently in expediting the works of land improvement, for which loans had been granted to proprietors. On the passing of the Land Act, 1881, his services were again sought for by the Board of Works, in order that his experience in connection with the distress works might be taken advantage of to expedite the arrangements for granting loans to tenants. I do not understand what the hon. Member means by "special opportunities of becoming acquainted with the wants of Irish tenants in relation to their holdings;" but from his past experience and efficiency, I conceive that the appointment of Major General James is a very proper one.

POST OFFICE—ALLEGED OVER-CROWDING.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Postmaster General, If his attention has been directed to the statements in the "Lancet" that—

> "In the Post Office Department, which yields a revenue of over three millions to the State, we hear there is great pressure, and that financial considerations exclude proper regard for the health of the employés. This is also said to be true of the Savings Bank Department, in which clerks are encouraged to work thirteen hours a day in crowded rooms, heated and lighted with gas. A more certain manufactory of consumption could not be imagined. We have heard of an instance in Queen Victoria Street where nearly one hundred of these employés are housed in a basement where gas is burning on the brightest days;"

and, if he will take steps to investigate the truth of these grave statements?

MR. FAWCETT: I can assure the hon. Member that the authorities of the Post Office are most anxious, as far as possible, to prevent the staff from being inconvenienced by over-crowding. The provision of buildings is, however, one of the chief difficulties in administering a Department, the business of which is so rapidly increasing as that of the Post Office. I may mention that recently several new buildings have been taken, and enlargements are being carried out in the existing premises. Much relief will thus be afforded. With regard to the amount of overtime, I may say that no clerks have been required to work the number of hours mentioned by the hon. Member. It is difficult to ascertain the number of hours of extra duty worked, because overtime is generally paid for, not by the hour, but by the amount of work done. No clerks are employed in the basement of the Savings Bank; but the sorting of papers and book-binding are carried on there. I believe it is the case that inconvenience has been suffered from the necessity of using so large an amount of gas. The substitution of the electric light for gas is now under consideration.

METROPOLITAN RAILWAYS—VENTILATORS.

MR. W. H. JAMES asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, If his attention has been called to the statement made by Sir Frederick Bramwell before the Committee of the House of Lords on the 19th of May 1881, with reference to an accident which occurred with an omnibus on the 28th of January in the Euston Road, in which he states that as the driver was proceeding to the City, when approaching the ventilator over the railway, a large volume of steam came up, frightening the horses, who both reared; in another instant that he lost sight of them, and that it was only by hearing their feet upon the pavement and the wheels striking against the palisade he knew where he was, and that had there been outside passengers they must have been thrown off; and, whether the ventilator in question is similar to those being now placed in the Embankment and Victoria Street; and, if so, what steps the Metropolitan Board now propose to take to protect the traffic from the recurrence of these or similar accidents in this neighbourhood, and what power they possess to remove those obstructions or nuisances which imperil the lives of street passengers?

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: I am aware of the evidence given by Sir

Frederick Bramwell before the Committee referred to by the hon. Member; and I may say that I entertain the strongest objections to the mode of ventilation by apertures into the street, and that I gave decided views upon the subject before Captain Galton, the arbitrator. The ventilators on the Embankment and in Queen Victoria Street are intended to be raised above the street levels; but though, perhaps, not so likely to frighten horses, they must necessarily be dangerous and obstructive to the traffic, and a nuisance to the neighbourhood. They have, however, been sanctioned by Parliament, in spite of the strenuous opposition of the Metropolitan Board and the City of London, and I am not aware of any steps which the Board or the Corporation can take for their removal.

MR. W. H. JAMES: May I ask the hon. and gallant Baronet whether, notwithstanding these difficulties, the Metropolitan Board of Works, or the Corporation, can take any steps for the removal of the ventilators?

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: My hon. Friend is well aware that, by the Forms of the House, there are very great difficulties; but, notwithstanding these, one of my colleagues has put a notice on the paper for the meeting of the Board of Works to-morrow, to discuss the question whether it is possible to bring in a Bill for the repeal of the obnoxious clauses. The General Purposes Committee will consider the matter, and I think they will have power to act.

TURKEY — DISORDERS IN UPPER MACEDONIA.

MR. BRYCE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to the disorders prevailing in Upper Macedonia, and to the dangers likely to result to the peace of the Balkan Peninsula from those disorders; whether there was formerly a British Consul stationed at Prizrend, in that district; and, whether, considering the state of the country, and the desirability of having authentic information regarding it, Her Majesty's Government will consider the propriety of again sending a Consul or Consular Agent to Prizrend?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I regret to say that the Reports which reach Her Majesty's Government as to the state of Upper Macedonia are not satisfactory. A British Consular Officer was stationed at Prizrend from August, 1879, to July, 1880; but, owing to the danger arising from the lawlessness of the population, it was thought necessary to withdraw him. Her Majesty's Government do not consider it advisable at the present time to send another Consular Officer to Prizrend.

IRELAND—NATIONALIZATION OF THE LAND.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the following statement in the "Freeman" of the 8th instant:—

> "At a meeting recently held in London of gentlemen in favour of the nationalisation of the land, it was decided, on the motion of Mr. William Trant, of Battersea, that a monster deputation of Englishmen be organised to visit Ireland, and give a welcome and present an address to Mr. Michael Davitt on his release from gaol;"

and, whether there will be any objection to the deputation on the part of the Irish authorities?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have seen the paragraph referred to, and can only say that on this or any other occasion on which crowds of people may be collected together, the Government will take such measures as they may deem necessary to preserve the peace.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—INDUSTRIAL INSTRUCTION OF PAUPER CHILDREN.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, as Chairman of the Local Government Board, it has come to his knowledge that the Board of Guardians of Mountmellick Union, Queen's County, appointed teachers to instruct the children in the workhouse in certain industries, and that the Local Government Board refused to ratify the appointments; whether the Board of Guardians, at their last meeting, protested against being obliged to discontinue the instruction of the children in useful industries; and, whether he can state on what grounds the Local Government Board objects to the children in workhouses being taught industries that might be useful to them?

Mr. TREVELYAN: From the Reports submitted to me I find that the Guardians proposed to appoint two pauper inmates to instruct the children in spinning and fancy work. The Local Government Board did not consider them to be suitable persons to act as paid officers of the workhouse, and declined to ratify the appointments. The Guardians protested at a recent meeting against this decision. The Local Government Board do not object to the children in the workhouses being taught useful industries; on the contrary, they encourage such teaching in every way in their power; but they consider it necessary to see that proper persons are employed. I think, however, the matter wants some further inquiries, and I am making them.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—SEARCHES IN PUBLIC-HOUSES.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state the number of persons searched by Policemen and Marines in the public-houses of Dublin since the passing of the Prevention of Crime Act; and, the number of firearms and treasonable documents found upon the persons so searched?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The number of persons searched in public-houses is 545. There were no arms or treasonable documents found on any of them. I do not wish to diminish the significance of that fact; but I would remind the House that these searches were made, for the most part, at a time when no arrests had been effected, though it was known that a very considerable number of murderous weapons were in the City of Dublin. Searches in public-houses have not always been fruitless in Dublin. On the 16th of December the public-house of John Lawless was searched, and two guns, one revolver, a double-barrelled pistol, a bayonet, dirk, and pikehead, together with some gunpowder, were found. There have recently been found in the River Liffey and on streets four revolvers, 233 rounds of ball cartridge, six rifles, 13 knives or daggers, some bullets and percussion caps, and a bayonet, probably thrown out and got rid of in consequence of apprehensions on the part of the persons in whose possession they were that their premises or persons might be searched.

DOMINION OF CANADA—MISSION OF THE RED INDIAN CHIEF.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he can state the result of the mission of the Red Indian Chief who last year visited this Country, had an audience with Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor, and an interview with Lord Kimberley at the Colonial Office; and, whether any assurance can now be given that his tribe will not be disturbed by the Canadian Government in the possession of the territory assigned to them?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: As a matter of fact, the person in question had no audience of Her Majesty nor interview with the Earl of Kimberley. The Colonial Office, however, in consequence of his application, referred the matter to the Government of Canada, and were informed at the end of last year that the allegation of the Chief Wah-Bun-Ah-Kee, *alias* Scobie Logan, that a movement was on foot to deprive the Indians occupying the Caradoc reserve of their lands thereon was totally without foundation.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTIONS OF BOARDS OF GUARDIANS—POWERS OF RETURNING OFFICERS.

Mr. MOLLOY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a returning officer to a Poor Law Union has any power to prevent a solicitor, representing candidates seeking election as guardians of the poor, being present at the counting of the votes given at such election?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Under the General Orders of the Local Government Board, which have been in force for the last 20 years, a returning officer has a discretion as to the admission or exclusion of strangers on such occasions. I do not understand that the candidate or his proposers were excluded on this occasion, however. A complaint has been made to the Local Government Board that in a recent case in the King's County the returning officer declined to admit a solicitor, and the Board have asked him to state the reasons which influenced him in so doing.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—THE QUEEN'S COUNTY PRISON.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Queen's County Prison has been converted into an invalid convict prison for the use of the Country generally; whether, under a recent Order in Council, female prisoners remanded or committed in that Country can no longer be sent to the county prison, but must be sent either north, to Tullamore, or south, to Kilkenny; whether the cost of the conveyance and of escorts thrown upon the county has not been thereby considerably increased; whether the journey of 16 or 20 miles on cars in the winter inflicts such suffering on the underclad prisoners that magistrates prefer to discharge prisoners charged with trivial offences rather than subject them to it; whether any representation has been made by the magistrates to the Lord Lieutenant on the subject; and, whether he will statew hat decision has been arrived at respecting it?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The facts are substantially as stated in the first two paragraphs of this Question. It is true that the cost of the conveyance and escort of prisoners has thereby been increased; but, on the other hand, it must be remembered that this is only a part of a general re-arrangement under the Prisons Act, under which the Queen's County effects a considerable saving by being relieved of the cost of maintaining its prisoners. In the case of a woman recently sentenced at Maryborough Petty Sessions to 24 hours' imprisonment for petty larceny, the magistrates, at the earnest request of the prosecutor, who pressed for leniency, altered the sentence, and ordered the prisoner to be kept in custody until the rising of the Court. This was quite an exceptional case, and is, I am informed, the only foundation for the allegations contained in the fourth paragraph of the Question. No representations have been made to the Lord Lieutenant on the subject from any Bench of Magistrates in the county.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Has not the Lord Lieutenant received any representation from the Grand Jury lately assembled?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I am not aware of any.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—ERECTION OF LABOURERS' COTTAGES.

Lord JOHN MANNERS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state the number of orders made by the Land Commissioners for the erection of Labourers' cottages, and the number of cottages which have been erected in consequence of such orders?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Land Commissioners inform me that the number of such orders made is 339; but that they are unable to state how many cottages have been erected in consequence of such orders. By Section 4 of the Labourers' Cottages and Allotments Act, a tenant who has been ordered to erect or improve a cottage is liable, on the complaint of any labourer employed on his holding, and in whose favour an order was made, to a penalty, recoverable before Justices in Petty Sessions, of £1 for every week—after six months from the date of the order—during which such order remains unobeyed. The enforcement of an order is, therefore, left to the person benefited thereby. I have asked the Board of Works to supply me with a statement of the amount expended through their Department for the last 10 years on labourers' cottages, and when I receive it I shall be happy to show it to the noble Lord.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: Would it be possible to obtain information as to the number of cottages that have been erected?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I imagine it would be very difficult; but I will follow up the matter.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SALES TO TENANTS.

Colonel KING-HARMAN asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, How many applications have been made to the Land Commission of Ireland by owners of property to effect sales to their tenants; how many sales have been effected in pursuance of such applications; and, what amount of business, if any, has been done by the Purchase Department of the Land Commission Court since the passing of the Land Act, 1881?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter), in reply, said, there had been only two applications in cases where the rent-roll was over £5,000 a-year, and in both of these cases the tenants declined to pay the lowest sum which the landlords would take, and so the negotiations fell through. In other branches of the Land Sales Department there had been 405 loans applied for, amounting to £501,973. Of these, up to the present, 286 loans, representing £125,799, had been sanctioned, and 133 sales completed, and loans issued amounting to £59,426.

Mr. SEXTON asked whether the Attorney General for Ireland would lay a Return on the Table embodying these facts?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter): Yes.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS—COLLISIONS AT SEA.

General OWEN WILLIAMS asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return of the number of collisions at sea caused by steam vessels during the last two years, together with the number of lives sacrificed on these occasions; and, whether, from the sources of information at his command, he has reasonable cause to infer that many other casualties have been occasioned by steam vessels running at undue speed in thick and foggy weather, although direct proof of such may not be obtainable?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, that the information which was asked for by the hon. and gallant Member would be found in the Wreck Abstract which was annually presented to Parliament, and the Returns for the present year were now in the hands of the printers. As regarded the second part of the Question, it appeared to him to be put in some misapprehension; because the hon. and gallant Member asked whether there were many other casualties—collisions—which were due to steamers running at an undue rate of speed, and the inference would appear to be that all the other casualties that were reported were due to the fact that steamers ran at an undue rate of speed. He had only to say that he was not aware of any considerable number of casualties from collisions which were not reported in *The Wreck Register*, and that he did not believe that any considerable portion of those which were reported were due to those vessels having run at undue speed.

STATE OF IRELAND—SEED POTATOES.

Colonel NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Would the Government take means to supply a small amount of good seed potatoes in those districts of Ireland in which there has been a partial failure of last year's crop, such seed to be sold for cash?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I can answer the hon. and gallant Member in no other words than that the Government are of opinion that the sale of seed potatoes should be left in the hands of private traders.

NAVY—COASTGUARD STATION AT KINCASLAGH.

Mr. LEA asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If, in 1878, Admiral Phillimore, then Admiral Superintendent of Naval Reserves, recommended the building of a coastguard station at Kincaslagh, County Donegal; and if in consequence a site was at once selected; and, whether, inasmuch as a considerable amount of property and distress exist in the district, he will cause the work to be commenced?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers), in reply, said, he had not been able to verify the statement referred to by his hon. Friend; but the present Admiral Superintendent of Naval Reserves had not reported the erection of a Coastguard Station at Kincaslagh as an urgent matter, although it would be taken in hand before long, probably in the year 1884. If his hon. Friend found that no provision was made for this service next year, he would, perhaps, then renew this Question.

LIGHTHOUSES AND BEACONS—TORY ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE.

Mr. LEA asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the work at Tory Island Lighthouse has been commenced, as promised on the 17th July last; what progress has been made; and, when it will be completed?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, it had been decided to appoint a Committee to inquire into the relative value of oil, gas, and electricity; and any alteration in the existing light at Tory Island would be postponed until this Committee had reported.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE BECHUANA CHIEFS.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, In what way, and at whose expense, Her Majesty's Government propose to provide for the Bechuana Chiefs; and where are they to be placed; and, whether the authority of the Transvaal Government, or what authority, is to be recognised over the territory which has hitherto belonged to those Chiefs?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: Sir, it is proposed to give small pensions from Imperial funds to Mankoroane and Montsioa, and such other Native Chiefs as may appear to have special claims on this country in consequence of former good services or promises of protection, and to find them locations somewhere in British territory. Sir Hercules Robinson has been desired to report where they can best be placed, and what cost may have to be incurred. Until his Report is received nothing further can be decided. As to the second Question, I can only refer the right hon. Gentleman to the Earl of Derby's despatch of the 27th of January to Sir Hercules Robinson, in which he is informed that the—

> "Clauses of the alleged Treaty providing for the exercise within the territories in question of jurisdiction by the Transvaal Government cannot be recognized as valid."

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, the hon. Gentleman had not answered the latter part of the Question. He had stated that the Transvaal Government would not be recognized as the authority; he had not stated who was to be.

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: Of course, my answer to that implied the existing authority.

POST OFFICE—THE PARCELS POST.

Mr. BURT asked the Postmaster General, If he has fully considered the effect which the official notice in the "Post Office Circular," issued September 26th, 1882, will have on sub-postmasters and letter receivers throughout the Kingdom if it is rigidly carried into effect when the parcels post comes into operation, since many of them are, and have been for a great number of years, the agents of the Railway Companies for the collection of parcels; whether the contemplated change will cause a most serious interference with a source of income for work that the persons referred to have done without interfering with the discharge of their official duties; and, whether it is intended that they shall have such an advance made to their allowance as shall be equivalent to the loss they will sustain if they are not permitted to act as agents on behalf of the Railway Companies?

Mr. FAWCETT: I am afraid it invariably happens that it is impossible to introduce any change, however beneficial, without some persons being prejudicially affected. With regard to the Parcels Post, I think it will be obvious to my hon. Friend that it would not be expedient to allow Postmasters to act as agents for private Companies, who will be in direct competition with the Post Office. It is, of course, only fair that some additional remuneration should be given to the Sub-Postmasters and letter receivers for the additional labour which will devolve upon them in consequence of the introduction of the Parcels Post.

LONDON MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT BILL—THE FELLOWSHIP OF FREE PORTERS.

Sir JOSEPH BAILEY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in any measure affecting the Corporation of the City of London, inquiry will be made into the status of the Fellowship of Free Porters, a society subordinate to the Corporation; and, whether the mode in which their funds are administered will be investigated, and the system by which their wages are paid by means of tokens cashed in public-houses?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he was informed that it was not quite correct to say that the wages of the free porters were paid by means of tokens cashed in public-houses, these tokens being vouchers for work done. With regard to the former part of the Question, a good deal of evidence was taken on this matter before the Commission of 1854, and he directed the attention of the hon. Member to its recommendations.

MOROCCO—ILL-TREATMENT OF JEWESSES.

Colonel ALEXANDER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign

Affairs, If he can now state the result of his inquiry into the circumstances under which eight Jewesses were bastinadoed at Casablanca by order of the Interpreter to the British Vice Consul at that place?

Lord **EDMOND FITZMAURICE**: Her Majesty's Minister in Morocco has telegraphed, in answer to the inquiry which I stated on March 6 had been addressed to him, that it is true that eight Jewesses, said to be prostitutes, were flogged by the Governor of Dar-el-Baida, or Casablanca, on January 29. Amiel, a native Jew, who appears to be employed by the Vice Consul as an interpreter, but is not a paid official of the Foreign Office, was present at the punishment; but no certain information has yet been received as to whether he instigated it. Amiel's sons were also flogged and imprisoned by the Governor, with the consent of their father, for having discharged a pistol at the latter, when remonstrated with for having been led into vicious habits by these women. Sir J. Drummond Hay has directed Vice Consul Lapeen to dismiss Amiel from employment for having been present at the flogging, and to express to the Governor disapproval of the flogging of women under any circumstances. Mr. Lapeen has also been instructed to inquire whether the punishment was inflicted at the instigation of Amiel. Full particulars are promised by post. As it has been stated that on a former occasion I denied the existence of such a place as Casablanca, I wish to point out that I carefully guarded myself from doing anything of the kind. What I said was that the Foreign Office had not been able to identify it at the moment, and that we had telegraphed to Her Majesty's Minister in Morocco for information. Dar-el-Baida, Sir, is not only not marked in the ordinary maps and books of reference, as Casablanca, but it is marked on several by the duplicate name of Anfa. On the Admiralty chart, and on the large map of Morocco, officially published by the French Government, the place is only marked as Dar-el-Baida. As soon, however, as it was ascertained in the Office that there was some doubt on the subject, I wrote a private letter, on March 7, to the Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, of which I am myself a member, suggesting that it was, no doubt, the Spanish name of a Moorish town, and asking which it was. Those communications, however, did not pass in time for me to use the results in my reply to the hon. and gallant Member, whose Question was asked on the 6th. The House will see that there has been no neglect on the part of the Foreign Office.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—ARTICLES 9, 10, AND 11 OF THE CONVENTION—REPAYMENT OF THE COMPENSATION CLAIMS.

Mr. **GORST** asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, What amount of money has been paid by the Transvaal Government in repayment of the sums advanced by Her Majesty's Government to meet claims for compensation awarded against the Transvaal Government under Articles 9, 10, and 11 of the Convention?

Mr. **EVELYN ASHLEY**: All the Transvaal Government has paid is £10,000—the results of the sale of captured property.

INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT—GRIEVANCES OF OFFICERS.

Mr. **GORST** asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it would be a breach of the Departmental regulations applicable to Inland Revenue officers to petition Parliament for an inquiry into their alleged grievances by a Parliamentary inquiry; and, whether it will also be a breach of discipline, under the General Order of January 3rd, 1883, for them to request Members of this House, representing the constituencies in which Inland Revenue officers are legally entitled to vote, to support a Motion for such inquiry?

The **CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER** (Mr. Childers): The hon. and learned Member's Question refers to Papers which, on his Motion, have been laid on the Table, and to which, when circulated, I understood that he intended to call the attention of the House. The points he raises are really questions for debate, and could not be satisfactorily dealt with in a bare answer without full explanations. When the Papers are in the hands of Members, if the hon. and learned Gentleman calls attention to them by Motion in the usual way, I shall be able to deal with the subject fully, and, I think, satisfactorily.

INDIA (MYSORE)—CESSION OF LAND.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If Sir James Gordon, Commissioner of Mysore, recommended Lord Ripon to approve the renewal of the concession of twenty square miles of land in Mysore for mining purposes to Messrs. Lavelle and Mackenzie and Lieutenant-Colonel Beresford; whether Sir James Gordon informed Lord Ripon that Mr. Mackenzie was senior partner of the firm of Arbuthnot and Co. of Madras, and Member of the Madras Legislative Council, and that Lieutenant-Colonel Beresford was Officiating Deputy Adjutant General of the Madras Army; was Lord Ripon made aware of the relations between Arbuthnot and Co. and the mining enterprises which had previously been attempted upon the lands in question; and, whether Lord Ripon knowingly sanctioned the connection of officials of the Madras Government and Madras Army with these proceedings, or why was he not informed upon these points?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: The details of this transaction, so far as they are known in the India Office, were explained to the House on the 14th of August last by the late Secretary of State, in answer to a Question of the hon. Member for Dungarvan. The concession in question was granted in 1877, and was for three years, from March, 1876. In 1878, it was further extended to February, 1880, and in February, 1880, it was further extended for a period of three years. The terms of the concession were approved by the Government of India before the assumption of Office by the present Viceroy, who took his seat in June, 1880. There is no reason to suppose that all the facts connected with the matter were not at the time fully before the Government.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) ACT, 1878 — INCREASE OF DRUNKENNESS.

Mr. CALLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the charges delivered, in the course of last week, to the grand juries of county Clare at Ennis, on Tuesday last, when Lord Justice Fitz-Gibbon told the grand jury that drunkenness in county Clare had increased from 960 to 1,511 cases (nearly 60 per cent.); of county Tipperary, at Nenagh, on the same day, when Mr. Baron Dowse said the cases of drunkenness in the North Riding of Tipperary had risen from 512 to 1,037 (over 100 per cent.); of county Cavan, on Wednesday, when Judge Harrison told the Cavan grand jury that the crime of drunkenness had trebled in their county; and on Friday, at Limerick, when Mr. Justice O'Brien called the attention of the grand jury of the county to "the very large increase of drunkenness," and Lord Justice Fitz-Gibbon told the grand jury of the city that,

> "While the convictions for drunkenness show a decrease, there was a considerable increase of that offence in the rural portion of that district;"

and, whether it is a fact that these counties, in which it is stated by Her Majesty's Judges of Assize that drunkenness has enormously increased, are not subject to the existing Sunday Closing Act; and that, whilst in the exempted portions of the city of Limerick the convictions for drunkenness show a decrease, there was a considerable increase of drunkenness in the rural, non-exempted portion of the said city?

Sir WILFRID LAWSON asked whether it was not the fact that the decrease in the arrests for drunkenness all over Ireland since the passing of the Sunday Closing Act amounted to 32,000; and, whether the increase referred to by the Judges did not relate to the last half-year?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I must ask the hon. Member to be good enough to give Notice of this Question, which involves considerable local inquiry in Ireland; and the same remark applies to the Question of the hon. Baronet, which I hope he will place on the Paper of the House.

Mr. CALLAN: I have given Notice of the Question. Has the right hon. Gentleman read the Irish papers? Has he read the Charges delivered during the present week by the Judges throughout the country?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I read the Charges delivered by the Judges as they came out, but this Question was only put on the Paper to-day; and when a Question is placed on the Paper it obviously means that official information is wanted, and not information obtained casually. It will take some time to obtain that information.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION COURT—COUNTY DOWN SUB-COMMISSION.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the judgment of the County Down Sub-Commission delivered at Newtownards on 8th March, in the case of James Smith, tenant; the trustees of the Marquess of Downshire, landlord; to the effect that farm buildings erected by a leaseholder in conformity with a covenant of his lease become the absolute property of the landlord on the expiration of the lease, and are chargeable with judicial rent as against the tenant who erected them, even where proof is given of an Ulster tenant right custom on the estate which has hitherto been held to override the covenant; whether this decision affects a large body of leaseholders on the Downshire estate who have invested considerable capital in farm buildings on the faith of the legalisation of that custom; and, whether he intends to take any steps in the matter?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Whoever answers this Question must act as the mouthpiece of the Land Commissioners; and, as my right hon. Friend is absent, I may be allowed to answer the Question. The Secretary of the Land Commission informs the Prime Minister that in this case the decision was given by a legal Assistant Commissioner in his judicial capacity. This decision is liable to review by the Land Commissioners sitting as a Court of Appeal; and the Commissioners think that they could not, with propriety, consent to any explanation or justification of his judgment being produced by the Assistant Commissioner for discussion.

LOCAL AND COUNTY ADMINISTRATION—LEGISLATION.

Mr. PELL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to economy and efficiency in Local Administration, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to enforce by legislation the simplification of areas and adjustment of boundaries of local authorities?

Mr. ALBERT GREY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he will inform the House what steps the Government are prepared to take in order to give speedy effect to the prayer of the memorial signed by sixty-eight Members of the House, in which they respectfully urged upon his attention

> "The pressing necessity of dealing in some effectual manner with the confusion and expense caused by the divided, overlapping, and conflicting areas of local and county administration; and that this should be done by calling on the local and county authorities to frame draft schemes within a certain period with the above object, subject to revision and confirmation by the Local Government Board, with power to the Local Government Board to frame schemes itself in those cases where no draft scheme shall have been presented to it?"

Mr. HIBBERT (for Mr. Gladstone), in reply, said: The prayer of the Memorial referred to in the Question of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Grey) has been fully considered by my right hon. Friend and by the Government. The simplification of areas, and the adjustment of the boundaries of the districts of local authorities, will necessarily be considered in connection with any scheme of local government; and in any measure on that subject it will be important to secure the practical assistance which can be rendered by county authorities in preparing schemes for dealing with the divided, overlapping, and conflicting areas of local and county administration. In the event of its being found impracticable to introduce a Local Government Bill this Session, the Government will consider whether a Bill should be brought in conferring upon county authorities such powers as those suggested. With regard to the unit of administration—the parish—considerable progress has been made by the Local Government Board, under the Poor Law Acts of 1876 and 1879, in annexing to adjoining parishes detached parts of parishes; and the Poor Law Act of last year will have the effect of incorporating, from and after the 25th of the present month, every detached part of a parish which is wholly surrounded by another parish, with the parish by which the part is surrounded. These preliminary steps to a simplification of areas will tend to facilitate the preparation of schemes by the county authorities.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE EASTER RECESS.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he can state the Bills it is the intention of the Government to propose for Second Reading before the House rises for the Easter Recess?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: In the absence of my right hon. Friend I have to say that the Government hope, on Monday next and Tuesday morning, to be able to take the second reading of the Bankruptcy Bill, the Criminal Code (Indictable Offences Procedure) Bill, and the Court of Criminal Appeal Bill, or as many of those Bills as may be possible, as these are the Bills which it is proposed to refer to the Standing Committees.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE inquired whether the Bankruptcy Bill would be the first Order on Monday?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Yes, Sir; it will.

In reply to Sir Stafford Northcote,

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, that it would be necessary to proceed with the Vote on Account to-night, at any hour at which it could be brought on. The first money Vote for the Navy must also be taken to-night.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL—POLICY OF HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I trust that the House will permit me to state the course which I intend to take with regard to the Motion which stands in my name in reference to the policy of the Government in the Transvaal. Having considered the statements that were made on behalf of the Government in both Houses on Tuesday, I should have felt it necessary, in any event, materially to modify the terms of that Motion. I have also had to consider, in view of the discouraging replies of the Prime Minister to me, and the fact that the adjourned debate to-morrow will probably extend very far beyond the issues raised by the Motion of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), how it may be possible for me to obtain means for bringing on any Motion which I may desire to move. Well, Sir, what I am anxious to do is to elicit the judgment of the House upon what appears to me to be the real and whole question at issue; and I wish to do that, as far as possible, in accordance with the convenience of the House, which would not be consulted by any unnecessary repetition of debate. Therefore, what I propose is this. To the Motion of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham—which I fear I cannot myself support—an Amendment has been moved by the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Cartwright); and, in the event of that Amendment becoming a substantive Motion, I shall propose to leave out all the words after the word "Transvaal," in the third line of that Notice, and to insert other words in their place. The Motion, as I propose to amend it, will then read thus—

> "That in view of the very grave complications that must attend intervention in the affairs of the Native population of the Western Frontier of the Transvaal after the policy adopted by Her Majesty's Government in 1881, and the serious consequences which are to be apprehended from the failure of Her Majesty's Government to give any practical effect to stipulations made in the name of the British Nation to guard the interests of Native tribes, this House regrets that Her Majesty's Government should, by the Convention of 1881, have committed this country to engagements which they are not prepared to fulfil."

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—PARLIAMENTARY OATHS ACT (1866) AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. HICKS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is now in a position to give an assurance to the House that the Affirmation Bill will not be brought forward for Second Reading till after the first week after Easter, as many Members have to be absent from the House during that week, in consequence of having to attend to their duties at Quarter Sessions?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: In the absence of the Prime Minister, I may say, in reply to the Question of the hon. Member, that we will undertake not to bring forward the Parliamenary Oaths Act (1866) Amendment Bill on the Thursday or Friday in Easter week; but I am unable to say at present what Business may be taken on the Monday following. An intimation, however, will be given to the House on that subject as soon as possible.

Mr. GORST wished to ask whether it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to proceed with the Bill at all?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: It certainly is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to proceed with the Bill.

ARMY—APPOINTMENT OF QUARTERMASTERS.

MR. H. S. NORTHCOTE asked the Secretary of State for War, If his attention has been called to the fact that, notwithstanding the provisions of Article 5 of the Royal Warrant for Pay and Promotion 1882, appointments of quartermasters in the Royal Engineers have recently been conferred on Warrant officers over forty years of age; and, if he will consider the advisability of so amending the Warrant as to substitute forty-five for forty years as the limit of age for such appointments?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON, in reply, said, that there had only been one case in which the appointment had been conferred under 40 years of age. It was under consideration to extend, in certain cases, the age under which the position of quartermaster might be conferred.

PARLIAMENT—COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (SPECIAL REPORT).

Leave to Committee to make a Special Report.

Special Report *brought up*, and read.

SIR JOHN R. MOWBRAY *reported* from the Committee of Selection, That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, which may, by Order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee:—Colonel Alexander, Mr. Armitstead, The Lord Advocate, Sir Walter Barttelot, Sir Arthur Bass, Mr. John Bright, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Bulwer, Mr. Burt, Sir George Campbell, Lord Edward Cavendish, Sir Thomas Chambers, Mr. Henry Chaplin, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Edward Clarke, Sir Edward Colebrooke, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Joseph Cowen, Sir Richard Cross, Mr. Davey, Mr. Dillwyn, Mr. Dodds, Mr. Dodson, Mr. William Edward Forster, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Lewis Fry, Mr. Gibson, Sir Hardinge Giffard, Mr. William Henry Gladstone, Sir Gabriel Goldney, Mr. Gorst, Mr. Gourley, Mr. Gregory, Mr. Heneage, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Staveley Hill, Mr. Beresford Hope, Mr. Hopwood, Mr. Walter James, Mr. Attorney General, Colonel King-Harman, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. William Lawrence, Sir Baldwyn Leighton, Mr. Charles Edward Lewis, Sir Massey Lopes, Mr. Marum, Mr. Monk, Colonel Nolan, Mr. Henry Northcote, Mr. Richard Paget, Mr. Parnell, Sir Joseph Pease, Mr. Pemberton. Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Mr. Richard Power, Mr. Charles Russell, Mr. Schreiber, Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Walter, Mr. Whitley, and Mr. Yorke.

SIR JOHN R. MOWBRAY further *reported* from the said Committee, That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures, which may, by Order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee:—Mr. Anderson, Mr. Armitage, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland, Mr. Baring, Mr. Barran, Mr. Boord, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Maurice Brooks, Mr. Thomas Bruce, Mr. Caine, Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Corry, Sir Robert Cunliffe, Sir Donald Currie, Mr. Dalrymple, Mr. Richard Davies, Mr. Thomas Dickson, Mr. Ecroyd, Mr. Algernon Egerton, Sir George Elliot, Mr. Henry Fitzwilliam, Mr. William Fowler, Mr. Edmond Dwyer Gray, Mr. Albert Grey, Lord George Hamilton, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Mr. Solicitor General, Mr. John Holms, Mr. James Howard, Mr. Hubbard, Colonel Kingscote, Mr. Edward Leatham, Mr. William Lowther, Sir John Lubbock, Mr. MacIver, Sir William M'Arthur, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. M'Lagan, Sir Alexander Matheson, Sir Charles Mills, Mr. Samuel Morley, Mr. Mulholland, Mr. Norwood, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Sir Henry Peek, Mr. Arthur Peel, Mr. Albert Pell, Lord Algernon Percy, Mr. O'Connor Power, Mr. Puleston, Lord Rendlesham, Mr. Ritchie, Sir Nathaniel de Rothschild, Mr. Rylands, Sir John St. Aubyn, Mr. William Shaw, Mr. Slagg, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. Edward Stanhope, Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. John Talbot, Colonel Tottenham, Sir Hussey Vivian, and Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE—MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE.

MR. J. R. YORKE: I rise for the purpose of putting a Question to the hon. Member for Leeds, the Junior Lord of the Treasury, of which I have given him private Notice. He was present yesterday "at the fifth annual meeting of the Hornsey Liberal Association, Northfield Hall, Highgate, Sir Sydney Waterlow, M.P., presiding." He is reported to have made use of the following among other expressions:—

> "In concluding his remarks"—I am reading from the report in *The Daily News*—"and speaking of Obstruction in the House of Commons, he said it came from a conspiracy of the Tory Party as a whole; and although the House had already benefited by the Forms of Procedure, yet it was perfectly clear that the New Rules that had been framed, although perfectly competent to put down Obstruction from a few men, were not sufficient to deal with it from a whole Party."

I pass over an unimportant passage and come to this—

> "They would not be able to read even the Bankruptcy Bill before Easter, and everybody knew that that was due to a dangerous and malicious conspiracy on the part of the Tory Party."

I wish to ask whether this report which I have read of his speech is substantially correct; and, if so, whether the hon. Member has anything to state to the House with respect to the expressions which he has used?

Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE: The words quoted by the hon. Gentleman are, I admit, substantially correct. I frankly confess that I think the words "malicious conspiracy" are stronger than the occasion required. At the same time, I adhere to my conviction that there is on the other side of the House, for the purpose of obstructing the measures of Her Majesty's Government, a considerable amount of united action.

Mr. J. R. YORKE: In consequence of the answer I have received from the hon. Gentleman, I have to take the course which I trusted I should not have been compelled to deem necessary; because I think I may say with perfect truth it has never been my practice to interrupt the proceedings of this House with any untimely interposition on my part, either in the way of moving the adjournment, or by question of Privilege, or any other manner. The only occasion on which I have departed from that practice was when I was urgently solicited by the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government to do so; and on this occasion, if the hon. Gentleman, instead of endeavouring, as I submit he has, to evade the question, had frankly and unreservedly withdrawn the odious —I say deliberately the odious—and undeserved imputation which he thought proper to make against the Tory Party as a whole, I should not have troubled the House with any interruption of its proceedings by moving any Resolution on the subject of Privilege.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand, from the observations which have fallen from the hon. Member, that he proposes to bring this matter before the House as a question of Privilege. I further understand that the extract from the newspaper which has been read by the hon. Gentleman refers to expressions which have been used by the hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. Herbert Gladstone) outside this House. I am not here to say that there may not be occasions when it may not be fit, and even necessary, to bring before the House expressions which have been used outside of the House by one of its Members; but I think that the House would do well not to make it a common practice to take notice of expressions used outside of the House, and to bring them forward as breaches of Privilege. I am bound to say that if these questions are to be treated as breaches of Privilege the House will set a dangerous precedent. I am aware that occasionally that course has been taken—that is to say, that notice has been taken of expressions which have not been used in the House, but outside the House, by Members of the House; but such occasions have been very rare. There was one such occasion in the year 1875, when a Member, speaking outside of this House of the Irish Party, did speak of that Party in language of a violent personal character. Notice was taken in this House of the expressions which had been used; but the expressions attributed to the hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. Herbert Gladstone) are not of that violent character; and I think, after the withdrawal of the words "malicious conspiracy" by the hon. Member, that the matter should go no further; and, unless I am otherwise instructed by the House, I shall consider it my duty not to treat this matter as a question of breach of Privilege.

Mr. J. R. YORKE: With the fullest deference to your ruling, Sir, I may be allowed to ask the hon. Member for Leeds whether he distinctly and unreservedly withdraws the words to which I have called attention.

Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE: I have already stated plainly that I do withdraw the words "malicious conspiracy." I suppose the hon. Gentleman misunderstood me.

Mr. J. R. YORKE: I will only submit to you, Sir, in extenuation of the course which I have taken, that in the year 1875, with respect to the very matter which you quoted, an hon. Member made use of the expression, with regard to the Irish Party, that they were "a disreputable lot." The hon. Member first explained that he had merely meant that their conduct was not creditable; but, nevertheless, on a Motion for the adjournment of the debate, he was called upon to apologize for having used that expression so explained. I mention this in extenuation for my having thought that the expressions of the hon. Gentleman, even after his qualified withdrawal of them, justified me in proceeding with the Motion which I was about to make.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—INTERFERENCE WITH LADIES ATTENDING PUBLIC MEETINGS.

Mr. MARUM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the action of the Constabulary Force in the town of Castlecomer, in the county of Kilkenny, that whereas a public meeting of the ladies of Castlecomer was convened by placards, at their instance, to be held at the rooms of the Catholic Young Men's Society, for the purpose of considering the advisability of presenting an address to Michael Davitt, upon such occasion, as upon former ones, two policemen attended, and when requested by one of the ladies, Miss Annie M'Kenny, to produce their authority for such proceeding, they stated "that they had orders to follow these ladies wherever they went;" and, whether such action shall be continued in future?

Mr. TREVELYAN: My attention has been called to this matter. The meeting was one convened by public placard, and the police attended in the discharge of their duty. It is not the case that when asked by Miss M'Kenny to produce their authority, they stated "that they had orders to follow these ladies wherever they went." They have no such orders, nor did they say so. It is the case, however, that there were persons concerned in the promotion of the meeting who are believed to be engaged in endeavouring to renew agitation in the district, and whose movements the police have instructions to watch.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—STOPPAGE OF SALE OF NEWSPAPERS ON SUNDAY IN LONDONDERRY.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that in Londonderry, last Sunday, the police arrested the boys in the streets who were selling copies of the Dublin "Evening Telegraph" of the previous evening, confiscated the papers, and summoned the boys, under a statute of William III,, known as the Lord's Day Act; whether this was done because of anything illegal or objectionable in the paper itself, or merely in consequence of its sale on Sunday; and, if the latter, whether it is the intention of the Irish Executive to use the Forces of the Crown in Ireland for the prevention of the sale of newspapers on Sundays, in a manner not used in London and other English towns under the corresponding English Act?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I have received the following telegram from the County Inspector of Constabulary at Londonderry:—

> "Acting under Mayor's orders, constables on duty last Sunday warned newsvendors not to offer newspapers for sale in streets, and when they persisted some of the papers were seized. The recent practice of crying out of newspapers in the streets here on Sundays gave offence to many citizens. Cases heard to-day at Petty Sessions. Papers ordered to be forfeited."

It does not appear that it was because of anything illegal or objectionable in the paper itself; but because of its sale on Sunday. That is all the information I have on the subject. The proceedings were not prompted by, or with the knowledge of, the Executive; but were taken by the magistrates. The Irish Executive has no such intention as is suggested in the last paragraph of the Question.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

ROYAL MARINES.—RESOLUTION.

Mr. HOPWOOD, in rising to call attention to certain inequalities and defects of administration affecting the Corps of Royal Marines; and to move—

> "That the Military and Naval value of the Corps of Royal Marines deserves to be adequately represented on the Board of Admiralty, so that the just claims of the Corps may be recognised, and defects in its administration remedied; and that it be referred to a Select Committee of this House to inquire into and report upon the best mode of effecting the above objects,"

said, no apology was needed to the House for occupying its attention with the grievances of this body, which was an arm of the Service of daily increasing importance to the country. It had had a curious and chequered history; but there could be no doubt that it was now a force of the highest value. In case of war, such a force was considered absolutely necessary by those best skilled in military and naval matters; but, unfortunately, it occupied a position where it was difficult to obtain an appreciation of what was its due. For this reason, he proposed a Committee of Inquiry, one of the first duties of which would be to suggest a remedy for the block and finality of promotion among the officers of Marines. There was no real employment for officers of this Corps above the grade of lieutenant-colonel, and the lieutenant-colonels themselves were engaged in work considerably beneath the dignity of those occupying a corresponding rank in the Army. In the Royal Artillery it took, on the average, 28 years to become lieutenant-colonel, 24 to become major, and 15 for a captain. In the Royal Engineers the parallel figures were 30, 23, and 16; but in the Royal Marine Artillery and Infantry the service for these ranks was longer than the longest time he had mentioned. Comparing the officers of the Royal Marines with those of the Line, the Line had greater advantages, because it had the employment on the Staff and half-pay promotion, both of which were at present closed to Marine officers. On board ship, too, the Marine officer was, as far as the command of his men was concerned, often under a great disadvantage, both personally and in the exercise of discipline, owing to his having, in some instances, to refer to the senior executive officer, perhaps greatly junior to himself, under the captain of the ship, though, it was true, some captains did delegate some of their powers over the Marines to the officers of that body. Again, when active operations upon land, which were the avenue to distinction and reward, took place, what was the position of the Marine officer? The Admiral had in his hands the distinction to be gained, and he naturally leaned towards the blue-jackets. In Ashantee, Colonel Festing, who was in command of the Marines, was on shore for a couple of months, and won praise on all hands; but, as soon as reinforcements arrived, the Marines were returned on board ship, and 400 blue-jackets were sent on shore. And the same thing happened in Abyssinia, Zululand, and the war against the Boers. Another anomaly existed with regard to discipline. When the Marines were on board ship, they were under the Naval Discipline Act; but as soon as they stepped on shore, a difficulty arose as to whether they were subject to those provisions, or whether they came under the Army Regulations. This question cropped up lately at Port Said, and the rumour went that, some time after the bombardment of Alexandria, the Commander of the troops on shore refused to have the Marines unless they were put under the Army Regulations; and, after some 48 hours' delay in telegraphing home, the difficulty was removed by the Admiral giving way. But the Marine officer on shore had often this to contend with—that when it was necessary to inflict punishment, or to repress any acts of his men, he had to wait for an officer from the ship—one far junior to himself it might be—to come with the necessary powers to decide the matter. These examples showed that friction arose in the management of the force, and it was this friction which he wished to see prevented. Who ever heard of an officer of the Marines getting a G.C.B.? Yet he apprehended that some of them had shown by their services that they merited such a distinction, quite as much as their more fortunate brethren of the Army and the Navy. Whenever were the Marines included in a Vote of Thanks by Parliament for a single victory? There might be an isolated case; but it was a fact that they were omitted from the Vote of Thanks which was passed on the conclusion of the Egyptian Campaign, and the only reason given was that there was not an officer of sufficient rank in the Service to justify the Vote being extended to them. Bearing in mind the large contingent of Marines that was sent to Egypt, he put it to the House whether there ought not, in common justice, to have been a recognition of their merits by a General Officer being placed at their head? The question had been asked, why this had not been done; and the reply was—"We do not think it necessary." Who were the "we?" The First Lord of the Admiralty, and several other gentlemen who represented exclusively the Navy interests; and the injustice was particularly hard on the Marines, too, in this way—that, because there was no officer of general rank among them, they were not given a special Vote of Thanks for their services. The hon. and learned Member then drew attention to the difference in pay of the Marines and the Line in regard to officers and men alike, and said the distinction was most unfair and unjustifiable. The officers of the Marines were composed of men of equal station and worthiness, and yet were paid in a very disproportionate manner. He admitted that during the last two or three years, several matters in regard to this valuable Corps had been set right; but they were remedies long delayed, and their concession was no reason why the Marines should not seek to get other grievances redressed. Having pointed out that the conditions of promotion in the Marines were unfair in comparison with those in the Line, and that there was also an invidious distinction in regard to pensions, he said that in the Line a soldier received another advantage in deferred pay, which was denied to the Marine. It might be said that the Marine received more money in the shape of rations when at sea on board ship than another soldier, and so he ought; but when he was on shore a portion of money was deducted in respect of rations, which reduced his pay below that of a Linesman. The officers of the Marines, too, were denied the privilege of Greenwich Hospital pensions, and the patronage of the Horse Guards was never distributed among general officers of that Corps. Considering their numbers and the position they occupied in relation to our national defences, he thought they should be treated in a more satisfactory manner. He was told that in regard to the pensions of widows of officers of Marines killed in action, or in circumstances which, under the Regulations of the Army, would entitle them to a pension, such claims had been lately denied by the Admiralty in the case of a lady whose husband had been killed at Tel-el-Kebir, though recently, just before, Admiralty Regulations had been issued stating that the Army Regulations were to be followed. Some years ago the same demand for inquiry was made on behalf of the Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers, as he was now making for the Royal Marines; and the Government of the day agreed to the appointment of a Select Committee, whereby an improved state of things was brought about. He trusted the Secretary to the Admiralty would adopt a similar course on the present occasion. There was no doubt that, as far as the rank and file were concerned, the Marines had been a very popular Corps for enlistment; but there was a danger in straining that popularity by the perpetuation of injustice and anomalies. The hon. and learned Gentleman concluded by moving his Resolution.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM, in seconding the Resolution, said, that before he knew the hon. and learned Member for Stockport had given Notice of his Motion he had put down a somewhat similar Motion himself. It might be in the recollection of the House that a short time ago he had asked a Question of the Secretary to the Admiralty on the subject of the Marine Forces. The answer he received was not satisfactory to that Force. Since that time they had had considerable correspondence with Gentlemen interested in the question; and so strongly had it been represented to him that something must be done, and done quickly, in the direction pointed out by the Resolution, that he was induced to give Notice of the Motion, in the hope that the Secretary to the Admiralty might see his way to think better of the answer he had then given; or, if that was not possible, to give him an opportunity to explain fully to the House his reasons for not acceding to what appeared to be a very fair and a very just demand. The question had been discussed before several times; Questions had been asked with reference to the Marine Force, and vague promises from time to time had been given; but, so far as he could make out, the practical benefits that had been derived by the Marines were *nil*. If this Motion were granted it could do no possible harm to anyone; whilst it would be the means of conferring a great boon on a most deserving class of men. As at present constituted, the Board of Admiralty consisted of the First Lord of the Admiralty, three Naval Lords, and one or two Civil Lords, and the First Naval Lord was the personage who had charge of the administration of the Marine Force. Besides that, there was a Deputy Adjutant General, who might or might not be consulted; but as he had no voice in the administration, he did not see how this gentleman was in a position to be of any great service to the Marines. It appeared to him to be a truism that, however friendly a Naval officer might be with the Force, naturally his first sympathy was in favour of his own Service. He had no doubt the reason why the Marine Force insisted on direct representation on the Board of Admiralty was because they felt that the anomaly that now existed would in that case be remedied. When they took into consideration the fact that the Marine Force represented one-third of the fighting force of the Navy, and that while the 26,000 men of the Navy were represented on the Board of Admiralty by three Naval Lords, the 13,000 Marines had no direct representation on the Board whatever, he thought a strong *primâ facie* case was made out for a Committee to inquire into the subject. With regard to their position under the Naval Discipline Act, they complained, with justice, that they had no particular status when on board ship. They had no right to demand immediate communication with the captain of the ship, and they also complained that they had no power to award the slightest punishment to their own men. During the late Egyptian War a force of Marines was landed, 1,200 strong, and commanded by three superior officers. Not one of these officers could administer the smallest punishment, and when on outpost duty irregularities occurred on the part of the men, the colonel commanding had to send for a captain of the Royal Navy to come on shore to administer the punishment. He could not imagine a position more degrading to the officers, more likely to destroy *esprit de corps*, or to prevent due respect from the men to the officers. He quoted from a lecture recently delivered by a distinguished officer of the Royal Marine Artillery emphasizing the anomalies under which the Marines were when placed under the Navy Discipline Act, which conclusively proved that while the education of the Marine officer was a most expensive one under the present system, we were deliberately and recklessly throwing away the advantage which the State had a right to expect from this superior education. He could not but feel that the manner in which the Marines had hitherto been treated had greatly impeded the development and prosperity of the Corps. If the Corps had one of its officers on the Board who could have spoken authoritatively on matters connected with the Force, what he complained of would have been impossible. One of his correspondents had suggested one of three courses which were as follows:—1. That when with the Navy the Marines should have the same privileges, relative ranks, and pay as the Navy. 2. That they should be turned over to the War Office and lent for Naval service, being placed on the same footing as an Army officer for all things. 3. That, failing either of these, the Corps should be wiped out. Now, he (Viscount Lewisham) need say no more to show that when such a proposition as the third one could be seriously made, how deep-seated was the grievance. He had met the Marines in different parts of the world, both afloat and ashore, and had no hesitation in saying that they were superior, in physique and general efficiency, to the Marines of any other nation in the world, and that they would bear comparison with the smartest regiment in Her Majesty's Service. When they considered that there was no quarter of the world in which the blood of their Marines had not been shed, and that there was hardly a battle in which England had been engaged in which they had not taken a distinguished part, he thought the House should unanimously agree to the Motion of the hon. and learned Member.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the Military and Naval value of the Corps of Royal Marines deserves to be adequately represented on the Board of Admiralty, so that the just claims of the Corps may be recognised, and defects in its administration remedied; and that it be referred to a Select Committee of this House to inquire into and report upon the best mode of effecting the above objects,"—(*Mr. Hopwood,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR said, that, having been employed on service in China, in which the Marines formed an important part of the Force, he was bound to state that a finer body of men than the Royal Marines could not be found. During his own experience, some changes in the organization and composition of this Corps had been made which had not been beneficial, at least, to the officers of the Marines, while some had been so; but it was necessary that other changes should be carried out. The fact could not be gainsaid, that Naval officers by merely being in command of a few Blue-jackets on shore, thereby took command of Marines as well, was a great defect. He remembered the case of Captain Ellis, who had been a Marine officer at Trafalgar, but who, on landing, fell under the command of Naval officers who were not born till many years after that action. No doubt, care must be observed in making changes, for they must consider the Marines as part of the Naval Force of the country, and they must not allow any changes to be made which would interfere with that Force as a whole. He thought that this question would not now have been raised if Naval officers showed more consideration when officers of Marines went on shore; but that the latter should have the command of an Army Force would, in his opinion, hardly be fair to the Army officers.

Sir JOHN HAY said, he thought a case had been made out for inquiry by a Committee. This House had inquired at various times into the position of different branches of the Service; and a Committee, over which the Chancellor of the Exchequer presided, rendered very good service in that way 12 or 15 years ago. He thought the time had now come when such an inquiry might be again made with great advantage. As regarded the Naval Discipline Act, the captain must be held entirely responsible for discipline on board ship, and this duty could not be delegated to any other person. Especially in these days, when this House criticized with great propriety any undue severity, it would never do to delegate to any other than the captain such a responsibility. The Marines should be regarded as part of the Navy, and they must disabuse their minds of any idea that the Navy could ever be conducted without a Force like the Marines. There were some points raised by the hon. and learned Member for Stockport which he thought might fairly be accepted by the House, or at least inquired into by a Committee. He himself had made the very proposal which the noble Viscount (Viscount Lewisham) had proposed, with reference to a Marine officer at the Board of Admiralty. No doubt, when the present Chancellor of the Exchequer was at the Admiralty, a change was made reducing considerably the number of the members of the Board; but public opinion changed again, and the Board was largely increased. If it was to be understood that the Board of Admiralty was to contain within it representatives of all the branches of the Service, then it was necessary that the Marines, who were one-third of the whole force of the Navy, should also be represented at head-quarters in the same manner. He entirely agreed with the hon. and learned Member, that when Royal Marines were tried by court martial, one or more members of the court should be Marine officers. If the number of the Marines was to be increased, the questions of their pay and pensions might very fairly and properly be submitted to a Committee for inquiry. If the hon. and learned Member carried his Motion to a division, he should certainly divide with him.

Mr. EUGENE COLLINS said, it was generally admitted that sergeants of Marines made the best officers of that rank in the Auxiliary Forces; but they were treated with great injustice, as regarded pension and pay, when compared with non-commissioned officers of the Army serving in the same capacity. He trusted these inequalities would be removed, and justice done to this admirable Corps.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he thought that the House was much indebted to the hon. and learned Member for Stockport for bringing this question so prominently before them, for there was no body of men who had served their country more ably and faithfully than the Royal Marines. He was sorry, however, to have to say that, whether Conservatives or Liberals were in Office, but little attention was paid by the Administration for the time being to the wants, the requirements, and the necessities of this branch of Her Majesty's Forces. He did not understand that it was the wish of the hon. and learned Member who had brought this question forward that the Royal Marines should be taken away from the Navy, or that the captain in command of a ship should not have full power over every man on board it; but the Royal Marines wanted someone in whom they could trust to be placed on the Board of Admiralty. The Force now consisted of a fighting body of men numbering about 13,000, and they had every right to demand that one of their number, who occupied a superior rank, should be placed upon that Board. The Royal Marines had behaved admirably in Egypt; yet in consequence of the red-tapeism, which required that all Reports relating to them should be addressed home, not through their own commanding officer, but through the Naval officer in command, no mention of their gallant conduct had been made in Lord Wolseley's despatches. This was a practice that he thought should at once be done away with. If the officer who was in command of the Marines was to make his Report directly to the General it would be sent home with the other Reports. Another point to which he desired to draw attention was that all punishments of the Marines had to be referred to the Admiral or other Naval officer in command, and that, consequently, when Marines were landed, and the Admiral did not give any orders for placing them under the Army Discipline Act, the men were actually under no Discipline Act whatever, and could not be punished for the offences they might commit. This state of affairs had actually occurred in the Crimea, when the Marines who were landed were under no such Act for at least a fortnight. In his opinion, when Marines were landed, they should be under the command of their own officers, who should always give the executive words of command. If a Marine officer of high rank were placed upon the Board of Admiralty, the question of pay and other grievances would be looked into, and thus satisfaction would be given to as fine a body of fighting men as could be found in the whole world. He hoped the Committee would be granted.

LORD HENRY LENNOX, as one who had taken great interest in Naval affairs, thanked the hon. and learned Member who had moved this Resolution. Recent events had shown that the Marines were in the present what they had always been in the past, and that as Infantry soldiers or as Artillerymen they were without rivals. In Egypt they did good service at Alexandria with the armour-clad train, and in a number of other engagements; while as police at Port Said they had succeeded admirably. Yet there was no body of men who had suffered so much from uncertainty as to their condition, and from anomalies and hardships. If the Secretary to the Admiralty granted this Committee, where all their grievances might be thrashed out, he was sure that the Marines would be willing to abide by their Report. He was not going to press on the Government that the Royal Marines should be represented on the Board of Admiralty by a general officer, because he believed that a small Board was more useful and effective than a large one; but the very fact that he was unwilling to press that claim made him the more anxious to urge the granting of a Committee to determine what should be the future condition of one of the noblest branches of the Service. It was not a matter of surprise that the Marines should wish to have a more direct representation on the Board. If they had had it, there would not have been what he called last year that insenrate reduction of 600 officers and men, who six months afterwards would have rendered such invaluable service.

SIR HENRY FLETCHER supported the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Stockport. He urged last year that a general officer should be appointed to serve on the Board of Admiralty. At present matters connected with the Royal Marines were under the supervision of the Senior Naval Lord; but he had a great many things connected with the Navy to supervise, and the interests of the Marines would be more effectually looked after if they had an officer of their own to attend to them. Another grievance was that officers of the Royal Marines were debarred from holding staff appointments, though eligible for entering the Staff College, like officers of the Army. When they had passed through a two years' course of severe instruction, there was nothing whatever open to them. When officers of Marines had passed from the grade of colonel, when they became colonels commandant, they had nothing to look forward to. In Egypt the authorities, both Military and Naval, made great use of the Marines, who were sent to the front at Alexandria and at Tel-el-Kebir, because they were old soldiers—as the Marines were allowed to engage for 12 years, whereas in the Army men were not allowed to engage for more than seven or eight. The Royal Marine Artillery did good service also in some of the minor engagements when the Royal Artillery were put out of action. He humbly asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, as he had done two years ago, to allow the Committee to be appointed.

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, that although some observations had been made by hon. Members in the course of the debate with which he could not entirely agree, his feelings and opinions were altogether in harmony with all that had been said in praise of that gallant Force, the Marines. There was not a word that could be used too strong to describe the gratitude which the country owed to the officers and men of that Force. Apart from their daily and constant duties on board ship, in time of peace, they had often served so well in an extremity, and had been employed with advantage on so many occasions, that he thought there would be a general agreement amongst hon. Members that there was no Force more deserving of the confidence of the country. Therefore, speaking for himself and his Colleagues, he approached the subject with every disposition to do justice to the claims of the officers and men. His hon. and learned Friend who brought forward the Motion did not appear to be aware of the important steps which the present Board of Admiralty had taken within the last two years with a view to redressing what appeared to be the grievances and inequalities from which the Marines suffered. Without entering fully into the question of the increase of pay granted to them, he might state that the money advantage of the changes of last year was represented by the sum of £24,000. As to the promotion of the officers, of course, it was difficult to equalize the rates of promotion in the different branches of the Service; but a good deal had been done to improve the position of the officers of Marines. They had been given the right of promotion from the rank of lieutenant to that of captain after 12 years' service, and at the present moment the senior lieutenant of the Corps had only 9½ years' service. Besides, it must be borne in mind that young Marine officers on appointment obtained at once the full rights of officers, and counted their service for promotion and retirement from the day of their appointment; while their brother in arms in another branch of the Service had to go either to Sandhurst or Woolwich, and spend a year, or two years, in undergoing a costly education, before he received his commission. Going higher than the rank of lieutenant, he might say that a Warrant had been prepared, and would very shortly be issued, granting to captains of Marines a brevet majority after 21 years' service, and to majors a brevet lieutenant-colonelcy after 28 years' service, or after seven years' service in the rank of major. Some delay had occurred in the preparation of the Warrant; but no injustice would be done to the Marines, because it would date from the time when similar advantages were given to the Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers. Other things had been done into which he need not enter in detail; but he had been furnished with a statement showing the comparative state of promotion in the three Corps—Artillery, Engineers, and Marines. The Return showed that the junior lieutenant-colonel of the Royal Artillery was born in 1837; of the Royal Engineers in 1838; of the Royal Marine Artillery in 1836; and of the Royal Marine Light Infantry in 1837. The junior major of the Royal Artillery was born in 1843; of the Engineers in 1841; of the Marine Artillery in 1842; and of the Marine Light Infantry in 1844. The junior captain of the Royal Artillery was born in 1854; of the Engineers in 1850; of the Marine Artillery in 1852; and of the Marine Light Infantry in 1849. This Return, therefore, showed, not, of course, that the rate of promotion was exactly the same in the different Corps, but that it was not in a hopeless condition in the Marines. Something had also been done expressly in order to avoid stagnation, Marine officers being allowed optional retirement on gratuities after 12 years' service. With respect to field officers, whose number his hon. and learned Friend said had been reduced, he found that in 1863 there were in the Artillery no majors, 27 captains, and 56 lieutenants. In 1883 there were 14 majors, 32 captains, and 39 lieutenants. In the Infantry in 1863 there were no majors, 124 captains, and 234 lieutenants; and in 1883 there were 43 majors, 71 captains, and 108 lieutenants. That showed that the state of promotion was very much better now than it was 20 years ago. With respect to pensions, he could only say it was intended that the Marines, both officers and men, should receive their full share of military pensions. Hon. Members said they ought to receive Staff appointments, and, above all, that they ought to be allowed to go on to the generals' list for a share of general officers' commands in connection with the Army. From the Admiralty point of view they had no objection to that, and should be glad to see it done; and he understood from the late Secretary of State for War that before he left Office steps were ordered to be taken for the keeping of some sort of record or register of the qualifications of Marine officers who might be candidates for Staff appointments; because if such a record were not kept His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge would not have the means of selecting a Marine officer for such an appointment. He could only repeat that he was most anxious that Marine officers should have their full share of these appointments. As to the appointment of a general officer of Marines in Egypt that had been so much talked about, he might observe that the force of Marines at Tel-el-Kebir and in the other land operations was no more than a battalion, and that for that reason alone no major-general could have been appointed to command them. The questions of discipline which had been brought forward were well worthy of consideration. As the right hon. and gallant Admiral opposite (Sir John Hay) had said, the captain of a ship was necessarily responsible for the discipline of the ship, and nothing could be done to invalidate his authority; but in the case of Marines on shore, especially when, though co-operating with a Military force, they were not placed under the Army Discipline Act, there was undoubtedly good ground for making a change. It was a matter that had been under the consideration of the Admiralty for some time before the Egyptian operations, and it was intended to introduce a clause dealing with it in the Naval Discipline Bill of the present year. It had been proposed to give the Marines a direct representative on the Board of Admiralty; but there were many conclusive reasons against that step. As things were, the Marines were perfectly well represented by the Deputy Adjutant General, and, besides, the Board was not intended to be a representative body. If the Marines were represented at the Board, other interests and classes in the Service might also claim to be represented, and the members of the Board would gradually recognize the dangerous principle that each of them represented a particular class. The principal objection was, that the Board was primarily consultative in its character and not administrative. The idea of an indignity being cast on the Corps of Royal Marines by their being represented only by a Deputy Adjutant General under an officer of high distinction, such as a Naval Lord always was, was surely dissipated when they considered that the Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers were represented by Deputy Adjutants General. The Royal Artillery was a Corps consisting of between 22,000 and 23,000 men; it was a much larger Corps than the Royal Marines; and it had only a Deputy Adjutant General under an Adjutant General of the Army. Another consideration he would press was that the Board of Admiralty had really very little to do with personal questions. The Admiralty differed from many other Departments in the Public Service in this—that the bulk of the business was not so much personal as material. The business which the Board had to determine was connected rather with the great work of maintaining the Navy in its proper condition, and it had not to do with mere questions of promotion and pay. Therefore, on these grounds, the idea of an officer of Marines being placed at the Board of Admiralty ought to be rejected. According to the terms of the Motion it was to be declared desirable to appoint a general officer to represent the Marines on the Board, and the question how this should be done was to be inquired into by a Committee. The Government were little disposed to assent to the appointment of a Committee on the subject, because there was always danger in the House interfering with the administration of a great Service such as this. The hon. and learned Member had brought forward the Motion in a speech full of martial ardour. His one cry was that money should be spent to relieve the alleged grievances of this Corps. He, who had always been thought to be an advocate of peace and economy, was now moving for a Committee to see how a warlike Service could be rewarded by having additional money spent upon it. The Government were quite prepared to spend it if it were necessary. The steps already taken were an earnest of their willingness, and if they were not sufficient they would see what more could be done. He asked the House not to appoint the Committee, but to leave the matter to the Government, who recognized the strong opinion which prevailed, to discover whether it was necessary to do anything more. If they did not do what was necessary, then the House could call them to account.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that the hon. Member, in his concluding remarks, had recognized the strong feeling that prevailed in both the House and the country in favour of the Royal Marine Corps, who had, at all times, done their duty and proved themselves to be an admirable and a useful Corps. It was fortunate that two or three hours had been devoted to the discussion of the grievances of this Corps, because it enabled justice to be done to their merits, and secured full consideration for the claims presented. No Military body deserved better than this Corps had done; but the argument the hon. Gentleman had used would weigh with him in declining to assent to the appointment of the Committee. The hon. Gentleman had gone fairly and frankly through the several statements made, in order to urge the House to grant the Committee; but his objection appeared to be fatal, that it was to inquire into and report the best mode of effecting an object which the Motion assumed was a foregone conclusion. It was not for the House to make the affirmation contained in the Resolution. He agreed with his hon. Friend, that it would not be to the advantage of the Service, or of the country, that the Corps of Royal Marines should be represented in the terms of this Resolution at the Board of Admiralty. Certainly, no officer sitting at that Board was understood to represent any portion of the Service; each was appointed because of his services, and of his general qualifications to assist in the administration of the Navy; and, undoubtedly, the duties were of the character which had been indicated. Some advantages, he hoped, might result from the discussion. He regretted very much that opportunity was not taken to employ a general officer when the Marines were sent out. It was said that they amounted only to a battalion, and that it was impossible to appoint a general officer to command a battalion; but if they were to be brigaded with the troops of the Line, looking at the great services they had rendered, why for the occasion might they not have been commanded by a general officer? It could not be denied that there was a certain amount of grievance in this direction. Officers who had served well and gallantly during a long period, and who had arrived at a time of life when they might reasonably expect to have the opportunity of showing whether they had qualities of a higher character than had yet been called for, were denied the opportunity when it seemed to occur. On a future occasion, no doubt, a remedy would be found for this admitted grievance. There were officers of the Royal Marines, of all grades, who had shown great capacity; and he saw no reason, simply because these officers had arrived at the rank of colonel or major-general, that they should be denied the opportunity of serving if the Army had need of their services. Undoubtedly, the

Marines existed for services in the Fleet. In time of emergency, they were of great use on land as soldiers; but, still, we must regard Marines first and foremost as sailors, who were bound to serve on ships. He thought some improvement might be made in the Naval Discipline Act, so that there should be no question as to the discipline to which Marines would be subjected when they were landed; but he would not anticipate discussion on that subject. After the discussion which had taken place, he trusted the hon. and learned Gentleman would not ask the House to divide, as there were many hon. Members, and he was one of the number, who would exceedingly regret having to go into the Lobby against what appeared, at all events, to be the interests of the Service. If grievances existed, they would be desirous to do everything in their power to remedy them; but he felt sure that a Committee of that House would not be the best means of effecting an improvement in the condition of the officers and men of the Royal Marines.

Sir EDWARD REED joined in the appeal just made to his hon. and learned Friend not to divide the House on his Motion, as by so doing he would make many Members go into the Lobby against the Royal Marines, of whom they were the warmest admirers. The Board of Admiralty was in no sense a representative body; and although he would be very glad to see a Marine, and more especially an Engineer officer, added to it, such addition would not be for the purpose of direct representation.

Colonel NORTH said, he could not understand why officers of the Marines should not be eligible to every command and every honour that could be conferred upon the Line, the Artillery and the Engineers. His hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty had stated that the strength of the Marines in Egypt was too small for the formation of a brigade; but in the course of the discussion he had heard that the Marines numbered about 1,200 men.

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN intimated that his remarks had reference to the Marines at Tel-el-Kebir.

Colonel NORTH remarked, that he was speaking not of them only, but of the Marines employed during that campaign. If there were 1,200 men, there were virtually two battalions, and those constituted a brigade. They possessed no body of troops which had shown their loyalty and bravery in every part of the world more distinctly than the Royal Marines. The thanks of the Royal Marines were due to the hon. and learned Member for bringing forward this Motion, which it was his intention to support. He served with the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Exchequer on the Committee of 1867, which did great service to the Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers, and he could see no reason why a Committee should not be granted to go into the case of the Royal Marines.

Admiral EGERTON said, he hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman would not divide the House. If the Motion were pressed he should deem it his duty to vote against it. If they were to grant this Committee they would be, in reality, damaging the cause which they were all so anxious to promote. Such a Committee could not be nominated until after Easter; by the time its Report was presented the Session would be considerably advanced; and, meanwhile, the Admiralty would be deterred from taking those steps which the Secretary to the Board stated that they intended to take on behalf of the Corps.

Colonel MAKINS also trusted that the Motion would be withdrawn. The discussion had had the good effect of drawing from the Secretary to the Admiralty a more satisfactory statement than those answers in courteous but peculiar language, which appeared to be common to the Front Bench when it was desired to give a question the go by. He believed the hon. Member was quite correct in saying that the scheme of promotion decided upon had not yet been made public. He desired to state one or two reasons why general officers of Marines should be employed where Marines were brigaded with Regular troops. If this had been done in Egypt, one inconvenience would have been avoided. In one action General Graham was absolutely unaware that the Royal Marines possessed men who were trained as field-gunners, and he kept the Royal Horse Artillery at work, while there were 400 Marine Artillery at hand, who would have been fully capable of relieving them at a time when they were practically exhausted. If there had been a general officer of Marines in command during that campaign, such a loss of force would have been almost impossible. At another time, a general officer was astonished when he was informed that the Royal Marines could have furnished him with a staff of telegraphists.

Mr. HOPWOOD said, he should have been glad to yield to the appeals of his hon. Friends, but he had to consider the wishes of others in this matter, and he considered it for the interest of the public to press his Motion to a division.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 60; Noes 39: Majority 21.—(Div. List, No. 36.)

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

NAVAL RESERVES AND COASTGUARD.

OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. GOURLEY rose to call attention to the Report of Rear Admiral H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh on the Naval Reserves and Coastguard. What he held first with regard to the Reserve Forces was that they should not be organized or regulated with a view to a small war such as that they had recently passed through in Egypt, but should hold in view the future possibility of a war with a large Maritime Power. Upon that subject, the Report which His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh had placed in the hands of the Admiralty was one of very great value; and in dealing with the details connected with the Reserve Forces he had placed before Parliament and the country an amount of information such as had not been conveyed by any Report since that of the Manning Commission in 1859. He (Mr. Gourley) would not call the attention of the House to the condition of the reserve ships of the Navy, as he had done last year upon Admiral Phillimore's Report; but he would like to ask a few questions. First, he would ask how many of them were armed with breech-loading guns, and of what calibre the guns were, and also how many of them were furnished with torpedoes, and how many with torpedo launches? He also wished to know whether any experiments were to be made with these launches in using electricity as a propelling power? If electricity could be applied it would in a large measure revolutionize ocean fighting, inasmuch as in a fog or in the smoke during a battle the launches would be the means of causing an enormous amount of destruction. He quite agreed with the recommendation of His Royal Highness that more men should be kept on board ship and less on shore. The Reserve Squadron was intended to be a fighting squadron, and to protect the Channel and our ports in case of emergency; and, therefore, it was exceedingly desirable that these ships should have the highest amount of efficiency possible. But this could not be obtained and maintained when they kept such a large number of men of the Reserve on shore, where, naturally, they lost knowledge of their duties. The next point referred to by His Royal Highness was their power of manning cruisers. At present the Admiralty were in the habit of supplying vacancies from their iron-clad ships; but any Member who knew anything of yachting, or of the work on board small ships, would know that those men were not the most handy on board cruisers. What His Royal Highness recommended was that, instead of transferring men from the iron-clads, boys — the sons of Coastguardsmen and others—should be apprenticed on board one of those vessels; and the effect of such a course as this would be to bring up a useful class of men without any extra cost to the country —a class of men who would, in after life, make very useful pilots. This recommendation would, if carried out, also effect a very large saving to the Admiralty, for by it they would be able to save the £70 or £80 a-year they now paid for rearing apprentice boys who were borne on the books of the Admiralty. Having dealt with the Coastguard Service afloat, His Royal Highness proceeded to deal with it on shore. With regard to the Coastguard in Ireland he recommended that the Rear Admiral at Queenstown should hold the command of that body in Ireland. The suggestion was a good one, and he should like to ask how many stations there were now in Ireland, and how many men quartered there at the present time? His Royal Highness also pointed out that the number of men now serving on the South Coast was larger than was required, for the object for which the service was established—namely, to prevent smuggling, which had now almost disappeared; and he suggested that a number of those men, who had great knowledge of the life-saving apparatus, should be transferred to the North-East, in a dangerously rocky part of the coast where there were many wrecks and great loss of life. The next point referred to was the present mode of selecting officers for the Coastguard. At present there were 69 officers of superior rank in that Reserve who had little chance of returning to active service afloat, and who, if necessity arose to call on them, would not be found efficient for duty on board modern ships of war after passing so much time ashore. His Royal Highness suggested that younger men should be transferred to the Coastguard Service for shorter terms, say two or three years, and that at the end of that time they should return to active service afloat, an arrangement which would prevent the Admiralty having to place such a large number of useful men on half-pay. The hon. Member then referred to other points in the Report of His Royal Highness, including the suggestions relating to Second Class Reserve, the system of drill that should be adopted, especially in regard to the use of torpedoes, and the Naval Artillery Volunteers, a valuable Force, which should now have a capitation grant with a view to stimulating them to thorough and complete efficiency. In conclusion, he said the Report was a very valuable one, both in regard to the details given and the suggestions embodied in it, and he hoped it would not be allowed to rust in the pigeon-holes of the Admiralty Office.

SIR JOHN HAY said, he thought the House ought to thank the hon. Member for Sunderland for calling attention to this most excellent Report, for which they were indebted to His Royal Highness. He was certain that if that portion of it which referred to the men of the Reserve being employed a portion of the time afloat was carried out it would be a great advantage to the Service. The suggestion with regard to the appointments of the officers and their duties were also excellent. In the Navy Estimates money was taken to pay 20,000 Reserve men, and the suggestion was still in print that only 18,000 would be enrolled. If that was so, the proposal to enrol 10,000 Second Class Reserve men would not be carried out this year. He bore personal testimony to the admirable and useful class of men that could be drawn from the Orkney and Shetland Islands, and the Isle of Man, and he heartily approved the suggestion that the Second Class Reserve men should be drawn from them. He had served in one of Her Majesty's ships with nearly 300 men raised in the Shetland Islands. There had been some difficulty at first in teaching the Northern fishermen the words of command, because they did not all speak English ; but he had seen enough of them to know that in employing them in the Second Class Reserve they should be making use of loyal and excellent men. With regard to the Isle of Man, he lived within a comparatively short distance of it, and had occasionally visited it, while he often saw the Manx fishermen in the bays near his own house, and knew some of them personally, and he was satisfied that they could furnish them with 2,000 men fit for the Second Class Reserve. They were men of fine physique and excellent character, and he was glad His Royal Highness had called attention to them. He regretted to find that the Admiralty, while asking for 20,000 for the Naval Reserve, stated that they believed that they should only be able to raise some 18,000 men for that Force. He had read the Report with great interest, and he trusted his hon. Friend (Sir Thomas Brassey) would be able to assure them that steps would be taken to raise the extra 2,000 men from the sources indicated in the Report.

MR. WILLIAMSON observed, that very possibly the proposal that the men of the Second Class Reserve should receive only £2 10*s*., while the men of the First Class Reserve received £6, might be somewhat inadequate; but he had no doubt that, if it were found to be so, the matter could be considered again another year. He himself rather thought that these fishermen, who derived from their industry at certain seasons of the year a good deal of money, would scarcely be tempted to leave their industry for 28 days for that very small amount. He suggested that if the Admiralty were not successful in getting the full number of these men, they should consider the best means of doing so, if necessary, by offering a larger monetary inducement. He hoped the Admiralty would consider, in connection with that very small money reward, the best means of determining the period of service. He thought 28 days' service was too much for these fishermen to give; and if the Secretary to the Admiralty could tell them that that period might be divided into two or three terms of six or eight or ten days each, it might remove a difficulty. In any case, he considered the idea of reinforcing our Reserves from the fishing population was an admirable one, and the country was indebted to His Royal Highness for bringing it before the attention of the Admiralty. There were on the Eastern and Northern Coasts of Scotland 45,000 men and boys employed in the herring fishing trade, 30,000 able-bodied fishermen on the East side—better or more daring sailors than whom could not be found. They were always at home, and would form an admirable Reserve Force in times of emergency; and he hoped the suggestions of His Royal Highness would be carried out.

Sir JOHN JENKINS urged the claims of the Naval Volunteers, and hoped they would receive more attention from the Admiralty than they had hitherto done.

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY said, that the Report of His Royal Highness the Superintendent of Naval Reserves was an important Paper, and he was glad that his hon. Friend the Member for Sunderland had called the attention of the House to its contents. Among the many valuable suggestions contained in that Report, perhaps the most important was that relating to the future strength of the Reserve. His Royal Highness recommended that the Reserve should be raised to a strength of 20,000 men, consisting of an equal number of First and Second Class Reserve men. This proposal had been adopted by the Admiralty. For the general purposes of manning the Fleet, and especially for the smaller vessels, the hardy fishermen who formed the Second Class Reserve were thoroughly efficient; and if these men were called out for active service it would not cause the inconvenience to the shipping trade which might be felt by the withdrawal of the First Class Reserves, who might be called the leading seamen of the Mercantile Marine. Drill batteries had long been established at points selected for the convenience of the fishermen, including the Shetlands, Wick, Peterhead, Brixham, Falmouth, Penzance and Stornoway. He had announced last year that additional batteries were ordered for Kirkwall and the Isle of Man, and the question of a battery at Grimsby was under consideration. No difficulty would be experienced in increasing the Second Class Reserve from the present strength of 6,000 to 10,000; and twice that number of suitable men could be raised if necessary. According to the statistics recently published by the Commission on the Fisheries, the men constantly employed numbered 56,000; those occasionally employed, 38,675. The increase in the fisheries—all the men being British subjects—compensated, in some degree, for the gradual reduction in the British seamen engaged in the foreign trade. It was interesting to remark that while the development of steam had reduced the number of seamen in the foreign trade, the extension of railways had greatly stimulated the fisheries by the facilities afforded for a distribution of fish to the inland markets. At the port of Hull, the number of smacks had increased from 40, in 1845, to 420 in 1881. At Grimsby they had increased from 70, in 1863, to 625 in 1881. Turning to the First Class Reserve, their present number was 11,316, and the reduction to 10,000 would be effected gradually by raising the standard of qualification. If it were necessary, no difficulty would be experienced in maintaining the First Class Reserve at its former strength. It was true that the percentage of foreign seamen had increased from 18,000, or 9·74 per cent, in 1871, to 14·6 per cent at the date of the latest Return, and the increase of traffic through the Suez Canal would necessarily tend to bring more foreigners into the British Mercantile Marine; but in the stormy seas of Northern Europe, and for Colonial voyages, English seamen would still form the majority of the crews. Throughout the Mercantile Marine they were always to be found in positions of responsibility. In the opinion of the Marine Department of the Board of Trade, as of the Liverpool shipowners, whom he quoted last year, there was no evidence of deterioration in our seamen. With reference to the availability of the Naval Reserve on a sudden emergency, the increase of steam navigation had had a marked and favourable effect in shortening the periods of absence of our seamen from the home ports. In the First Class Reserve only 207 men had obtained leave to engage for long voyages. Before passing from the subject of the Reserve, he desired to refer to the question of rank. Masters holding responsible positions in the Merchant Service could not undertake active duty in connection with the Reserve, and no commission had hitherto been given for a higher rank than that of lieutenant. It was proposed, however, to recognize the recent services of masters of transports in the Egyptian Campaign by making a certain number of promotions to the rank of commander. The hon. Member for Sunderland had referred to some other suggestions of His Royal Highness which the Admiralty were not prepared to adopt. It was not thought expedient to complete the crews of the reserve ships. The disposable men in the home ports were usefully employed in gun-drill and in fitting out ships for commission, and they were constantly being drafted to seagoing ships. For the annual cruise of the Reserve Squadron the crews were completed, as his hon. Friend was well aware, from the Coastguard, whose efficiency must be maintained by occasional service at sea. With regard to the manning of the cutters, a proposal was under consideration to replace them to some extent with gunboats. By this means the duties of the Coastguard would be more efficiently performed. The vessels would be of a class to which the seamen of the Navy were accustomed, and a valuable opportunity would be afforded to our younger officers to gain experience in pilotage and to become acquainted with the Coasts of the United Kingdom. As to the practice of the Naval Reserve at a floating target, its necessity was admitted, and the withdrawal of gunboats from the Coast of Ireland would enable them to make better provision for this service. Referring to the observations of his hon. Friend the Member for Carmarthen (Sir John Jenkins), he was aware that considerable disappointment had been felt in certain quarters at the hesitation of the Admiralty to give a capitation grant to the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers. Having been closely connected with this Force from the commencement, he was naturally anxious to see it established on a permanent basis; but that object could only be attained by giving proof of its efficiency for some defined purpose and by minimizing the cost. The first promoters of the movement were well aware that the training of the Naval Volunteers would entail a large expense for the drills on shore and the exercises afloat, and on this ground, in tendering their services to the Admiralty, they specially insisted on their willingness to dispense with the capitation grant. As compared with the Land Volunteers, the Naval Volunteers were relieved of all expenses except the cost of uniform. They were drilled in the ships or batteries provided for the Naval Reserve, while the Land Volunteers were called upon to bear considerable expenses for drill-sheds. Highly favourable Reports had been received of the conduct and efficiency of the Naval Volunteers both ashore and afloat; but as yet no defined place had been assigned to them in the general scheme for the manning of the Navy. His Royal Highness proposed that they should take the place of the Coastguard; but that could be done with equal efficiency by men who had not been trained as Naval gunners. With these considerations in view, the Admiralty were not prepared to entertain the demand for a capitation grant. He was, however, able to give a satisfactory assurance on a point to which he believed the Naval Volunteers attached even more importance, and he was able to announce that a suitable vessel would this year be appropriated for the annual cruise. The marked success of the Coastguard life insurance fund formed an interesting feature in the Duke of Edinburgh's Report, and the success with which the scheme had been carried into effect reflected the greatest credit on His Royal Highness, The benefits accorded to the contributors were on a more liberal scale than those usually given. The management was in the Reserve Office, and there was only one paid official. The Admiralty had not lost sight of the proposal to extend the scheme to the Service afloat. Having last year given in detail the number of men in reserve for manning the Navy, it was unnecessary that he should recapitulate figures which had not materially changed in the interval. In conclusion, he could assure the House that they had an an ample Force at their disposal to meet any emergency which might arise.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—NAVY ESTIMATES, 1883-4.

DEPARTMENTAL STATEMENT.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: In moving that 57,250 Men and Boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services, including 12,400 Royal Marines, in the next financial year, I believe I shall be taking the course most convenient to the Committee if, before dealing with any question that may arise out of the individual Vote, I make a few remarks explanatory of the Estimates as a whole, and of the administrative policy which they embody and disclose. The net demand which in these Estimates we propose to make upon the public purse amounts to £10,757,000, as compared with £10,483,901, voted for the current year. But this comparison is not quite exact, for these Estimates comprise certain items connected with the Egyptian Expedition, amounting to £25,500, and are further swelled by transfers from Army Votes to the extent of £118,032; so that the amount which should properly be compared with the Estimates of 1882-3 was £10,613,468, showing a net actual increase on those Services which were provided for in the normal Estimates of the present year of £129,567. Now, perhaps I may be allowed to refer to a Paper which I have caused to be prepared and circulated with the Estimates, containing an explanation of the causes of the various differences in these Votes. A similar Paper has for many years accompanied the Army Estimates, and I trust that those who watch with interest the course of Naval Expenditure may find its publication of some use.

SIR JOHN HAY: Where is it to be found?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It was delivered to the right hon. and gallant Admiral a few days ago with his other Parliamentary Papers. If hon. Members will turn to the Abstract given on pages 4 and 5 of the Estimates they will find that, excluding for the moment the two Shipbuilding Votes and the Votes for Victuals and for Naval Stores, there are on the remaining Votes increases and decreases which result in a balance of decrease of £2,799. But if we wish to deal with normal expenditure only, we must deduct from these Votes the charges connected with Egypt which fall upon them, and we thus arrive at a decrease of £28,299. I do not know that any of these Votes call for particular remark from my present point of view, beyond this, that I cannot even see the figures on the Paper without contemplating with some satisfaction, and inviting others to view with the same feeling, the Vote for Retired Pay—that is Vote 15—in which for the first time we find a welcome abatement, due to the lapse of the first of the Terminable Annuities, created in connection with the commutation of retired pay. Year after year we have had nothing but constant additions to the charge under that head; but now at last this 10th year brings us an instalment of relief. We have thus, as I have said, already a net decrease of £28,299, and this is swelled by the Victualling and Store Votes, which give us a further decrease of £118,691, almost equally shared between them. For the former Vote we are able to ask for a diminished sum, chiefly because of the fact that the requirements of the Service during the year have not been so great as was expected, and because we have been able to commence the year 1883-4 with stocks somewhat better replenished than usual. With regard to the Vote for Naval Stores, for which a sum less by £60,000 than last year's Vote will be proposed to the Committee, it is so largely affected by the New Rule as to Appropriations in Aid, that it seems to deserve special remark. This is not the time, nor am I the person, to defend—if it needs defence—the new system, prescribed, as it has been, by the Treasury, with the approval, or, I may even say, at the instigation, of the Committee of Public Accounts. What I wish to say of it, from the point of view of the Executive Departments, is that it has, what I believe to be, a most wholesome and economical effect in encouraging those who administer them to turn useless stores and obsolete property into money, strictly under the control and sanction of the Treasury and of Parliament, and to employ the proceeds in providing for the Public Service. So long as the proceeds of the sales of old stores went to swell, without credit or acknowledgment, the balances of the Exchequer, not only was there a temptation to those in charge of a Department to hoard useless property, which generally deteriorated in value, and which even sometimes cost something in the keeping, but also, if any old stores were disposed of, they had no direct inducement, in the interest of their own Department at least, to secure that the disposal should be effected on the most advantageous terms. But now all that is at an end. If now we are called upon to give new lamps for old, we are at least allowed to set the value of the old lamps against the cost of the new; and I believe the Committee will be of opinion that this arrangement is both right and reasonable. Now, these considerations apply with the most direct force to the Vote to which I am now inviting the attention of hon. Members. Some of our Dockyards have their creeks filled with old and worn out vessels—wooden ships of obsolete type—which are not only useless, but on which money is annually spent to watch them, and frequently to patch them, and pump water out of them, in order to keep them afloat. It would be hardly possible to conceive a less profitable application of public money. Now, it is by the sale of an additional number of these ships—a transaction, the details of which when we come to the Vote I shall be fully prepared to explain and justify—that we have been able to secure a diminution of the public charge under this Vote, which actually provides for an amount of stores for the service of the Navy virtually the same as the provision made under it in the current year. It may be interesting to trace for a moment the history of this Vote in recent years. From the gross amount of the Vote in these Estimates, and for the previous three years, we must deduct the amount expended on repayment on behalf of other Departments of the Government, which is now included in the gross Vote, a credit of the same amount being set against it. The amount available for purchase of stores for Naval Service for the coming year is thus £1,265,500. In 1882-3 it was £1,250,000, the apparent increase being accounted for by the fact that the liability for certain electrical and torpedo stores has now been transferred from the War Office to the Admiralty, who now provide for all such stores with the exception of explosives. In 1881-2, the amount was £1,172,700; in 1880-1, it was £1,011,000; and in 1879-80, it was £1,030,000. The average of these four years, therefore, was £1,115,925; whereas, as I have said, the amount now proposed for the strictly Naval Service of next year is, after deducting the £16,500 taken over from the War Department, £1,249,000. These figures, I venture to think, sufficiently prove that this Vote has not been unduly weakened; and I have thought it right to dwell upon the subject in order to prevent any misapprehension. Now, resuming our review of the Votes, and adding the decrease on victuals and stores of £118,691 to the decrease already secured on the other Votes of £28,299, we have a total net diminution on all the Votes, save two, of £146,990. There remain the two Shipbuilding Votes, which I have kept to the last, and the net expenditure under these we estimate at an increased amount over this year of £394,589. This leaves a net increase on the whole of the Estimates of £247,599; and if we deduct from this the sum of £118,032, which I have already quoted as the result of the transfers between the Army and the Navy Votes, we are brought round again to the net actual increase of £129,567, which I have already stated to the Committee. Now, to those who have kindly followed the figures I have quoted, I have said enough to show what the main principle of policy which underlies these Estimates is — namely, that by thrifty administration we should be able to concentrate as much money as possible upon the Shipbuilding Votes; not by starving the other Votes, for I have shown that this is not done, but by keeping a firm hand upon the expenditure under them, we have endeavoured to render available for the strengthening of Her Majesty's Fleet a larger proportion of the money which we ask for from Parliament than has, for many years at least, been devoted to that purpose. We propose, indeed, a certain addition, to the extent I have named—£129,567—to the burden of Naval Expenditure. I assure the Committee that it is with regret, and after much deliberation, that we do so. But we are responsible to the country for maintaining the Navy of England in a state worthy of her maritime position, and capable of undertaking the manifold duties imposed upon it; and we believe that with this addition—I think I may call it a moderate addition—to the sum at our disposal, which the experiences of recent years and our knowledge of the requirements of the Service convince us is necessary, we shall be able to fulfil our task. Our programme is not of a startling or ambitious character. We have been invited by writers of great authority in the public Press to take another course, to open up a new era of great Naval Expenditure, and to launch forth upon a sea of new projects and unknown expense in shipbuilding. I have to thank hon. Members who entertain those views for their consideration and courtesy in not interposing Amendments on this occasion; but we are not disposed to follow that advice. In the first place, we believe that we are quietly and steadily making and preparing such additions to the Navy as fully to maintain our position. In the second place, I would ask the Committee what would be the effect in Europe if England were suddenly to embark on a new career of Naval Expenditure, and possibly set the example of a fresh international rivalry on the sea, which could in the end but add to the miseries which the system of portentous Military establishments on land already inflict upon the world? And, in the third place, we are of opinion that if ever there was a time when it would be the height of unwisdom to make a sudden and fresh start in Naval construction it is now, for it is hardly too much to say that at the present moment everything is unsettled. The gun and its mountings, the torpedo and its discharge, the degree and extent of a ship's protection, the character and position and distribution of her armament—those and many other questions are subjects of experiment and controversy; and the inventions of science and the versatile development of the art of war may at any moment dictate some new change. Surely, then, we are bound now more than ever to proceed carefully and tentatively, following closely upon known experience, and confining our operations to that which is absolutely necessary. This is the policy of Lord Northbrook and his Colleagues in the present Naval Administration, and it is the only one that the Government are prepared to recommend to Parliament and the country. We believe that in what we are proposing to-night we are doing all that is necessary, while we are not imposing on the taxpayers of the country greater burdens than the necessity of the case requires. Now, Sir, let me direct the attention of the Committee more particularly to Vote 6—the Dockyard Vote. The net expenditure included in it amounts to £1,556,000; but a portion of this may be described as being, in some sense, of an unproductive nature, so far as the building and repairing of ships are concerned. Just as the Estimates are hampered with dead weight, so this Vote includes within its own limits a dead weight of its own, in the form of incidental expenses; and it is satisfactory to observe that this is gradually and steadily dwindling. The amounts appropriated to yard and other services, for the last five years, are as follows:—In 1878-9, £273,177; in 1879-80, £229,160; in 1880-1, £208,988; in 1881-2, £197,676; in 1882-3, £177,554. In 1883-4 it is £178,038. This steady decrease is due to a better system of account-keeping, and to economies consequent on an Inquiry into the subject conducted in 1880 by Mr. Hamilton, to whom the Admiralty and the Public Service of the country owe so much. The amounts proposed to be spent on actual effective wages in next year are, for new construction £504,659, and for repairs £443,484, making a total of £948,143. This will be found to be a larger sum than has been spent for many years on this service; comparing it, for instance, with the average expenditure on wages for the previous five years, which is, for new construction £454,242, and for repairs £350,462, making a total of £804,704; there is shown an increase in favour of the coming year of £143,439. Or, if we compare it with the present year alone, it shows an increase of £126,291. But wages are not the only element in the building and repairing of our ships. Of the materials and stores to be worked up into them it is not easy to form a precise calculation; but, from such information as I can obtain, I would estimate their value at from £750,000 to £800,000; and if we add to these sums the amount to be paid to private undertakings for ships and machinery, under the Contract Vote—in which I include gun-mountings, but exclude the item for experimental services — namely, £1,031,300 we arrive, at a total of nearly £2,750,000 directly, actually, and effectively devoted to the maintenance of the Fleet. But the Committee will ask, with this large amount for wages, materials, and contract work, what work do you propose to do? We expect, if the Committee furnish us with the means, to build of unarmoured ships 3,948 tons in the Dockyards, and 2,270 tons by contract, being 6,218 tons in all, or a somewhat smaller amount than this year. But of armoured tonnage we propose to build 1,982 tons by contract, and 11,224 tons in the Dockyards, or 13,206 tons in all, as against 11,466 tons this year. The Committee will, probably, think that this is a very satisfactory amount. I wish, however, frankly to say that I think a slight modification ought to be made in the figures I have just quoted, which, however, does not affect the substantial effect of the general result. In the armoured tonnage—11,224 tons—which I have said is to be built in the Dockyards, are included, as hon. Members will see if they turn to page 204 of the Estimates, two new protected vessels, the *Mersey* and the *Severn*, which are to be constructed at Chatham. These are the two vessels which I described to the Committee in August last, one of which it was then intended to build by contract, but which are now both to be built at Chatham. They are vessels of a type to which the scientific advisers to the Admiralty attach great importance, and they may possibly prove to be the pioneers of a future class. They will possess high speed, with their machinery, magazines, and buoyancy protected by an armoured deck, but with their armament unprotected. Now, it may be questioned whether these vessels ought to be reckoned as armoured ships, although, with their horizontal protection, there are many who consider them quite as efficient and formidable as certain of the ships which, with perpendicular armour, bear the undisputed title of "iron-clads." The *Polyphemus* has always, for instance, been reckoned as armoured, and the new ships deserve the rank quite as well as she does. But we are disposed, on the whole, to think that a better arrangement would be to place them in a new and intermediate category of "protected ships;" and if this was done, the figures I have quoted would be altered in this way. I should then say that we propose to build 19,424 tons in all, whereof 6,218 would be unarmoured, 925 protected, and 12,281 iron-clad. Now, let me go back over the last five years, and state to the Committee how they stand in this respect. In 1878-9, 8,430 tons of armoured ships were built; in 1879-80, 7,427 tons; in 1880-1, 9,235 tons; in 1881-2, 10,748 tons—and these figures, be it observed, include the *Polyphemus*—and in 1882-3, 11,466 tons by estimate; whereas in 1883-4, excluding the *Severn* and *Mersey*, it is proposed to build 12,281 tons. These figures prove that it has been Lord Northbrook's desire gradually and cautiously, but steadily, to increase the amount of armoured shipbuilding, and how successful he has been in carrying his desire into effect. I will not further occupy the Committee with the recital of tedious figures; but I hope that I have made good our claim to the credit of having been able in our proposals to combine, in a degree not always attainable, a large and substantial addition to the Naval strength of the country with the smallest proportionate addition to the burden of the taxpayer; and that, after all, in my opinion, is the great object of Naval Administration. With regard to the individual ships included in the programme, it is unnecessary to give an exhaustive account of them to the Committee. The history of an iron-clad's construction at the present time is too often a record of hindrances and delays, which disappoint our best expectations; and whatever be the energy, and care, and foresight of the officers of the Department—and it would be difficult for one who sees them daily at their work to exaggerate their high qualities—they could not altogether avoid or prevent these delays, which occur especially in the closing stages of the shipbuilding career of a vessel. It is not only the increasing complication of the ship herself that is the cause, though that has something to do with it. The re-armament of the Navy which is now in progress, and not a day too soon, involves not merely the guns and their carriages, and all the questions connected with them, but also the manner in which the ship is to be built up and prepared to receive the gun and its carriage; and the slightest change in any one point implies delay. Similarly, the preparations for torpedo armament and machine guns, and conning stations to protect the officers from machine gun fire, are a fruitful source of delay. And delay often means unavoidable waste, apart from the mere cost of new fittings. Thus it is that the *Ajax* and *Agamemnon* are only now practically complete. The *Conqueror* also, for similar reasons, will not be finished in this year, as promised; and I am afraid that all promises must be taken subject to contingencies of this kind, which I have only cursorily hinted at. The delays in her case have been connected with her armament of 43-ton guns; her auxiliary armament with Vavasseur mountings; her torpedo armament; and also with the new system of closed stokeholes for forcing the fires on occasion, and getting higher speed with the same engines. Her speed, however, has fully justified what has been done to her, being 15½ knots. The *Edinburgh* and *Colossus* have been also much delayed waiting for a decision as to the gun they are to carry, which is to be the 43-ton gun. The *Impérieuse* and *Warspite* are advancing well. Turning to the *Admiral* class, I have to say that further consideration of the barbette system has satisfied us that it was a wise decision to adopt it in preference to the turret; that is, taking into account the very extended protection against machine gun fire which has been obtained at the top of the barbettes. The two new ships, therefore, which were indicated last year, will be of this type, and, in fact, sister ships to the *Benbow*. They are the *Camperdown*, to be built at Portsmouth, and the *Anson*, at Pembroke. The *Benbow* is being built on the Thames by contract. Although these six ships are all alike in type, we have endeavoured to make some improvement—the *Benbow, Camperdown* and *Anson* will be five feet longer than the others, with a displacement of 10,000 tons, as compared with 9,700 in the *Howe* and *Rodney*, and 9,200 in the *Collingwood*, and they will have stronger armour in their barbettes. As to their armament, the *Collingwood* will carry the 43-ton gun, while the others are prepared to carry the 63-ton gun. We have, however, determined to place in one of them, instead of four 63-ton guns, two of the 100-ton B.L. guns of Elswick pattern, considering that this gun has been subjected to a sufficient test of experiments on trial to justify us in taking this course. It will thus be seen that while adhering to the type, we are not omitting any occasion of developing the power of this class of ships. As to the repairing of ships—a work to which the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith) most properly attaches great importance—we have been able, during the present year, to complete the repairs of all iron-clads on hand, notwithstanding that the demands on account of the Egyptian service seriously interrupted the work of the Dockyards.

Sir JOHN HAY: Does this include the *Thunderer?*

Mr. CAMPBELL BANNERMAN: The *Thunderer* will be finished, or nearly so, I hope.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: And the *Shannon?*

Mr. CAMPBELL BANNERMAN: Yes.

Lord HENRY LENNOX: And *Shah?*

Mr. CAMPBELL BANNERMAN: I am now talking of iron-clads. The only exception is the *Bellerophon*, which is being fitted as a seagoing gunnery ship, and the fittings of which take much time to complete. For next year we provide for repairs an increased sum of no less than £121,654 in wages, and included in the work so provided for are all the iron-clads ready for repair, except the *Black Prince*, and provision is made for the reliefs for the next year and a-half. The details of these matters will be more conveniently and appropriately gone into when we come to the consideration of Vote 6. With regard to the important question of the guns, it is generally agreed that any question as to their nature and design is better dealt with by the Representative of the War Office, who is responsible for their manufacture and supply. But I may say that, as far as the supply to the Navy is concerned, by the end of the financial year it is hoped to have the following number of new breech-loading guns completed:—11 12-inch, 8 9-2-inch, 4 8-inch, 127 6-inch, 20 5-inch, 53 4-inch, and 18 of another pattern of 4-inch, or 241 in all.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Do I understand the hon. Gentleman to say that these guns will be ready this year?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes; before the end of March this year. That is the hope we entertain. It will be observed that in these Estimates we take over the whole charge for gun mountings.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Does the hon. Gentleman mean 1884 or 1883?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: 1883.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: The year ending March 31, 1884?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No; we hope to have complete by the end of March the number of guns I have mentioned.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: This month?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes; but I will ascertain the fact quite distinctly. From the information I have received I believe it will be so. I know that some of the guns have been already delivered; but I cannot answer for all. Hitherto, the Admiralty have provided all special mountings, such as those in turrets, which may be said to form part of the ship itself, and all machinery connected with such mountings; but in future they are to be responsible for the whole provision, and I believe that to be a step in the right direction. Turning to the immediate Vote before us, I have very little to announce in the way of change affecting the *personnel* of the Navy. But it is impossible for me to move this Vote without some reference, however brief, to the events which have happened since the Navy Estimates were last introduced in the House of Commons. It may be held that when the two Houses of Parliament passed a Vote of Thanks to the two Services, the curtain, as it were, dropped upon that act in our military history; but I cannot move the first Vote in the Estimates without taking occasion, on the part of the Board of Admiralty, to express again their high admiration and appreciation of the conduct of all engaged in the Egyptian operations. The officers and men of the Navy may be said to be always on active service; they are always, so to speak, in face of the enemy; they are every day engaged in all parts of the world in the discharge of duties full of difficulty, responsibility, and danger. It was, therefore, nothing new for them to find themselves called upon, under the eyes of the whole world, to accomplish such a task as was laid upon them in Egypt. But, as far as I have been able to observe, not a single fault has been found with any part of their conduct, because there was no room for fault-finding. I am not aware that even criticism has been extended to the naval part of the operations; and it is hard to say which has been more remarkably illustrated—the skill and high professional attainments of the officers, or the courage, fine spirit, and unbroken discipline of the seamen and Marines. It is our intention to ask Parliament, in the present Session, for powers to enable us to confer a benefit upon those whose conduct has been thus so worthy of praise. This is in pursuance of a decision at which my noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty arrived long before these events. Shortly before he came into Office the loss of the *Atalanta* occurred. A subscription was, as usual, opened for the benefit of the relatives of the warrant officers and men who had lost their lives in her; but the public did not appear to be disposed to subscribe a sufficient fund to furnish the pensions required. It then appeared to Lord Northbrook hardly creditable that when such a disaster occurred the relief of the distress occasioned by it should be wholly thrown on the relatives of the sufferers and on the charity of the public; and he stated publicly that the Government would consider what could be done. When, consequently, the calamity to the *Doterel* occurred, my noble Friend begged the Lord Mayor to refrain from calling for subscriptions from the public, and subsequently we gave temporary allowances out of Greenwich Hospital Funds to the widows and near relatives of those who were then killed. The same course has been followed in the case of the families of those who lost their lives in Egypt. There is, however, some uncertainty how far the Greenwich Hospital Acts authorize us to let these allowances take the form of permanent pensions; and, therefore, a Bill on the subject will shortly be introduced, which, I hope, will receive the willing assent of the House. There is only one other matter to which I think it necessary to allude. We intend to make a slight alteration in the term for which men in future will be engaged in the Navy. At present a man engages for 10 years, from the age of 18, and then he re-engages for a further period of 10 years. We propose that the first period should be 12 years, making the total service of those who continue 22 years, instead of 20. It appears to us that 38 is too early an age for a man to leave the Service and commence to draw full pension; and we believe that seamen would be very glad to continue in the Service up to the not very advanced age of 40. Our proposal, then, is that the first engagement should be for 12 years, instead of 10 as at present. We do not anticipate that the change will cause any difference in the entry of boys, and it will prospectively have a considerable effect in diminishing the burden of deadweight, so that we shall be doing something for our successors. I merely make this casual allusion to our proposal, which does not in any way affect these Estimates, nor will it, of course, affect men now serving. Statutory powers will be required; and when the necessary measure comes before the House there will be every opportunity for its explanation and discussion. I have now completed my task to the best of my ability; and, apologizing for the length at which I have trespassed on the patience of the Committee, and thanking hon. Members for their kindness in listening to me, I beg to move the Vote for the number of men and boys.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That 57,250 men and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, including 12,400 Royal Marines."

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I have listened with great attention to the Statement of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty, and I think it must be the universal consent of the Committee that nothing could have been more temperate, moderate, or more clear than the Statement of the hon. Gentleman; but I may, perhaps, be allowed to refer, in the first instance, to his later observation with regard to the conduct of the Navy in Egypt. The claims of that Service demand our first recognition. I am sure that everyone will join in the commendation which the hon. Gentleman has expressed on everyone engaged, from the Admiral, to the officers, men, and blue-jackets, and Marines, for their conduct in the late operations in Egypt. Whatever our opinions may be, and there are adverse opinions, as to the policy of these operations, it is not at all necessary, on the present occasion, to enter into that; for there can be no doubt that every man has done his duty, and that the Navy has as fully maintained its ancient reputation as completely and thoroughly as in the old times. The hon. Gentleman has referred to the discipline maintained in the Fleet, and I think that discipline deserves more commendation than even bravery and daring; in fact, the credit of the British arms depends upon the discipline and good behaviour of the men of the Force, and it is especially to the discipline which was maintained that I desire to express my admiration. The hon. Gentleman has also referred appropriately to the question of widows' pensions, and the provision which should be made by the country for the families of those who have suffered and fallen in the discharge of their duties. I will not now enter into that; but I feel certain that the country and the House will be prepared to consider any proposal the Government may think fit to put before them, in order to provide against contingencies which, in connection with a Service like the Navy, must, unfortunately, frequently occur. I trust, indeed, that we may not have a recurrence of the particular calamities to which the hon. Gentleman has referred; but that calamities must occur in connection with the Service is unfortunately certain, and it is only just and proper that some provision should be made. The hon. Gentleman has referred also to the question of an alteration in the terms of engagement; but I will not discuss that question now. The hon. Gentleman is very well aware that the dead-weight upon the Navy is a subject which gave the late Board of Admiralty great concern; that great efforts were made, tentatively, to lessen that dead-weight; and that we called the attention of the House seriously to it. I shall cordially welcome, and gladly assist in, any efforts the present Board of Admiralty may make with reference to the ultimate relief which may be afforded, unfortunately not to this generation, but to those who come after us. The hon. Gentleman commenced with an elaborate and interesting statement as to the charge which falls on the Votes under the Estimates we are about to consider. I will not follow him in that elaborate statement, because I have neither the time, nor would it be to the advantage of the Committee that I should do so now. I shall not question the main facts he has stated; but, from my own point of view, I must deal with what appears to me to be the gross charge under the old system of the Naval Service, and under the Estimates now before the Committee. Admitting that there are charges placed upon the Naval Votes which ought to be borne by the Army, it appears to me that while the Estimates presented to Parliament last year amounted to the charge of £10,600,000, the Estimates this year amount to £10,940,000, exclusive of the Transport Service. While I make no complaint whatever of that increased charge, I concur with the view which the hon. Gentleman has put before the Committee, that the Admiralty is responsible before the country for maintaining a Navy worthy of the country, and capable of maintaining and defending the position of the country in any emergency. I understand the hon. Gentleman to say that the Board of Admiralty are of opinion that by this addition they will be able to fulfil the duty which attaches to them; and I fully recognize the fact that upon them rests the responsibility of taking such steps, making such provisions, and asking for such supplies as shall enable them to provide a force in *matériel* and men which shall be sufficient to meet any emergency to which at any time the country might be exposed. I entertain the view that the Navy exists for a possibly sudden state of war. We are not to assume, because the sky is clear at the present moment—because there are no threatening clouds—that a storm cannot arise in the course of a few days, weeks, or months; and, therefore, I say, if we are to be at the cost of a Navy at all, it should always be maintained in a state of complete efficiency and readiness for the protection of the country in case of war. My earnest desire is that the occasion for its services in this respect may not arise; but it exists for, and the only justification of its existence is the possibility of a state of war, and the guarding of the country in such a state of difficulty and trial. It appears to me, therefore, that every ship in Her Majesty's Service should be as rapidly as possible brought into a state of complete efficiency. I am aware that it is not possible to maintain the Navy at every moment, and under all circumstances, in a condition of complete efficiency; but there should be no delay and no want of energy in the construction of ships, or in the matter of repairs to ships, which are believed to be necessary for the defence of the country. The hon. Gentleman has referred in his speech—and I can heartily sympathize with his feelings in this matter, for I myself have had experience of the same trouble and anxiety—to the delays which attend the completion of ships. Those delays are intimately connected with a subject to which I have more than once drawn attention in this House, and to which, I regret to say, I feel it my duty to call attention again—namely, the supply of guns and ammunition to Her Majesty's Navy. In the year 1880, I believe, an understanding was arrived at between the Secretary of State for War and myself that a new class of guns should be supplied for the use of the Navy. The gun was to be breech-loading, and of 43 tons weight; but I think I am right in saying that from that time to the present—a period of more than three years having elapsed—the gun has not been supplied to the Fleet, nor is it yet in existence. Ships are actually waiting for these guns; and, more than that, there is a gun of a new class, to be supplied to ships of the *Admiral* type, which, I believe, is not yet designed. Sir, my hon. Friend made a statement just now which took me somewhat by surprise. I understood him to state that 241 guns of the new breech-loading class have been supplied to the Navy for the year ending 1883; but I must point out that this is not consistent with the statement made only three weeks ago by the Surveyor General of Ordnance in this House, in reply to my Question as to the number and calibre of guns actually on board ship. The statement then made was that there had been 56 8-inch and 84 4-inch guns supplied.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The other guns are ready, but not actually on board ship.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am very glad to hear they are ready; but I should have been much better pleased to hear that they were on board ship. The guns. it seems, are somewhere; but they are not delivered at the Dockyards, and are not in possession of the Admiralty; and, therefore, the expectations which were held out last year, and the year before, have not, up to the present time, been realized. But what has been realized is, that the ships for which the guns are intended have been greatly delayed, are being greatly delayed, and are not ready for service when they ought to be ready for service. I venture to think that if they had been supplied under another system—that is to say, if the Admiralty had been solely responsible for the manufacture and for the obtaining of their guns, they would not have to come down to the House year after year and say—"The guns are not supplied to the ships; the War Office has not delivered them to us." This is a matter of very great import; and with regard to the observations which fell from my hon. Friend, I think I am right in saying that the country and this House will hardly be satisfied to receive from the Admiralty the statement that they themselves are not responsible for the supply of guns to the Navy. I know that they are hampered by difficulties, and by arrangements which have the sanction of usage, and it may be of the Government, and of many Governments, and I am not now attributing blame to the Admiralty in any degree; on the contrary, I am endeavouring to strengthen their hands for the discharge of the duties devolving upon them. But I say that as Parliament and the country will hold them responsible for the completion of ships for the Fleet, and for the efficiency of everything in them when they are sent to sea, it will not be sufficient for the Admiralty to say—"The guns are not ready; we do not know the size of the gun, or what the charge will be, and therefore we cannot complete the ships." The Admiralty is responsible for the completion of a ship, for the efficiency of its armament, for sending it to sea, and they are also responsible for the testing of guns placed on board ship. so that the men who are to work them may have complete confidence in their weapons. Now, I think I am right in saying that the 43-ton gun which is being built is not yet complete—it is a gun in course of construction, but it has not been tested; and I feel convinced that the First Lord of the Admiralty will not suffer a ship to go to sea with guns, the pattern of which has not been fully tried and tested. If I am anxious upon this question it is because I feel it to be one of the very last importance, and one that very greatly affects the accuracy of the Estimates presented to Parliament. If you have not the guns you may just as well not have the ships; but if you have the guns they may be mounted upon a less costly and more rapidly constructed ship than an iron-clad, and make some use of them. Of so much importance do I regard this matter, that I shall feel it my duty, unless a more completely satisfactory account is given of the progress and construction of guns for the Navy, to move for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the system under which the guns for the Navy are supplied, or else to move for a Royal Commission on the subject, whichever may appear at the time to be best. But I am convinced that an end must be put to the delay which hampers each succeeding Board of Admiralty, and adds, at the same time, to the duties of the War Office. My hon. Friend has referred to the additions which are to be made in the programme of last year—namely, the contemplated increased amount of shipbuilding and repairs. I am glad to see that a much more efficient provision for repairs has been made—the amount of repairs necessary for maintaining ships in a state of efficiency having for the last two years been insisted upon by myself as a point of the greatest importance—and once more I say that if a ship is not efficient, and is not intended to be of service again, the sooner it is abandoned the better. I do not want you to repair a single ship which you yourselves believe to be an undesirable ship for the Service; but if you are convinced that a particular ship ought to be repaired, then I say she ought to be repaired without delay. It is, therefore, satisfactory to find an increase in the Vote for repairing purposes, and that between 1,500 and 1,700 additional men will be engaged in completing work which has not been carried out as the Admiralty intended. I give the Board of Admiralty full credit for their intentions, but I had some doubt last year as to whether they would be able to carry out their programme; and I confess to a feeling that there is a possibility of their not being able to do so with regard to the programme of this year. But I do not now reproach my hon. Friend with the deficiency of the amount of repairs executed; and as the Admiralty propose to effect these repairs during the coming year, I will not, on the present occasion, pursue the subject.

There is one point I wish to refer to. The hon. Gentleman, as I think quite unnecessarily, referred to what might be the political effect in Europe if the Parliament of this country sanctioned a further addition to the expenditure on the Navy. Sir, I believe such a course would not have the slightest effect in Europe; at all events, it would not have an injurious effect, if the Government of the country thought it desirable to expend some £400,000 or £500,000 more in shipbuilding than they had done last year. I think it would act as a kind of assurance for the peace of Europe if it became clear that the Government were determined to resist aggression and defend our interests abroad. The Governments of Europe have probably much greater knowledge of the offensive and defensive forces of this country than nine out of ten Gentlemen have who sit in this House. They have information upon which they can place reliance, and the addition of a few hundred thousand pounds, more or less, to the Estimates for the defence of this country will, I am sure, have no other effect than to convince Governments disposed to be belligerent that we are watchful and prepared in case of need. Without advocating the embarking in any great Naval expenditure, I do certainly advocate the maintenance of the forces of the country at an efficient standard, and that standard, in my opinion, must have regard to the forces maintained elsewhere; it must have regard to the duties to be discharged by the Navy, and which are of a very varying nature throughout the world, because heavier duties fall upon the Navy of this country than fall upon the Navies of all other countries taken together. We have a large commerce, and practically we have to perform what are called the police duties of the seas, and we have, in consequence, to maintain an iron-clad Fleet equal to any emergency. Certainly, we have reason to be proud of the way the Fleet performed its duty on a recent occasion; but I say it is impossible for us to be contented, in view of the great responsibilities cast upon us, with anything less than a preponderating Naval Force; and in making that assertion I do not wish to say anything which may be considered as a menace to any Foreign Power. I repeat, however, that we have a commerce to defend greater than that of all the rest of the world taken together; and to say, under those circumstances, that our Naval Force should not preponderate above the Naval Force of other nations, would be to say that we should descend from the position we have always occupied on the sea to that of a weak and dependent Power. No, Sir; our duty is clear. We must not act in panic, and by no means as a threat to other Powers, nor with any desire to exercise an undue or exclusive influence in the counsels of Europe. Our duty is simply to protect the interests which belong to this country; and for these purposes I say, in the language of the hon. Gentleman himself, we are bound to maintain a Fleet sufficient to discharge the duties, and fulfil the obligations, of the country. Well, the question is, whether the provisions which have been made are sufficient for that purpose?—but I do not propose to enter into a discussion of that question on the present occasion; because other opportunities for doing so will arise; and I now only wish to lay down the general principle on which the Naval policy of this country ought to rest, and that is that both our ships and men should be adequate to our great interests and responsibilities. It has been usual for the Secretary to the Admiralty to make some statement of the work done in the past year. My hon. Friend, however, has failed to do that on the present occasion; and it is, therefore, to be presumed that he reserves his statement on the subject until the Vote is reached. There appears to be a discrepancy between the amount of tonnage of armoured ships last year and that stated in the present Estimates, which represents about 600 tons. That discrepancy is so remarkable that it takes a good deal of Admiralty experience to be able to suggest an explanation of it; but I have no doubt that the ships have turned out to be more costly, and the number of tons is, in consequence, less. You have paid wages and have used materials, but you have not produced the full result expected. But, then, I am at a loss to see how the increase claimed to have been accomplished during the year is arrived at. That remains to be explained; and I have no doubt some hon. Gentleman will put questions that will attract the attention of the Secretary to the Admiralty to this point. There is another subject to which I wish to ask the hon. Gentleman's attention. He has spoken with considerable force, and with all the feeling which belongs to the Department, as to the principle sanctioned by the Treasury of taking appropriations in aid. I can understand thoroughly the cordiality with which these will be welcomed by the Departments of the Admiralty; but I would ask my hon. Friend whether he is himself quite satisfied that he will realize all the money he has taken to account in this way? No one more than I heartily endorses the principle that old and worn-out ships, which can by no possibility be of use for the Public Service, should be disposed of, even at less than they are worth, if it be possible to sell them. I have had some experience, however, of the result of the endeavours to get rid of old ships, and I am bound to say that the amount which my hon. Friend has taken into account under this head appears to me a very sanguine Estimate; and although I sincerely hope his expectations will be realized, the sum in question seems a large one to be obtained from the sale of ships of this description. The question, however, which is involved here belongs more properly to the Treasury. I am exceedingly glad that the Admiralty have taken into their own hands the arrangements with regard to gun carriages, by which one serious cause of delay will be removed. It will be for the experienced officers of the Admiralty to find out what is the best method of mounting guns, and to adopt it for the time being. Improvements will come, no doubt—you can never get the best thing for all time; but in this case you can utilize that which appears the best kind of gun carriage for naval purposes, until those improvements have presented themselves. I have noticed with regret that ships building by contract have not been completed as they ought to have been—I refer to ships of the *Leander* class, and some of the gun vessels. I do not see why there should be greater delay in building a man-of-war by contract than in building a merchant ship by contract. The designs of the unarmoured ships have been carefully considered. I know the Constructor's Department of the Admiralty are quite capable of doing their duty, and I assume that the execution of the designs was carried out under the supervision of a properly qualified officer, and that time was mentioned in the contract; and it, therefore, does seem to me most extraordinary that the anticipations of the Admiralty as to the completion of these ships are so frequently disappointed. There ought not to be such delays as now occur, and which go far to place them all in a position of doubt as to the performance of the work undertaken by the contractors. I reserve for consideration, when we get to the Votes, questions as to the number of men employed at the Dockyards in Portsmouth and Devonport. I am glad to see that there is a large increase in the number of men employed in the Dockyard at Malta, and I hope to hear that the anticipations as to the amount of work which will be got through up to the 31st of March will be realized. The Admiralty have undertaken that the *Thunderer* and *Invincible* shall be completed for sea at Malta; and when the hon. Gentleman comes to Vote 6, it is to be hoped he will give us some information on this subject. I shall also require information as to the sources from which the large increase in the Wages Vote, or in the expenditure for wages at the Dockyards, has been met. I assume that the money has come out of the Egyptian Vote. I do not know whether that is so; but the amount spent at the Dockyards has been in excess of the amount voted, and if the extra money has not come out of the Egyptian Vote I do not know where it has come from. [Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: From the *Leander* Vote.] That is very unsatisfactory, for, apparently, we have a sum voted for one purpose and put to another. If the money has not been spent on the Contract Vote, I give credit to the Admiralty for having made good use of it; but it ought to have been spent on the Contract Vote, and the hon. Gentleman should have come down to the House and asked for an extra Wages Vote if it was necessary. They are not acting fairly by the House of Commons or the country—certainly not by the House of Commons—in undertaking to spend a certain amount on a particular object, and then spending it on something else. [Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN made a communication across the Table to the right hon. Gentleman.] It seems the Admiralty have been desirous that the money should be spent on the object for which it is voted, but that it has been prevented by a delay with the contractor. The House is not to be told that money is to be granted now for certain work, and that they are to remain satisfied with the provision for the coming year, and then find, six or 12 months hence, that the individual responsible for carrying out the engagement has not fulfilled it, and that the country is without the strength upon which it has relied. The contractors ought to be efficient for the Public Service. The contracts will not be complete for six or nine months. The ships have not yet been delivered at the Dockyards. There is one other point upon which I should like to have information when the hon. Member comes to the Vote itself, and that is the diminution in the provision for metals and armour and the increase in the provision for wages. All of us who have had anything to do with the actual administration of the Dockyards know perfectly well that if we employ a given number of men in shipbuilding we must have stores in proportion to those men. The hon. Member has said that they have received assistance from other sources in aid of this particular Vote for metals; but I fail to see that the resources they have obtained will be sufficient if the programme of the Admiralty is carried out. If they build this very large amount of armour tonnage for which they take credit this year they will want a larger amount of armour and metals to put on the ships. This is an estimate of his own, to which I wish to draw the attention of the hon. Member. I am glad to find that the Admiralty are of opinion that, so far as armoured ships are concerned, the barbette system is one which may be safely followed. Armoured ships should be built in proportion to the armoured ships of other countries, and in proportion to the duties we have to discharge; but I admit that the observations which have fallen from the hon. Member are of great weight. It is true the progress of inventions, and especially the progress made in regard to the power of guns, make it essential that the Admiralty should not proceed hastily or rashly in the construction of ships. They should proceed according to the necessities of the day, and to meet the exigencies of the country at the time. It may happen—I do not say it will, but it may happen—that we shall have some of these days to abandon heavily armoured ships, as men who went to battle in armour have been obliged to abandon armour. It may be—I do not say it will—that ships will not be able to carry armour that will keep out the projectiles which can be fired upon them. Experiments, very scientific and interesting, have been made upon this subject, and I doubt whether it will be possible for any ship to be sent to sea sufficiently heavily armed to resist the gun that will be manufactured in three, or four, or five years time. But we must build ships as rapidly as we can for the discharge of the duties of the day. At the present day, no doubt, armoured ships, protected ships, and unarmoured ships are necessary in our Fleet; and it will be the duty of the Admiralty to exercise its discretion—fully alive to its duties and responsibilities—in providing such ships for the time being as will suffice for the defence of the country. Reference has been made to the new protected ships of the *Severn* and *Mersey* class. These certainly ought not to be called armoured ships, or placed in the category of armoured vessels. The *Mersey* and *Severn* are only ships of the C class—larger and quicker ships of the C class—and clearly, though they may be called "protected," they are virtually unarmoured, as far as their boilers and space for seamen is concerned. I am afraid I have addressed the Committee at too great length; but the Navy Estimates involve matters that are of great interest to this country. They deserve the deepest and most careful consideration on the part of the country, and they are not to be disposed of in a few minutes' conversation across the Table. We shall have to renew the discussion which has now been commenced, I trust, very soon after Easter. I hope the hon. Gentleman will secure a day soon after Easter, so that we shall not have a repetition of that which I have called the time scandal—and I repeat the phrase—of considering the Estimates when the House of Commons has practically gone away, and there is neither time, inclination, nor strength to give adequate consideration to them. I certainly offer no opposition whatever to the Vote which has been proposed; and I trust my hon.

Friend will be prepared to give information on the points I have indicated, either now or when the next Vote is taken.

SIR EDWARD J. REED said, he wished to join in the tribute paid by the late First Lord of the Admiralty to the speech of the hon. Gentleman for its clearness and excellence. There was one part of that speech, however, which he could not altogether praise with fairness to others who were much interested in Naval matters, and who were as anxious that the Navy should be built effectually and economically as even the hon. Member himself, or his Colleagues at the Admiralty. The hon. Member, in view of the anxieties which had been expressed as to the condition of the Navy, seemed to think it was fair to those who had taken a part in expressing those anxieties to put them forward as inconsiderate advocates of some monstrous expenditure upon ill-considered ships, which would impose heavy burdens on the taxpayers of the country. He (Sir Edward J. Reed) begged to assure the hon. Gentleman that, if that was his opinion of the advocates of an increased number of armour-clad ships, he was completely deluding himself as to their motives and feelings in the matter. The case which they presented to the Committee and the country was this—that while a large expenditure was taking place upon the Navy they were not getting the value for their money, but were spending money on an immense scale, and in such a manner as no private concern would ever dream of spending it. The hon. Gentleman—for whom he ventured to predict a successful administrative career at the Admiralty, because of his perfect adaptation to the methods of the Department, and the clear and admirable manner of his exposition—had painted that night the condition of the Navy with a brush that was truly admirable. If he had any defect at all, it was of this kind—that he painted everything in such bright and favourable colours that one was almost disposed to distrust the thoroughness with which he investigated some of the questions. For instance, one of the complaints he (Sir Edward J. Reed) and others had made, and which he ventured to think the country would make before long, was this—that at a time when science and progress were increasing the cost of their ships, and increasing charges for the Effective part of the Navy were inevitable, they allowed the Non-Effective Services to go on increasing in the dead weight they put upon the Public Service. At a time when they could not afford, apparently, to build themselves an efficient Navy, they could afford to pay people who were doing nothing in connection with the Navy over £2,000,000 a-year for half-pay and pensions. The hon. Gentleman took credit most properly—and he (Sir Edward J. Reed) was sure he was very glad the Admiralty felt themselves the relief they had acquired in this way — for the falling-in of Terminable Annuities to the extent of £8,000. But the hon. Member did not remind them that there had been an increase of more than £10,000 for pensions—that was to say, instead of the dead weight having diminished, they had £2,000 or £3,000 more to pay this year than they had last. He wished to ask what the Government were going to do to put a stop to this continual increase? The hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Massey Lopes) moved for a Return, which was in the hands of Parliament, which showed that in, comparatively speaking, a few years the Non-Effective Service had increased from £1,000,000 to £2,000,000. It was now more than £2,000,000; and he wanted to know if these Non-Effective Services were to be allowed to devour the Navy altogether, for that was what they were going to do, unless some new policy was adopted by the Admiralty. He would give the Admiralty credit for all they had said on the subject. He had not a shadow of a doubt that they were anxious to do something in the direction of reducing this enormous dead weight; but he felt it was necessary for the House to bring some pressure to bear on them to force them to take some steps to relieve the Service of this burden. So far from the Estimates having altered the view of those who were anxious on these points, they seemed to him to illustrate on almost every page the strength of the arguments which had been advanced. After these arguments about the increase of the Non-Effective Charges came the other arguments about the growing up in the Navy of large and inevitable charges which a few years ago—only ten years ago—had no existence. They had taken over £100,000 from the Army Votes, and he thought he was right in saying they had an actual increase of about £38,000 for torpedoes and other things. The Admiralty had no means at all of escaping from these charges. As the cost of individual ships increased so did the Vote, and they were on the horns of this dilemma—they must either increase their outlay or go without the ships. They must do all they could to induce the Government to grapple with the items for Non-Effective Service and minor charges. He had said enough, he thought, to dispel the notion that there was anybody—at any rate, he had entirely disclaimed it for himself—who wished to run the Government and the country into increased expenditure for armour-clad ships. What he wanted was to see the money that was granted rightly expended. He would ask the attention of the Committee to what his view of these Estimates was—and he was bound to say it was a very different view from that of his hon. Friend (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman); but he hoped that in any criticism he might offer it would be thoroughly understood that he was actuated by no desire to disparage the action of the Admiralty, for he should be happy to assist them by all the means in his power. It was only right that they should bring independent judgment to bear upon the Estimates, and see how they presented themselves to their minds. In comparison with last year the Government had knocked off £58,000 from the Votes for Provisions; and it was only by comparison that hon. Members could obtain any clear idea of the matter. They had knocked off £110,000 in Vote 10 for Naval Stores, which, as the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) had stated at the end of his speech, included various materials required for the construction of ships. They had also reduced the Vote for Medical Stores £4,000. There was a saving of £8,000 in regard to half-pay. Altogether he made up £180,000 of diminished expenditure, mostly in regard to materials which, if they were not bought now, would have to be bought later. Then the next thing he found was the extra credit of £99,000 as compared with last year—that was to say, the Admiralty were going to sell £99,000 worth more material than they did last year. As to this credit question, they had heard the Secretary to the Admiralty that night explain what an admirable change had been effected in taking away the hand of the Treasury—[Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No.]—Well, in a large degree; he did not say it would be done entirely. He remembered that when the system which was now abolished was introduced, it was presented to the country as a most admirable improvement, and one of those devices of economists which were most worthy to be recorded with admiration by the world. He remembered very well, when he was out in Japan, he recommended that very thing to the Japanese Finance Minister as one of the features of our financial reform which deserved the imitation of all mankind; and now he was in the unfortunate position of having the Japanese Finance Minister, and everyone else to whom he had recommended that system, told that it was just as admirable a thing to get rid of it as it was to adopt it in the first instance. These things were very puzzling—he supposed they were all right; but, at any rate, they were deserving of notice. In addition to the sums of £180,000 and £99,000, there was the recognized admitted excess of £129,000; so that, if they added all these sums together, it would come out that the Admiralty were going to spend £400,000 more this year than they did last. Now, he wished to tell the Committee how they were proposing to spend it. Anyone would suppose, from the speech delivered from the Government Bench that night, that it was about to be expended to the confusion of the advocates of an increase in the number of iron-clad ships; but he did not find that that was the case. Let him give his version of it. What he found was this—that the Admiralty undertook this year to spend in the Dockyards £15,000 more upon armoured hulls than they undertook to spend last year. He would ask the Committee to mark that statement. Not more than they, in reality, did spend, but more than they asked for from the House of Commons. That was £15,000 out of £400,000. Now came an item for which he gave them full credit—that was to say, they would expend on engines for iron-clads £162,000 more, which made £177,000. There were various sums for timber stores, coals, electric stores, and torpedoes, which made a total of £121,500; but there would be nothing from that to add to the iron-clad Fleet at all. There was £10,000 additional to the pension list—and on that point he hoped he might not be misunderstood. He would not advocate breaking faith with anyone who had become entitled to a pension. That was not his point. He knew that these things became an incubus upon the Admiralty to their misfortune; but, at the same time, they should be mentioned, in order to get the Admiralty to make some attempt to reduce these charges prospectively. They had had nothing as yet of the balance for the iron-clads. Out of the remaining £94,000, they were going to pay for replacing the boilers of the *Polyphemus*, do a good deal of work on ships they had lately finished, and spend £55,000 in repairing a yacht for Her Majesty, which, he believed, ought not to be repaired. He did not wish to say a word of complaint in regard to the *Polyphemus*. She was announced to the House as a great experiment—an experiment involving many experiments; and he did not think it was possible to make such efforts as were made in that vessel to adopt a totally new style of ship without incurring risks of unfortunate outlays. He did not blame the Admiralty; but they had to take the amount spent into account in considering how far the increased expenditure had brought an increase of the Fleet. The expenditure in repairing the Royal yacht he confessed he complained of. Fifteen or twenty years ago he surveyed that very yacht, and had to strain his judgment a little in order to consent to her repair, so bad was the condition in which she was. She was then, however, so extensively repaired as to make her almost a new vessel. He remembered that when he came up from her hold, he encountered a distinguished Admiral on the deck, who asked him what he had seen—how the vessel looked? He answered the question, when he was asked—"What is your opinion as to her repair?" and to this he said—"For myself, I do not think she ought to be repaired, because I think a new iron yacht ought to be built"—and he should say the same now. The gallant Admiral then inquired—"Do you mean to say that you would send the Crown of England to sea in an iron vessel?" and he had answered—"Yes; but nothing on earth would induce me to send her to sea in that vessel, because a vessel of iron intended for the transport of a personage so precious to this country could be divided into so many compartments that she could not be sunk by a slight accident; whereas the vessel you are going to spend so much upon is of such a character that if she met with a collision in the North Sea, or in the Channel, she would go to the bottom like a stone." The Admiralty had some very curious arrangements in regard to these Estimates, which he thought it was strange to present to business men. They said the proportion of the cost of the ship was the only real criterion; that they would take the tonnage of the ship and put it in a fractional relation to the price of the ship; and then this curious thing often happened—a ship was complete in her tonnage, and then the Admiralty asked for £5,000, or £10,000, or £20,000 to complete a ship the tonnage of which was already built. That system had been carried on for a long time; but it was such an absurdity that the Admiralty had at last been induced to abandon it. Now, however, it had turned up again; and he would strongly advise the Secretary to the Admiralty to remove from the Estimate a statement which had no earthly value, and which must tend to embarrassment and trouble. He wished next to say a word or two upon the point on which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) had so much insisted. Last year the Admiralty promised that they would complete the *Agamemnon* for £4,800, the *Ajax* for £8,000, and the *Conqueror* for £30,700; but what were the facts? The *Ajax*, which was to have cost £8,000, had cost £21,000; while the *Agamemnon* had cost £14,800, instead of £4,800. The hon. Gentleman had stated that night that those ships were now completed; but he would like to ask whether the hon. Gentleman was quite so sure that they were complete; whether they had their armament on board, and were ready for sea? He was afraid that the answer to that would not be so satisfactory as the Committee would wish. On the *Conqueror* £30,700 were to have been spent to complete her; but £7,000 more were now asked for to complete her. Twelve months ago the Admiralty stated that for £40,000 they would finish these three new ships; but, in reality, they had spent £70,000 odd upon those ships, and had completed only two of the three. He was not putting these figures in order to censure anybody, but simply to throw a strong light upon the point raised by the right hon. Gentleman, and with a view to asking the Committee to record their opinion, if the opportunity should arise, upon a system in connection with the guns of the Navy which paralysed the Navy entirely, and prevented the Admiralty from doing what they proposed to do, and caused unavoidable delays from which they would gladly escape. There was another point he wished to call attention to, which bore upon this question. There was a ship called the *Edinburgh*, which was commenced as the *Majestic*. When the last Administration was in Office he had delivered what he regarded as a heavy blow at them on the last evening of the discussion on the Navy Estimates. The Conservatives had been in the habit of boasting that they had always come into Office and built a great Navy; while the Liberals who succeeded them had always let down the Navy; but having been in Office for six years the Conservatives had not completely built a single iron-clad, and from that time they had never put forward that proposition again. He hoped they never would put it forward again; but, unfortunately, this Liberal Administration, which, when it came into Office, promised to build ships more quickly, and had done better at first, were now falling behind; and unless they took care in regard to the *Edinburgh*, and did better than they had hitherto done, they would incur great discredit. The *Edinburgh* was commenced four years ago, and the Government proposed in these Estimates to advance her so little in the coming 12 months that she would be only four-fifths built at the end of that time. He ventured to say that no Government was able to justify such an enormous expenditure of time. Why had the Government fallen into this position? Entirely because of this question of the guns. He did not believe there was any other cause for it; and between these two Departments of the State the Navy was more or less paralyzed. He would appeal to the Secretary to the Admiralty not to be satisfied with having the *Edinburgh* finished a year or two after he went out of Office, and not to let it be said that a ship which was commenced before he came into Office was not completed when he left Office. Taking the present rate of progress, it would take six years and a-half to complete this ship; and he must urge the Admiralty to be more energetic than they had been. In the next place, he wished to refer to the *Severn* and the *Mersey*. These two vessels had some protection in the water, but they had no side protection at all; and it was surprising, as they had no armour, that they were put by the Admiralty in the list of armoured ships. Some of the Members of the Government had put foward the extraordinary notion that these ships were not likely, in battle, to be struck between wind and water. The other night, when the Army Estimates were being discussed, a statement by the late Secretary to the Admiralty was quoted, to the effect that ships in future would be very little struck between wind and water. He did not mention this in deprecation, in any degree, of the merit of these vessels, but to confute a dangerous doctrine. He hoped the Secretary to the Admiralty would not think he had borne too hardly upon the Admiralty, or had sought to weaken them in any degree; but had rather aimed at strengthening them by these suggestions.

Lord HENRY LENNOX said, that, at that hour of the night, he should not proceed with the remarks he had intended to make, but would simply say that he dissented altogether from these Estimates. He considered them utterly unvaluable; and at some other time he should state his opinions on the fallacious way in which they were drawn up. At the same time, he wished to take this opportunity of congratulating the exponent of the policy of the Government in this matter on the admirable manner in which he had performed his task. He desired to ask the Chairman whether, when Vote 6 or 10 was taken, he could enter upon a general review of the policy of the Government in regard to these Estimates?

The CHAIRMAN: The noble Lord wishes to enter into the general question of the Naval policy of the Government. When the Committee come to a special Vote, the noble Lord will have to confine himself to that Vote.

Lord HENRY LENNOX said, he was most anxious to forward Public Business; and, at that hour, he had thought it better to postpone his remarks to a subsequent occasion. He must, however, mention that whereas last year the Navy Estimates were moved at 2 o'clock in the morning, and there was no opportunity of discussing them, hon. Members were now called upon to discuss the Estimates four days after they had been issued. Hon. Members had hardly had time to look over them, still less to master their various details; and he must appeal to the Secretary to the Admiralty to give him a subsequent opportunity of discussing the policy involved in these Estimates.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he thought some slight misapprehension existed as to the rights of hon. Members in discussing these Estimates as a whole. It had been held, on former occasions, that upon Vote 2—the Victualling Vote—it was fit that the discussion should arise, and travel over the whole of the Estimates, if there had not been sufficient time to consider them on Vote 1. He hoped there might be an understanding that if this Vote was given that night, as seemed necessary for the Public Service, a discussion should be taken upon Vote 2, and full latitude be allowed to hon. Members to raise any question of general principles affecting the Estimates as a whole.

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, the arrangement suggested was precisely that which had been adopted on many previous occasions, both in reference to these Estimates and to the Army Estimates. He thought it would be convenient to follow the same course now; and as there was the Vote for Wages, which it was absolutely necessary to take that night, to postpone the discussion till Vote 2 was reached, when there would be full opportunity for its renewal.

Mr. GORST wished to ask when Vote 2 would be reached, because he must protest against a custom which it had been said would be altered, but which seemed to be still flourishing with vigour —namely, the custom which withdrew the Navy Estimates from discussion in Committee of Supply. The House had been in Committee only about two hours, and now they were asked to vote what was practically a Vote on Account of the Navy for upwards of three months —for they were to Vote £2,500,000, and that would carry on the expenditure of the Admiralty for upwards of three months; and therefore it was very improbable, looking at the pressure of Public Business, that there would be any more discussion on this subject until July. The practice of the Government was to put down the Navy Estimates on the night when the necessities of the Public Service imperatively required them to be at once passed; and he protested against this practice, which was again pursued this year with the utmost coolness by the Government and their officers. This practice would, practically, withdraw the Navy Estimates from discussion in Committee of Supply to relegate them without discussion to the end of the Session, when the House was fatigued, and when the pressure of Public Business would prevent these Estimates from being discussed in a deliberate and ample manner.

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, he did not know what information the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had received; but someone had apparently told him that the Government were going to relegate these Votes to the month of July, and he condemned the Government before they had suggested that that should be done. He could assure the hon. and learned Gentleman that the Government had no such intention; and when the hon. and learned Member complained that the House had been in Committee only two hours, he must remind the hon. and learned Gentleman that that was not the fault of the Government. Supply was the first Order of the Day; but hon. Members having brought forward Motions, the hon. and learned Member ought not to complain. He blamed the Government for having done that which they had not done, and then for that which they were not going to do. It seemed to him that the arrangement now proposed would be convenient to the House; to take the remainder of the discussion on Vote 2; and he hoped the day was not far distant when the discussion could be resumed.

The CHAIRMAN: The noble Lord (Lord Henry Lennox) appealed to me on a point of Order just now; and I am bound to say that I stated the Rules correctly, as they have been handed to me. After the first Vote there is no right in hon. Members to discuss the general policy of the Estimates; but there have been occasions when, by an understanding somewhat of the nature proposed by the hon. Member the Secretary to the Admiralty, a general discussion has been taken on Vote 2. Under the circumstances, I think the same indulgence should be extended on this occasion.

SIR JOHN HAY asked whether these Estimates would be made the first matter in Supply when they were again put forward?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: Yes; certainly.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he had to complain of the way in which the Government trifled with the Committee. He had more than once complained of there being no Minister in that House responsible for the Navy Estimates. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty certainly conducted his business with the greatest possible ability, but he had not sufficient power; and over and over again the Committee were called upon to discuss the Estimates without there being a Cabinet Minister present. That night they had to discuss the Estimates in the presence of a Minister who had nothing to do with them; while the hon. Gentleman who was responsible for them could not fix a day for the further discussion. He thought the Committee were entitled not only to know that the Navy Estimates would be the first Order of the Day when they were again to be discussed, but to have an assurance from the Government that that discussion would not be postponed until such a day when, practically, there could be no discussion at all. He did not wish to inconvenience the Committee by moving Progress; but he must press the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give an undertaking that this discussion should be renewed at a proper date. Every year these Estimates had been brought forward when everybody was out of town, and the result was that very great abuses had crept in. Last year the Secretary to the Admiralty had promised that there should be a full inquiry into the grievances and complaints of the Dockyard men, by a Committee of the Admiralty. This inquiry had been put off to such a date that it was impossible to discuss the recommendations of the Committee. He had received that day a letter from Devonport, the writer of which he would not name, because the Admiralty were averse to anybody asking anything of a Member of Parliament; but he found that only yesterday was an order received with regard to engine-room artificers, and they greatly complained of the manner in which their claims were treated. They were now bound to serve 22 years instead of 20 years, which was the maximum of other Departments, before they could obtain pensions. When an order was sent to a Dockyard only a day before the Navy Estimates were to be discussed there was no opportunity for Members representing Dockyard constituencies to make themselves acquainted with the grievances complained of. He must, therefore, support the hon. and learned Member for Chatham. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) seemed inclined to back up the Government; but aristocratic considerations would always make ex-officials support the Government of the day. He hoped the Government would seriously consider the claims which Dockyard Representatives had to attention, and would give some authentic assurance that the resumption of this debate would be fixed for a time when there could be a full attendance of Members on both sides.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, it was very desirable that these Estimates should be fully discussed; but it was quite out of his power to announce the exact day when the discussion would be resumed. It should, however, be resumed as soon as possible; and, in his view, it should be before the Whitsuntide Recess. Nothing but overwhelming necessity should interfere with that being done.

MR. A. F. EGERTON said, he thought that promise should be satisfactory to the hon. Member for Portsmouth. If the debate on these Estimates was taken before Whitsuntide, he should consider the House very fortunate. He looked with considerable alarm on the diminution of men under this Vote 1—a diminution of 250 men—for that seemed to show that the Government were suiting the men to the money, rather than the money to the men. That was a policy which he thought should be avoided as much as possible. He wished to have some explanation of the reason of this diminution; and there was another question which he thought germane to this Vote. There had been rumours abroad that the health of the boys who went into competition for Naval cadetships was suffering from over-cramming. As that was a serious matter, he would like to know whether the Secretary to the Admiralty could give the Committee any information as to the condition of those boys, and as to whether there were any signs of their having suffered from competition?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, he had not heard anything about the cadets on the *Britannia* being over-crammed; but he would make inquiries. If he found there was any truth in the matter he would let the hon. Gentleman know.

MR. PULESTON reminded the Committee that similar speeches and promises were made last year; but, notwithstanding, the Navy Estimates were not taken until the very end of the Session, when the House was half empty. Indeed, for many years past the Government had promised, no doubt in good faith, that the Navy Estimates should be brought on at a time when they could be adequately discussed; but, somehow or other, those promises had never been fulfilled. What he wanted to put to the Government was, whether it was not possible, in view of the importance of the Estimates, and the difficulty of getting anything like a debate, that the Estimates could not be fixed for some day—say a Monday—on which there would be no discussion on the Motion to go into Committee? Surely the New Rules must count for something. This Session there ought to be some improvement made on preceding years.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, it was evident his words had not reached the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Puleston). He had, a few moments ago, said it was to his official interest to get the Estimates voted early, and he would do his utmost to get an early day for their discussion. He gave a much less decided pledge than that last year about the Army Estimates; but the Committee would remember that it was fulfilled to the letter.

MR. PULESTON fully appreciated the good intentions of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he found no fault with the Members of the Government. Force of circumstances had prevented the Estimates being taken early in past years; and he merely made these observations in the hope that it might be found possible this year to carry out the understanding arrived at.

MR. GORST, as a point of Order, asked if it was possible for an hon. Member to move that only half the amount now asked be voted? He did not suggest the taking of that course on the present occasion. The Committee would have much greater power over the Estimates if it could be moved that only one-half the sum for wages should be taken now, and the other half the next time the Committee sat.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is quite competent for the hon. and learned Member to move any reduction of the Vote.

MR. ONSLOW said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had promised that further discussion on the Vote should come on before Whitsuntide. He would like to remind the right hon. Gentleman that the Budget would not be brought in, this year, before Easter; and that, judging from certain expressions of feeling, the discussion on the Annual Financial Statement would very likely occupy several nights. After the Budget there would be the Army Estimates, and other important Business. He did not wish the right hon. Gentleman to give an absolute pledge on the subject; but it certainly would be interesting to the Committee to know whether the Government would give a second night for the Navy Estimates before they took the second reading of the Parliamentary Oaths Act (1866) Amendment Bill? He was perfectly justified in asking that question, because it was quite evident that upon that Bill there would be several nights debate.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, the pledge he gave was clear and straightforward, and he did not think he ought to be pressed for anything further. He was not the Leader of the House, and he had gone as far as he considered it his duty to go. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had thrown out a bait which had been thrown out to other Governments before. It was very tempting to take Votes on Account; but all Governments had declined to do it, both with regard to the Army and Navy Estimates. There was nothing which could weaken the financial control so much as Votes on Account, and he certainly must resist any proposal made to that effect.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he thought there might be some misapprehension as to the question of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). It would be perfectly competent, as the Chairman had ruled, for the hon. and learned Gentleman to move to reduce the Vote by one-half; but then the question would arise whether, having once been reduced, it could be re-voted? He (Sir R. Assheton Cross) apprehended there would be great difficulty in carrying out the course hinted at in the question of his hon. and learned Friend. He agreed that in regard to Army and Navy Estimates, Votes on Account were practically unknown, and that to take such Votes would mean the introduction of a dangerous practice. At the same time, he must back up the appeal made by the hon. Gentleman below the Gangway (Mr. Puleston), and others, as to the absolute necessity of taking the next Votes at an early period. They ought to distinctly understand that they had a positive pledge from the Government that they should have a whole night before Whitsuntide for the discussion of the Navy Estimates.

Mr. GORST said, he was sorry to trouble the Committee again; but he could not allow the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to pass by without a word of explanation. There was a sort of plausible virtue in not taking Votes on Account in regard to the Army and Navy; but the fact was that the Government really did take Votes on Account. What was the Vote they were now asked to pass but a Vote on Account? It was a Vote of upwards of £2,500,000, which had to be spent in carrying on the Naval Service of the country for a period of upwards of three months. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer said they never took Votes on Account in regard to the Army and Navy. It was quite true they never took them under that name; but they did take them nevertheless.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, they commenced the Business of the evening by a protest from the other side against his hon. Friend the Member for Leeds (Mr. Herbert Gladstone), saying that Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House combined together to prevent Business being carried on. What had been going on for the last half-hour? If he might venture to give the Government a piece of advice, it would be that they should remember that if they gave an inch, hon. Gentlemen opposite would immediately cry out for an ell. He never heard more handsome offers than those made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. [" Question!"] Hon. Gentlemen cried " Question!" They wasted half-an-hour, and then, if anyone protested, they cried " Question!" The Chancellor of the Exchequer could not give more distinct pledges; therefore, let this " nagging" and protesting cease, so that some Business might be transacted.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere), on account of the great position he held in the House, was, no doubt, entitled to read the Opposition lectures, and they accepted them with great deference. What he (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) wanted to point out was that they had got from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer no pledge at all. All the right hon. Gentleman had said was that he took great interest in the matter—as, indeed, they all did—and then he went on to say he was not the person to decide; that he had to refer to others. He noticed that a Committee of the Cabinet had just entered the House—two moderate Liberals and two advanced Liberals—and, therefore, he would again ask whether the Government would give the Committee a pledge that the adjourned debate on the Navy Estimates should come on before Whitsuntide? The Chancellor of the Exchequer said he could not give such a pledge without consulting somebody else. Could the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) do so?

Mr. WARTON said, the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had spoken about the waste of half-an-hour in what he was pleased to call " nagging." What, after all, was half-an-hour if, by means of its waste, they secured a proper and adequate discussion of the Estimates? All the Estimates had been neglected by the present Government; and of late the Indian Budget, despite its importance, had been put off till the very last week of the Session. He did not think the pledge asked for by the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow) was at all unreasonable. The Committee ought certainly to receive a pledge that the Navy Estimates should be brought on again before the second reading of the Parliamentary Oaths Act (1866) Amendment Bill was taken, or else it should run through the country that the Government preferred that the House should neglect its Constitutional duty rather than they should be prevented foisting an Atheist upon the House.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given a Parliamentary pledge that the Navy Estimates should be discussed before the Whitsuntide Recess; and unless the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington), or some other Member of the Cabinet, repudiated that pledge, he was quite content to abide by it.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2.) £2,633,300, Wages, &c. to Seamen and Marines.

CIVIL SERVICES (VOTE ON ACCOUNT).

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £3,606,800, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charge for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, viz. :—

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

Great Britain :—

	£
Royal Palaces	6,000
Marlborough House	1,000
Royal Parks and Pleasure Grounds	20,000
Houses of Parliament	7,000
Beaconsfield Monument	500
Public Buildings	30,000
Public Offices Site	5,000
Furniture of Public Offices	2,000
Revenue Department Buildings	55,000
County Court Buildings	6,000
Metropolitan Police Courts	1,500
Sheriff Court Houses, Scotland	3,000
New Courts of Justice, &c.	9,000
Surveys of the United Kingdom	50,000
Science and Art Department Buildings	4,500
British Museum Buildings	2,000
Natural History Museum	3,000
Harbours, &c. under Board of Trade	2,500
Rates on Government Property (Great Britain and Ireland)	75,000
Metropolitan Fire Brigade	2,500
Disturnpiked and Main Roads (England and Wales)	35,000
Disturnpiked Roads (Scotland)	5,000

Ireland :—

Public Buildings	30,000
Royal University Buildings	- -
Science and Art Buildings, Dublin	- -

Abroad :—

Lighthouses Abroad	2,000
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings	5,500

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

England :—

	£
House of Lords, Offices	6,000
House of Commons, Offices	6,000
Treasury, including Parliamentary Counsel	10,000
Home Office and Subordinate Departments	15,000
Foreign Office	10,000
Colonial Office	6,000
Privy Council Office and Subordinate Departments	4,000
Privy Seal Office	500
Board of Trade and Subordinate Departments	25,000
Charity Commission (including Endowed Schools Department)	5,000
Civil Service Commission	7,000
Exchequer and Audit Department	9,000
Friendly Societies, Registry	1,500
Land Commission for England	4,000
Local Government Board	50,000
Lunacy Commission	2,500
Mint (including Coinage)	20,000
National Debt Office	2,500
Patent Office	5,000
Paymaster General's Office	4,500
Public Works Loan Commission	1,500
Record Office	4,000
Registrar General's Office	12,000
Stationery Office and Printing	90,000
Woods, Forests, &c., Office of	4,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of	8,000
Mercantile Marine Fund, Grant in Aid	- -
Secret Service	6,000

Scotland :—

Exchequer and other Offices	500
Fishery Board	2,500
Lunacy Commission	1,000
Registrar General's Office	2,000
Board of Supervision	3,000

Ireland :—

Lord Lieutenant's Household	1,000
Chief Secretary's Office	6,500
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office	300
Local Government Board	10,000
Public Works Office	8,000

	£
Record Office	1,000
Registrar General's Office	3,000
Valuation and Boundary Survey	6,000

Class III.—Law and Justice.

England:—

	£
Law Charges	17,000
Public Prosecutor's Office	600
Criminal Prosecutions	34,000
Chancery Division, High Court of Justice	26,000
Central Office of the Supreme Court, &c.	20,000
Probate, &c. Registries, High Court of Justice	14,000
Admiralty Registry, High Court of Justice	2,000
Wreck Commission	2,500
Bankruptcy Court (London)	7,000
County Courts	20,000
Land Registry	1,000
Revising Barristers, England	- -
Police Courts (London and Sheerness)	2,000
Metropolitan Police	100,000
County and Borough Police, Great Britain	1,000
Convict Establishments in England and the Colonies	90,000
Prisons, England	70,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	70,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum	4,000

Scotland:—

Lord Advocate, and Criminal Proceedings	10,000
Courts of Law and Justice	5,000
Register House Departments	6,000
Prisons, Scotland	20,000

Ireland:—

Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions	20,000
Supreme Court of Judicature	15,000
Court of Bankruptcy	1,500
Admiralty Court Registry	200
Registry of Deeds	3,000
Registry of Judgments	500
Land Commission	30,000
County Court Officers, &c.	15,000
Dublin Metropolitan Police (including Police Courts)	25,000
Constabulary	250,000
Prisons, Ireland	30,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools	25,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum	1,100

Class IV.—Education, Science, and Art.

England:—

	£
Public Education	550,000
Science and Art Department	60,000
British Museum	25,000
National Gallery	1,000
National Portrait Gallery	500
Learned Societies, &c.	3,500
London University	2,000
Aberystwith College	1,000
Deep Sea Exploring Expedition (Report)	1,000
Transit of Venus, 1882	500

Scotland:—

Public Education	110,000
Universities, &c.	3,500
National Gallery	400

Ireland:—

Public Education	150,000
Teachers' Pension Office	500
Endowed Schools Commissioners	200
National Gallery	300
Queen's Colleges	2,000
Royal Irish Academy	500

Class V.—Foreign and Colonial Services.

	£
Diplomatic Services	60,000
Consular Services	60,000
Suppression of the Slave Trade	1,500
Tonnage Bounties, &c.	2,000
Suez Canal (British Directors)	400
Colonies, Grants in Aid	5,000
South Africa and St. Helena	1,500
Subsidies to Telegraph Companies	9,000
Cyprus, Grant in Aid	- -

Class VI.—Non-Effective and Charitable Services.

	£
Superannuation and Retired Allowances	120,000
Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions, &c.	1,000
Pauper Lunatics, England	- -
Pauper Lunatics, Scotland	- -
Pauper Lunatics, Ireland	65,000
Hospitals and Infirmaries, Ireland	4,000
Friendly Societies Deficiency	- -
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Great Britain	800
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Ireland	600

Class VII.—Miscellaneous.

	£
Temporary Commissions	6,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	2,500
Total for Civil Services	£2,916,800

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

	£
Customs	100,000
Inland Revenue	100,000
Post Office	100,000
Post Office Packet Service	120,000
Post Office Telegraphs	270,000
Total for Revenue Departments	£690,000
Grand Total	£3,606,800

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he thought this was a question which, as proposed, might give rise to considerable discussion. Everybody knew that in respect to the Civil Service Estimates a Vote on Account must be taken. It was not clear, however, for what length of time that Vote ought to be taken. He knew it had been customary in former years to take Votes on Account for two months; but, under the New Rules, and other circumstances, it was questionable whether it was necessary to take it for so long a time. It was always understood that this Vote on Account was to be of a limited character; and he should have thought that, without detriment to the Public Service, it might now be taken for a shorter period than two months. He hoped the Government, without any Amendment being proposed, would consent to reduce that amount, so that the Vote on Account might not be taken for two months, but for, say, one month.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, the Vote which was now asked on account was, practically, for two months, though, literally speaking, it was for seven weeks. He was not aware that a Vote for less than two months had ever been taken. On one or two occasions a Vote for three months had been asked for—once by their Predecessors. The Government could not possibly, under the circumstances, ask for a Vote on Account for less than two months. There was no possibility of their being able to get anything in regard to the Civil Service Estimates which would justify them in saying they would not require a Vote of Credit for so long. Therefore, he could only say that, while conforming to what he promised the Committee just now—namely, to take as many Votes in Supply as early in the Session as possible, he must press for a Vote on Account for two months.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, that when he was Secretary to the Treasury the present Chancellor of the Exchequer himself insisted upon a reduction of the time of the Vote on Account from two months to six weeks. There was very great difference in the circumstances of the present year from those of any year which had gone before. This year, when Supply was put down it could be proceeded with from Vote to Vote. The reason why Governments had found it impossible to make headway with Supply was that on the Motion for going into Committee, private Members could raise discussions on other subjects. The Prime Minister, in moving the New Rules, referred to the advantage of Supply being taken much earlier in the Session. What he thought the Committee had a right to expect was not that there should be no Vote on Account, but that a Vote should not be taken for the whole of the Civil Service Estimates except for a very limited period, and that no second Vote should be taken until some progress had been made in the earlier Classes of the Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer knew better than he (Mr. Sclater-Booth) did what the prospects of the Government were with regard to their own Business; but what he contended was that, under the circumstances of the present year, the experiment of taking a Vote for a month or six weeks should be tried. He was satisfied that if the right hon. Gentleman would take off one-fourth of the Vote, he would be supported by the Committee.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, the House had been given to understand that if private Members gave up the facilities they previously enjoyed for raising discussions on going into Committee of Supply, that very mischievous practice of the Estimates of the year being relegated to a late period of the Session would be brought to an end. That was one of the advantages which was constantly urged on the Ministerial Benches during the passing of the New Rules through the House, and the Government had now an opportunity of carrying into practice the principles they had laid down. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said it would be absolutely necessary that a Vote on Account should be granted. That everyone admitted. It was, however, also said that a Vote on Account was necessary now, because of the early occurrence of Easter. But the Committee must bear in mind that the Vote on Account they were now asked to grant would practically carry them up to the 1st of June. That could scarcely be necessary. He did not wish to move the somewhat crude Amendment, that the Vote be reduced by one-half; but if the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would consent to take a Vote for half the amount now proposed, he would find he could do so without detriment to the Public Service, and he would certainly find no objection raised by the Committee. There was no desire to hamper the Executive Government with regard to the management of the National Services; but there was a desire that the Government should so regulate the amounts they asked for as to insure to the House of Commons practical control of Supply. They had hitherto been familiar with the practice of having the Estimates hurled at their heads at the latter end of July, or in the month of August; but they were assured solemnly by the Prime Minister that that would not occur again if the House gave him the power that he asked for under the New Rules. He trusted the Chancellor of the Exchequer would see his way to meet the wishes of the Committee, and thus allow the discussion to terminate in an amicable manner.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, he hoped the Committee would recollect that the circumstances of the year were somewhat exceptional. They were not, however, exceptional exactly in the direction which had been stated by hon. Gentlemen opposite. They were exceptional in this respect—that Parliament had sat up to the very eve of Easter without a single Government measure having passed a second reading. He had no doubt that at some future period they would hear of the mismanagement of Business, and the waste of the time of the House by the Government. He should be glad to know in what way it was possible to have prevented the present state of things? He did not complain that 11 nights were occupied by the debate on the Address; and he did not suppose it would be denied that since then their time had been almost exclusively taken up by the necessary discussion of Supply. The consequence was they had now arrived at a period of the Session when it was absolutely necessary some progress should be made with the legislation the Government had proposed. He did not suppose there were any hon. Gentlemen opposite who desired that the Session should be distinguished by no legislation whatever; therefore, they would be scarcely unwilling to afford the Government an opportunity of taking the opinion of the House on some of the legislative projects which they had laid, and were desirous of laying, before the House. He trusted the course the Government now proposed to take would be assented to by the Committee.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, the noble Marquess had certainly made a most melancholy confession when he admitted that, despite the reform of the Rules of the House in the way the Government, not the House, wished, the Government were in the deplorable plight that they had not yet succeeded in obtaining a second reading of any one measure. The noble Marquess now said—"Let us postpone the Civil Service Estimates, in the hope that we may be able to ask the House to consider some of the measures which hitherto we have been unable to bring before its notice." He (Lord George Hamilton) did not think such an issue ought to be put to them now, because what were the facts of the case? This Vote on Account was not merely for a long period, but it was a Vote on Account for by far the largest Civil Service Estimates ever yet presented to the House of Commons. Ever since the present Government had been in Office the Civil Service Estimates had not been taxed in the House. The consequence was they had increased at an unparalleled rate, and they now amounted to £3,000,000 more than they were when the late Government left them, and to £1,600,000 over the last Appropriation Account. If this fact were combined with the knowledge that the House of Commons had during the time referred to no control over the Estimates, cause and effect were brought very close together, and the Liberal Party, if they chose to sanction the increased expenditure, would be responsible for it. It was well known that if certain items once got upon the Estimates they generally remained there, and constituted a permanent increase of expenditure. As the Government must have a Vote on Account, if they could not undertake that the Estimates would be discussed during the next two months, then he thought the Committee would do well to grant a Vote on Account for one month only.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER pointed out that the New Rules made it impossible for hon. Members to raise a debate upon any subject in which they took an interest, except upon the Address to Her Majesty; whereas it used to be open to any Member to raise such questions on going into Committee of Supply. The

Government now took Mondays for going into Committee of Supply without Question; and not only had they obtained Mondays, but Thursdays also. The Committee would recollect that the Prime Minister said last year that it was not the duty of the Government to keep a House on private Members' nights; and the consequence had been that last Session the House was counted out on six successive Tuesdays. As the Government would not give Members any help in bringing forward their questions on Tuesdays, and as they had no power to raise them on going into Committee of Supply, Members were entirely in the power of the Government, having no means of advocating and defending their opinions. Under the circumstances, they had but one course to pursue, and that was to take every opportunity which the Forms of the House presented of exercising the very small privileges left to them. Such an opportunity occurred on the Address; and if the Government had passed Rules which rendered the course he had indicated necessary to private Members, they had no right to complain that the Opposition had availed themselves of the Constitutional opportunity which then presented itself for bringing forward questions in which they took an interest. There was no other course open to them; and he considered it unjust and improper, on the part of the Government, to twit the Opposition with the debate on the Address.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, this Vote on Account was not larger than had been asked for by the late Administration on one occasion.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, the Vote on Account which the late Government were allowed to take was £1,200,000. The Estimates then were very much less than the Estimates of the right hon. Gentleman.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, the Vote was accurately stated by the right hon. Gentleman at £1,200,000; but only that amount was taken for two months, because a considerable sum had already been voted.

MR. SALT said, he felt that the Government which came to the House from time to time for Votes on Account for the purpose of managing Public Business confessed that it had driven itself and the Business of the country into a corner. He wished to point out how extremely important this Vote was which they were now asked to grant, and which would, no doubt, be granted. Having voted the £3,660,800, the Committee to that extent, and possibly to a much greater extent, would have diminished their proper control over the Votes; because when, at a future time, they came to criticize the Estimates, they would be told that they had already voted the sum in question, and that it was impossible they could now deal with the subject-matter of the Votes. Supposing that objection were raised to an Estimate, how were the Committee to deal with it when they found that a large sum on account had already been voted? This was putting the House and the country in an unfair position with regard to the Estimates. He put it to the Government that, owing to circumstances over which they had very little control, the Estimates of last year were brought forward so late in the last Session that it was absolutely impossible to discuss them properly; and it was, therefore, the more incumbent on Members of the House, in regard to the Estimates of this year, to see that there was no extravagant item in them which was not submitted to full examination. Speaking for himself, he repudiated entirely, and with some degree of indignation, the charge that it was the intention to discuss the Estimates at such a length as to obstruct legislation; but if there was in the mind of the noble Marquess or the Government any such idea, it was easy to deal with it in this way. Let the Estimates be put before the House at the proper time; and if there were any unusual delay, or unfair and unnecessary criticism, it would then be time to charge Members with delaying the Estimates for the purpose of obstructing legislation. He thought hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House had a right to complain, when the Government charged them with dealing with the Estmates in such a manner as to prevent the discussion of Government Bills. He put it as strongly as possible to the Government, whether they would afford an opportunity for discussing the Votes properly when they next came forward? And he could answer for it that, so far as he was himself concerned, and he believed he might say so far as hon. Gentlemen on those Benches were concerned, they would be submitted to perfectly fair and even generous criticism.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he thought he could give the hon. Member exactly the assurance asked for; because the rule was laid down in 1866, and ought to have been, if it had not been, rigidly observed, that the taking of a Vote on Account did not preclude objection to, and indeed refusal, of any new Vote. It was well understood that the taking of Votes on Account involved no new principle; they were asked for every year in connection with the Civil Service Estimates.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, the right hon. Gentleman had apparently understood the observations of the hon. Gentleman who preceded him in precisely an opposite sense to what he (Mr. Lowther) did. He had not understood the hon. Gentleman to say that the House would be precluded from objecting to any new Vote, but to ask that the promise of an opportunity for discussion should be given before any Vote was given at all. The impression now conveyed was that if they consented to a a Vote on Account they would hear nothing more of these Estimates. The noble Marquess himself had stated that the next two months were to be employed in getting on with legislation.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he had stated nothing about the Estimates not being submitted to further consideration during the next two months.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he had not supposed that the noble Marquess referred to the fact that no progress was being made in legislation for the purpose of indulging in historical retrospect only. He (Mr. Lowther) presumed that the Government hoped to make progress with legislation through the Vote now asked for, and he considered that this view was not an unfair construction to place upon the words of the noble Marquess. That being so, hon. Members were, he thought, entitled to ask for an assurance that they would have an opportunity of discussing the Civil Service Estimates within the next two months. The proposal did not appear to him an unreasonable one, and he hoped it would be acceded to, in order to obviate the necessity of moving a reduction of the Vote.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, hon. Members opposite appeared to be under some misapprehension as to the Civil Service Estimates. The increase this year was about £1,300,000 more than for the year 1880, and the four heads of Elementary Education, Irish Police, Land Commission, and Grants in Aid, including the contribution to Main Roads were more than enough to account for it. The Grants in Aid this year were nearly £1,000,000 more than in 1880; and if hon. Gentlemen opposite took these facts into consideration they would see that the whole argument on which they based their opposition to this Vote fell to the ground. He trusted that the Vote would be allowed to pass.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he thought the justice of the case would be met by giving the Government one month's Supply. They would have Mondays and Thursdays in every week after Easter for bringing forward the Civil Service Estimates; but his feeling was that if they allowed the whole Vote to be taken that evening, seeing that there were four or five Government Bills to be considered, read a second time, and probably dealt with in Committee, the Prime Minister would come down after Easter and ask for another Vote on Account, alleging that it was absolutely impossible to proceed with the Estimates in the then state of Public Business. Under the circumstances, he felt it his duty to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £1,660,800.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £2,000,000, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charge for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884."—(*Sir Walter B. Barttelot.*)

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS pointed out that the proposed Vote was presented in one form by the noble Marquess, and in another by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman treated it as a matter of course that a Vote of two months' Supply should be taken, because it had been taken on former occasions. That, however, was a principle against which, he thought, the Committee ought to protest in the most solemn way, especially as under the

New Rules there was no necessity for a Vote on Account. The noble Marquess, on the other hand, had approached the matter in a totally different spirit, by saying that the Vote should be granted under the peculiar circumstances of the present Session. He trusted the Government would be able to promise an opportunity for the discussion of the Estimates before the Whitsuntide Recess.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, it was the invariable custom to take a Vote for two months on account. He could only say that nothing would surprise him more than to find they could not get, at any rate, one evening in the week after the Recess for the discussion of the Civil Service Estimates; and, unless something extraordinary happened, he assumed that the first evening after the Recess would be devoted to their consideration.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE said, the Government had stated that there had been no opportunity up to that time of taking the second reading of measures in which the country and the House were interested. But he pointed out that this had been altogether an exceptional year, inasmuch as Easter fell much earlier than it had fallen for many years past, and the Session had commenced a week later than usual. The consequence was, naturally, that the Government had less time in which to carry on its Business before Easter.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 38; Noes 59: Majority 21.—(Div. List, No. 37.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

Committee to sit again *To-morrow*.

BILLS OF SALE (IRELAND) ACT (1879) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 105.]

(*Mr. Monk, Mr. Patrick Martin, Mr. Corry, Mr. Eugene Collins.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. MONK, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it was the complement of the Act of last year, which had proved of great advantage to this country. He had received letters from Dublin stating that many of the extortioners dealt with by that Act had found their occupation in England gone, and were making arrangements for transferring their operations to certain cities and large towns in Ireland. This Bill, he believed, had the approval of every Irish Member, and of the Chambers of Commerce in Ireland, and it would have the support of the Attorney General for Ireland.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Monk.*)

Motion *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, the sum of £6,240,100, be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock;

Committee to sit again *To-morrow*.

QUESTIONS.

THE PUBLIC OFFICES—EXPLOSIONS AT THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD AND AT THE "TIMES" OFFICE.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Perhaps I may, with the indulgence of the House, be allowed to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can give the House any particulars with respect to the explosion which has taken place at the Local Government Board Office; and whether there is any truth in the report that an explosion has also taken place at *The Times* office?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The particulars I have received from the police are, that at five minutss past 9 this evening an explosion took place on the ground floor of the Office of the Local Government Board, in Charles Street, Westminster, wrecking a room, and breaking much glass, and causing other damage in the neighbourhood. There are many conjectures as to the cause of the explosion; but it would not be right to state them until there has been an official inquiry. No person has been injured. In reference to the other matter to which my right hon. Friend refers, I have seen a gentleman connected with *The Times* office; and it appears that previous to the explosion at the Local Government Board Office, at about half-past 7, there was found outside *The Times* office a canister containing some explosive material, which seems to have slightly exploded, but with no serious effects. Those are the facts I have received.

MR. PULESTON asked whether there was anything to indicate in a similar way the cause of the explosion at the Local Government Board Office?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: At present I have no information of anything having been found; and, in fact, the explosion was of such a character that there was hardly likely to be anything found.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE asked whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman's statement, that no person had been injured, referred to persons at the Local Government Board Office only, as he had heard it reported that several persons at *The Central Press* office had been injured and taken away in cabs?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The information I have received does not bear that out.

CROWN LANDS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. COURTNEY, Bill to amend the Law relating to the management of the Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues of the Crown, *ordered* to brought in by Mr. COURTNEY and Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 122.]

House adjourned at half after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 16*th March*, 1883.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 1)*.

Committee—*Report*—National Gallery (Loan) (18).

Third Reading—Payment of Wages in Public Houses Prohibition (21), and *passed*.

EDUCATION—HIGHER BOARD SCHOOLS.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

LORD NORTON, in rising, pursuant to Notice, to move—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working of the higher schools now being established by several school boards in England,"

said, he asked their Lordships to inquire how the interests and advancement of National Education were concerned in the establishment of higher schools by boards in many towns in England. All he asked was inquiry; and as those schools were avowedly a new departure foreign to the legislation on the subject—whatever might be the Parliamentary sanction to Code modifications—of vital national importance for good or evil, and a course on which the highest authorities disagreed, it would be a strong measure if the Government set themselves against information, and held themselves aloof from any inquiry. The facts of the case were these. Board schools, called higher or advanced elementary schools, were being set up, or proposed, in the Metropolis and great manufacturing towns. At Bradford the first attempt of the kind was made. Whatever its intention was, it had practically turned out to be simply an aristocratic duplicate of the elementary board schools. It took children from the same age—seven—in the lower Standards, and only kept its pupils longer within the highest Standards, which the Code defined to be elementary; and by charging the highest fee within Government subsidy, 9*d*. a-week, or about half the cost, it enabled a higher class to get State-aided education without their children coming in contact with the poorer class for whom it was chiefly intended. The question raised by this kind of higher board school was as to the waste of the duplicate teaching power and process; and whether the instructions of Parliament would not be better carried out by sounder education in the same higher subjects being had by all requiring it in independent middle schools, if such schools were unimpeded in adapting themselves to the present requirement by this public bounty; while private resources, readily forthcoming for exhibitions and scholarships, could help poorer children of exceptional ability to avail themselves of such middle schools freely. At Manchester, an old charitable foundation was, three years ago, bought up and adopted by the Board for a higher rate-aided school affecting to give the working classes all the literary and science studies called elementary in the Code, and it was about to be enlarged to add classics to its programme. In the girls' department, they not only recited, but were acting Shakespeare, at the cost of the rates, being engaged possibly quite as usefully as the boys in their empirical science lectures Several exhibitions of £25 a-year admitted children exclusively to this higher board school, which might suffice for clever children to get better education at the magnificent grammar school close by, where even non-exhibitioners in the highest department only paid a £5 yearly fee, or 2*s.* a-week. In this higher board school children were only admitted after passing the 4th Standard, which was a mode of cutting from the elementary schools the few advanced pupils in each of them fit for higher studies to be profitably pursued at all. The question here raised was, whether the entire charge on the rates and Treasury for such a higher board school was not both superfluous and mischievous interference with schools ready at hand. At Liverpool there were no such separate higher board schools for children above the 4th Standard; but the so-called elementary schools undersold and starved the lower departments —exactly suited for such children—of several well-endowed middle schools, in spite of their scholarships and prizes for poor children of exceptional ability; the rate and Treasury grants giving them the enormous advantage of plant, scientific apparatus, and trained teachers, over the schools whose resources for implements and salaries they served to supersede. The Sheepshanks voluntary middle school in Liverpool called itself self-supporting, living on 9*d.* fees and Treasury grants without burdening the local rates, showing how we had come to consider institutions free which only taxed the Treasury. But there were three great middle-class schools or institutes close to offering the same education without any public aid. The Leeds Board reported of their higher schools that

Lord Norton

> "The term means nothing more than schools in which higher fees are paid and a better class so led to attend, and as they are able to stay longer, the teaching is productive of superior results; but neither in quality of teachers nor in subjects of instruction, is there any difference between the ordinary and higher schools. They feel considerable difficulty in further extending the instruction as to the power and duty of school boards to trespass on the province of middle or grammar schools, but the time has arrived to push forward."

They quote the August Circular of the Council Office as their guide in avoiding to encroach on secondary education, limiting the age of their scholars to 14, and the subjects of instruction to the ample definition of the Code, and deprecating severely all attempts at anything higher. They deal with two classes of children—those of skilled artizans and of exceptional natural ability —the latter they would enable to compete for exhibitions; and here, they say—

> "The work of the school board should end and that of middle and grammar schools begin. They deplore that so few rise to the higher standards in elementary schools that it is impossible to give higher education in them."

The question here was, whether they and others like them were really doing what they so wisely professed, or avoiding what they so severely deprecated— so illusory was the Code definition of elementary teaching, and so mistaken the notion of employing public taxation to force every child artificially up to an intellectual standard. At Sheffield there was a central higher board school, professing to collect in sufficient numbers boys and girls of exceptional ability from elementary schools, a very few coming from each. They confessed it was ground not trodden before, and a step only to be justified because there was no other provision for such children, enabling them to apply the little science they had acquired in elementary schools to the manual work they were destined for in the manufactories of the town. There were, however, many middle schools in Sheffield for this purpose wholly supported by fees—in the case of the grammar school only four guineas a-year, or 2*s.* a-week; and there was a private scholarship fund, freeing an ample number of poor children even from this small charge. The large sum of £52,000 expended out of the rates in establishing this competing board school would have furnished these independent schools with every requisite, and avoided the great irritation of a large number of ratepayers. Lastly, in the London School Board Office, there was a scheme ready drafted by the late managing committee, to collect similarly in a few higher board schools advanced children, calculated in number at about 3 per cent, from all the elementary schools. The weekly fee was proposed to be lower than 9*d*., in order to check the aristocracy from coming; betraying the fact that the payment which was proposed as a limit to the working class had been taken by the higher class as a means of social exclusiveness and aristocratic, though eleemosynary, distinction. This scheme was proposed, not because of deficiency of independent higher schools, which in many parts of London abounded more than was generally known, and which probably were prevented increasing by the Board's proposal; but simply to get hold of higher schools as a re-arrangement of their present work, culling the few elementary scholars who could go in for higher education into sufficient numbers. The question here raised was, whether independent schools did not provide more suitably for these picked boys, and for the upper artizan class, on terms within their easy and willing reach. From the samples he had given, it appeared that there was great variety in the plans and views of the different towns, which had set up higher board schools, on the subject. All, however, agreed in wishing to limit their higher board schools to the upper artizan class and poor children of exceptional ability from the elementary schools, and in deprecating all trespass on the province of independent middle schools, or going beyond what the Code had called elementary studies. But were such schools likely to keep to that lower class, and was the Code definition of elementary studies true, either to common sense, or to the plain legislative intention of Parliament, from which it had annually wandered further and further? Were not such schools sure to be made use of by a higher class, who would naturally engross to themselves the chief attention, to the detriment of the first claimants, and to the overriding, by their unlimited command of public money, of independent middle-class schools, which would give higher education better? So, also, had not the Code been losing sight of its first claimants—namely, the working classes up to the age of going to work, when education took the form of apprenticeship, and when technical education must begin? Their Lordships expressed a very decided opinion two years ago, by a majority of 2 to 1, that the specific subjects enumerated in the Code did not come within elementary instruction. He wished, therefore, to inquire, whether those higher board schools were doing what they pretended to do, and avoiding what they deprecated? He confessed to misgivings whether they were not being rather led astray by inappreciation of what was really needed as elementary instruction in a too eager anticipation of technical study which, to be of any use, must come after. There was a blind fear of foreign competition in art and trade. But the Fourth Schedule in elementary schools, even if pupils were collected in higher schools, would not improve the competition of our working classes with their rivals in other countries, who put technology in its proper educational place after elementary instruction was completed. The varieties of special technology could not be taught among general subjects in elementary schools. The attempt only wasted the time due to elementary instruction, and the working child's education was not wholly in school, but much more in applied industry. The superior intelligence of Americans, for instance, was not the result of special primary schools. It was a mistake to suppose these higher elementary schools an imitation of them. Their Reports were always repeating the principle that general national education was to fit the nation for every kind of citizenship, not to aim at any particularly high standard of literature for all sorts and conditions of life. There was but one higher school on the school rate in all Pennyslvania, with 1,000,000 population, and the higher class did not send their children to State schools at all. There was more sense in American practice than in our supposed imitation. The inquiry would be (1) as to the higher board schools already established, at what age they admitted, and to what age they retained children, and what were the Standards in which they were examined at leaving; (2) at what age, and to what extent, advanced elementary teaching took the form of experimental science and foreign languages, and the class of children so entering on such studies, and what became of them; (3) what independent, middle, grammar, or proprietary schools there were in towns where higher board schools were being set up or proposed, at what fees, and whether with any exhibitions to them, and whether such schools provided the sort of education required by the upper artizan class; (4) how far it might appear that the undertaking or proposal of State-aided higher schools had impeded in any towns the development of independent middle schools in their neighbourhood; (5) whether parents of the upper artizan class seemed willing to pay more for schools independent of boards, of non-eleemosynary character, with higher association, and with religious freedom? For such an inquiry the witnesses would be (1) Council Office officials and Inspectors; (2) Endowed Schools Commissioners; (3) chairmen of school boards; (4) managers and masters of middle, grammar, and proprietary schools; (5) principals of training colleges; (6) manufacturers and artizans, and recognized authorities on the subject. He asked for inquiry now, for soon it must be too late. The course of national education should at least be reconciled with the Education Acts—the Acts brought up to it, or it reduced to the Acts. What he feared was that the poorer classes were being left out by the ambition of higher work; that elementary training was being sacrificed to superficial show induced by prizes of public money on results got up; that better means of higher instruction for the artizan class were hindered from meeting supply to demand by a mischievous use of public bounties; and that the Government supply was not so suited to the middle classes of this country as the independent supply would be, and that there was a fatal error in premature anticipation of technical instruction in elementary schools. That error was perhaps the very reason why, in spite of our schools, foreign workmen were found as much as ever in our manufactories. Whether these fears were just or not information was wanted. Possibly, the Board schemes might be reconcilable with the claims of other schools, if not unfairly handicapped in competition. He defied any one to show that the inquiry was unnecessary or uncalled for, and he did not think it could be for a moment urged against it that the question was in any sense a Party one. He might say that the right rev. Prelate (the Bishop of Exeter) took generally the views he (Lord Norton) had attempted to express; and he was sure many others on the opposite side of the House were with him. Both sides in Parliament were equally and impartially interested in testing a new departure from its educational enactments. But the Government must accept the inquiry, or it could not be usefully carried out. In his opinion they would incur a grave responsibilty if they decided that no inquiry was needed. The noble Lord concluded by making his Motion.

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working of the higher schools now being established by several school boards in England."—(*The Lord Norton.*)

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRIVY SEAL) said, that no one was better qualified than his noble Friend (Lord Norton) to bring educational questions of this kind before the House; and he (Lord Carlingford) could assure him that he approached the Motion without the smallest disinclination to agree to the institution of an inquiry, if it could be shown that it was necessary, or likely to be of use to the cause of education. As many of their Lordships were aware, the credit for the introduction of the system of permitting and encouraging the teaching of certain higher subjects in a higher class of board schools separate from the general system, was due to the late Government. The system also of permitting, and within certain limits of encouraging, the teaching of the so-called higher subjects, over and above and alongside the three R's, in ordinary elementary schools, was mainly the work of the noble Duke—whom he did not see in his place—(the Duke of Richmond and Gordon) and Lord Sandon, and was introduced in the Code of 1875. When the subject was under discussion in the House of Commons, Lord Sandon stated that the Government had permitted and encouraged the teaching of certain higher subjects in ordinary schools, in the belief that it would be of enormous benefit to a limited number of the best children in those schools, and would not interfere with the efficiency of the schools as regarded the teaching of the ordinary elementary subjects. It was considered, on the contrary, that it would give more life and intelligence to schools in general. On almost all sides of the House of Commons the proposals of the Government were well received, and with especial favour and thankfulness by Lord Sandon's Predecessor in Office, Mr. Forster. He (Lord Carlingford) could not but think that his noble Friend entertained needless alarm with reference to the teaching of higher subjects in elementary schools, and especially with regard to the training of elementary school children in so-called higher board schools, to which his Motion was in terms confined. He understood the noble Lord to say that the establishment of the schools to which he referred was foreign to the purpose of Parliament, that they were bad secondary schools, and that, somehow or other, they led to the neglect of the essential elementary teaching in the ordinary schools of the country. He disputed both those propositions. He was not aware that anyone had ever been able to define where elementary education left off and secondary education began. He did not say that there might not be a certain number of scholars who found their way into these higher board schools who might be described as belonging to the middle class or lower middle class; but the great majority of the children in these schools belonged to the same class as that which furnished the children who attended the primary schools in the towns in which these higher schools had been established. The schools in question were simply advanced elementary schools strictly and literally so called, organized with the object of effecting a division of labour, and they complied, in all respects, with every requirement of the Code. The fee generally paid was the highest permitted by the Code—namely, 9*d.*; but care was taken that any promising child who, in the opinion of the Board, could not afford to pay that fee, should not, in consequence of that inability, be debarred from admission into the school. The greater number of the questions which had been put by the noble Lord he would find answered in the Code itself. He (Lord Carlingford) would not dogmatize about the propriety of teaching higher subjects in the ordinary schools, or about the merits of this or that subject recognized by the Code. He was, however, satisfied on the whole that the changes introduced into the Code of 1875 by the Duke of Richmond and Lord Sandon had been successful, although there had been a great deal of criticism as to the various specific subjects that the children were allowed to learn. He wished their Lordships to understand that the amount of money paid on account of special subjects was very limited indeed. Out of more than 4,000,000 of children who attended our primary schools the number taking up special subjects last year was somewhere between 150,000 and 170,000, and the grants made on account of those subjects amounted to £33,000, of which sum £15,000 only went to board schools, more than half going to the voluntary schools of the country. His noble Friend seemed to think that the Education Department was pushing on the teaching of special subjects with dangerous zeal. As a matter of fact, the exact contrary was the case, and he was bound to say that the policy of the present Education Department, while continuing that of their Predecessors, was more restrictive and cautious The Code of last year limited the teaching of those subjects in such a way as to prevent the possibility of the expenditure of public money to a greater extent than was contemplated by Parliament, and to insure the teaching of the essential elements of education. The New Code, for example, did not allow a special subject to be paid for unless the child learning it had passed Standard IV. It also limited the number of special subjects, and laid down that no school should teach them, unless 70 per cent of the children attending it should have passed the examination in the three "R's" during the previous year. These and other changes would come into force in the month of May. That being so, he held that the present was not a convenient time in which to institute an inquiry such as the noble Lord proposed. An inquiry of that kind would, under present circumstances, be inopportune and ineffectual. He would now read to the House the Instructions issued by the Education Department to their Inspectors with regard to the question of specific subjects. The following Circular was addressed to the Inspectors in August, 1882;—

> "In ordinary circumstances, the scheme of elementary education, as now laid down by the Code, may be considered complete, without the addition of special subjects. . . . In large schools, however, and those which are in favourable circumstances, the scholars of Standard V. and upwards may be encouraged to attempt one or more of such subjects which the managers may deem most appropriate to the industrial and other needs of the district. It is not the intention of my Lords to encourage a pretentious or unreal pursuit of higher studies, or to encroach in any way on the province of secondary education."

Under the conditions referred to in that Circular, the teaching of a certain number of higher subjects would be continued in our ordinary schools. It was very difficult to understand why his noble Friend should quarrel with the higher schools to which he had drawn attention. If it was admitted that the Code of 1875 ought to continue in force, the objection of his noble Friend was unintelligible. The noble Lord, in fact, was falling foul of institutions which he ought to look upon with favour. These higher schools added nothing to the teaching which could be and was given to a certain number of children in ordinary schools. They were confined absolutely to teaching within the limits of the Code. It was a mere matter of organization that some of the subjects should be taught in separate schools; it had been found that the teaching of the higher subjects was better carried on and with better advantage to elementary teaching in one school in a large town rather than in all the schools. To show their Lordships the nature of these schools, he would read a letter, sent by the Education Department of the late Government in March, 1880, to the Sheffield School Board. It said—

> "My Lords entirely concur with your Board in the desirability of providing in a single school for the instruction of the more promising scholars in the higher subjects at a higher fee than is charged in other schools, as a course tending to secure greater economy and efficiency than the attempt to provide such instruction in each of the public elementary schools under the Board."

In their answer, the School Board said—

> "There is absolutely no educational provision of the kind contemplated open in Sheffield to children of the class for whom this school is intended. The fees charged at the Collegiate School, Wesley College, and the High School for Girls place those institutions beyond the reach of children ordinarily passing through the public elementary schools. The Board have no desire to usurp the functions of these institutions, and they believe the higher departments of the central schools will be easily filled by children from the public schools of the town."

In a letter from Mr. Hanson, Chairman of the School Management Committee of the Bradford School Board to the Department in November, 1880, he said—

> "The better schools under our Board are called 'higher board schools.' They are not intended to be schools for the middle classes, or schools of secondary education. They are simply advanced elementary schools. As public elementary schools, they are conducted according to the regulations of the Code—instruction is given in all the ordinary Standards—they earn grants exactly as the ordinary schools."

Under those circumstances, he submitted that there was no real ground for alarm. He believed that the schools were strictly within the limits of the Code, and, judging by the Code, of the intention of Parliament. In his opinion they provided a good education for a certain number of children who were too advanced in many cases to be properly taught in ordinary schools, and whose presence there might absorb too much of the teacher's time and lead to some sacrifice of the ordinary and essential business of the schools. Moreover, he was satisfied that, in the great majority of cases, the children attending the board schools would not be able to afford to pay the fee at middle-class schools. While he had no objection on general grounds to such an inquiry as was asked for, he submitted that the noble Lord had not shown any sufficient reason for a Parliamentary Inquiry as regarded this subject, especially at a time when a New Code was coming into operation and the provisions of that Code bore so essentially upon the points in question. Under the circumstances, he did not think that to undertake an inquiry, at all events at the present time, would be a useful work; and he could not, therefore, support the Motion for a Committee.

Lord COLCHESTER said, that he did not consider the school boards the best bodies to be intrusted with secondary education. Moreover, he was not sure that the Education Acts intended that the public rates should be applied to the teaching of anything other than elementary education. As it was now, the result of the step that had been taken was that the expenses of the higher schools of the school boards created considerable difficulty in the reorganization of endowed schools. The Schools Inquiry Commission, presided over by Lord Taunton, expressed their opinion that the want of the country was third-grade schools immediately above the level of elementary schools. In a great many parts of the country, it had been attempted to apply endowments to the purposes of higher grade education, sometimes very much against the will of those administering them. Those endowments had formerly been applied in a wasteful manner to elementary education; but they had now to a great extent been applied to the maintenance of schools one degree higher, in which there were opportunities for obtaining scholarships. These schools were within the reach of the poorer classes; but it had been found that the schools were destroyed by the establishment of the higher class board schools, with lower fees. He thought an inquiry of the kind proposed was desirable for several reasons; and, especially, because it would make clear the evils of the competition that now went on between the various schools, and would probably be able to suggest a remedy for them. Besides, it would be well to know how far the education imparted at the higher board schools was given to the children of parents who could afford to pay the full price for it elsewhere. He had no wish to lay down the law one way or the other on any of these questions; but he held that there was a clear case for an inquiry, and trusted that the Government would allow a Committee to investigate the subject.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, the noble Lord opposite the Lord Privy Seal appears to me to have overlooked the fact that we are asking, not for a Vote of Censure on the present policy of the Council of Education, but only for an inquiry into its results; and, therefore, the allusions which besprinkled his speech to the action of the late Government have not much argumentative value. It cannot, I think, be argued that because both Parties have sanctioned the establishment of our present administrative system, its results ought to be withdrawn from the view of Parliament. No doubt, the late Government gave their sanction to the principle to a limited extent, being guided by the reports they received, and by the opinions of those whose opinions were best worth having; but it does not follow that, if they had continued in Office, they would have thought that the system, so newly introduced, should have been continued for any length of time without the supervision of Parliament. The very interesting speech of my noble Friend who has just sat down (Lord Colchester) indicates one part of the subject as to which an inquiry is very seriously wanted—namely, the extent to which this new system may be an encroachment on the arrangements which the Endowed Schools Commissioners are making out of materials at their disposal, and the possibility of finding two Departments of the Government competing with each other, and making the performance of the work more difficult for both. Another reason for watching the operation of the new system is the interest of that very much neglected person, the ratepayer. We should never lose sight of the fact, that this educational system, whatever its merits, and whatever the benefits it confers, is still a system of educating the children of parents too poor to educate them themselves, and of taking money from the pockets of other people for the purpose. It is founded on precisely the same principles as those which justify the existence of the Poor Law in this country; but directly you go beyond the primary necessities of education, for the most necessitous class, you are on very dangerous ground. You must ask yourselves whether you are not sacrificing the interests of the ratepayer to a greater extent than the necessities of the case justify. Indeed, the thing in itself savours of injustice. You may be bound to take rates to furnish what is necessary, but have you the right to furnish, at the public cost, what is superfluous? If you thus part from your logical principles, you will enter upon a limitless field of expense, and the overburdened ratepayer may have to furnish education to classes who are very well able to supply it for themselves. On these grounds, I think it very desirable that, as regards this system, which I do not desire to censure so far as it has gone, Parliament should very carefully watch the proceedings of the school boards; but there is also another general ground for an inquiry. It is the inevitable law of affairs, that whenever you establish educational facilities for the poorest classes, gradually richer classes take possession of them. This is not the first time in our history that efforts have been made to educate the people. Efforts were made centuries ago to do this by means of endowments. We have had public schools, Universities, and grammar schools, all of them representing the efforts of benevolent persons to educate the poorer classes; but, in each case, the richer classes stepped in and appropriated what was meant for the poor. It is a very natural process, and in the present day we see this same process at work before our eyes. Those who conduct schools, being responsible for the educational results produced therein, naturally like the class of pupils who can pay best, and whose proficiency reflects the greatest credit on the school, and that motive affects the Education Office as well as the schoolmaster. The constant, if slow, action of this principle tends to shoulder out of the school the lowest, most necessitous, and most indigent of the children, and to provide the education needed by a wealthier class, and paid for at a greater cost. This process we see in operation every day, and I, therefore, join my noble Friend in regretting that the Government have expressed their objections to an inquiry. At the same time, I am not prepared to say that the matter is so imminent that the House should force the Government into an inquiry against their will. There is a great deal in what the noble Lord the Lord Privy Seal advances, that a great change has been made by the present Code in the conditions of the new system. I should, therefore, advise my noble Friend (Lord Norton) to be content with the effect his speech has produced, and that he should reserve for another year his proposal for an inquiry into the matter.

Lord ABERDARE said, he thought that noble Lords opposite ought not to complain if effect were now given to the concessions made, with the full concurrence of both sides of the House, by the late Government. When the subject was discussed some time ago, there was a very general desire that the education given by these schools should be improved, and the only question now, as it seemed to him, was whether the right class of children were being benefited by what had been done. He had found, in the course of an extensive and lengthy examination into the state of education throughout Wales, in which he had taken part, that there were a very large number of those whom he might call the working class, and small tradesmen, who were unable to avail themselves of the grammar schools, and it would be a great advantage if these higher schools could be extended to those districts where this occurred. He was not aware that there was any great increase in the age at which children remained at school. At Birmingham, out of 11,447 children on the rolls, there were only 60 above the age of 14, and these were not in the advanced classes, but they were mostly ignorant and backward boys. In Scotland, which had long had a much wider scheme of education than England, none of the suggested objections were made. The elementary subjects were best taught where the higher subjects were taught, and there had been a very great increase in the numbers learning mathematics and Latin in order to qualify themselves for Professions. There had been no corresponding increase in England and Wales; and the question naturally arose, why should not English boys have the same opportunity of qualifying themselves for the professions as Scotch boys? In the populous districts of Glamorganshire and in Methyr Tydvil, notwithstanding the decrease of population, there was an increase in the numbers in the upper Standards. He knew there was an idea that a class of persons used these schools for whose benefit they were not intended. He thought, however, that it was now too late to go back. Having once sanctioned this system, it was not right to interfere the moment that the school boards had determined to extend the advantages of elementary education to a large number of the working class. They could not, therefore, recede; and it was unnecessary, and would be a great pity, to interfere because the board schools were only realizing what had been hoped for from them. No amount of evidence would carry conviction so well as attendance at the schools themselves, and the noble Lord who had raised the question (Lord Norton) would be surprised if he knew the thoroughness of the teaching in the superior subjects. In Scotland there did not exist the slightest disposition to object to this education being paid for out of the rates; and it would seem cruel to deprive small tradesmen and others of the advantages of this higher education for their children. There was a general demand in the lower middle class for these higher board schools, for endowments were very unevenly distributed, and many large populations were without them. To interfere with what was going on for the sake of a third-grade school here and there would be to sacrifice a general good for partial and uncertain benefits, and he was therefore glad the Government did not see their way to accede to the inquiry. For himself, he could only say that he should distrust very much the working of such a Committee as the one proposed.

LORD NORTON said, he did not complain of too much zeal on the part of these higher board schools, but of zeal without discretion; for they would interfere, he thought, with institutions much better fitted to perform the function they assumed. The work would be better done by others if only the school boards stood out of the way; but private enterprize, however superior, could not compete with unlimited command of the public purse. It was not much defence to say that the Code had been so far altered in its last Edition, that special subjects could no longer be taught until Elementary Standards were passed. It certainly was an improvement to secure the bottom before the top; but the question was whether the elementary was not the sole subject in the possible scope of the Code. The time when the departure was being taken, and when these higher board schools were few, was the only time for any inquiry, which would evidently be too late when such schools were generally established all over the country, even although, as at Sheffield, they were established in spite of the opposition of a large minority of the ratepayers. He thought the step which was being taken was adverse to the interests of national education. However, he quite allowed that if the Government would not consent to assist the inquiry he proposed, that inquiry would be valueless. He must, therefore, throw on the Government the entire responsibility of refusing it, although, in his judgment, it was most urgently needed. He should, however, do his utmost to procure any information otherwise by moving for a Return on certain points, and he hoped the Government would not refuse such a Return. At present, he would ask leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)— "REGINA v. MATTHEW SMYTH."

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN asked Her Majesty's Government, By what authority the Attorney General for Ireland had transferred the case of Regina *v.* Matthew Smyth, committed in January last for trial by the Ballymore-Eustace Bench to the Naas Quarter Sessions, from that Court to the Assizes, without any communication to that Bench on the subject; and, whether Her Majesty's Government approve of the conduct of their law officer in thus ignoring the magistrates and overriding the law of the land?

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRIVY SEAL), in reply, said, that, since he first saw the Question of the noble Earl on the Notice Paper, he applied to his right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland, who stated that this Matthew Smyth was committed to the Quarter Sessions on a charge of indecent assault. His right hon. and learned Friend said that, having read and considered the information in the case, he came to the conclusion that it would be more properly tried at the Assizes, and, in the exercise of his undoubted right, he directed that it should be there tried accordingly. He further said that that was a right inherent in his office as Public Prosecutor in all criminal cases, and that it was a right very frequently exercised on occasions like the present. That was the only answer he could give. It appeared to him (Lord Carlingford) to be quite sufficient; and he was only surprised that the noble Earl should have thought it necessary to raise such a question, and that he should say that the Attorney General for Ireland had overridden the law of the land, because he had transferred the case to the Assizes, where, in his opinion, it could be better tried.

The Earl of MILLTOWN said, that, no doubt, the Attorney General for Ireland was a high authority; but he was clearly wrong in his law upon this point, for he had no right whatever *ex propria motu* to act as he had done in removing a case to another Court.

Lord HARLECH wished to know whether the right was conferred by Statute, or by the Common Law? If the former was the case, under what Statute had the Attorney General for Ireland acted in this matter?

Lord CARLINGFORD (Lord Privy Seal), in reply, said, that the right was exercised under the Common Law.

Viscount CRANBROOK said, he was of opinion that it was not in the power of the Attorney General for Ireland to remove a case without first obtaining an order of the Court for that purpose. He would further point out that the witnesses to be examined had been bound over to appear at the Quarter Sessions, and they could not be required to attend at the Assizes without an order of the Court. He thought such a course of proceeding very strange and unusual.

Lord FITZGERALD said, there were many cases in which it was the duty of the Attorney General for Ireland to have a cause removed from one Court to another, and he had no doubt that the Attorney General had performed that duty properly and conscientiously, and for the public good; but it was a mistake to suppose that the Attorney General had any authority to direct the removal or transfer of the cause, for that could only be accomplished by an order of the Court; and probably, if the case was looked into, it would be found that there was such an order. If there was no such order, the proceeding was irregular.

Viscount CRANBROOK said, however that might be, he held that the order of the Court was necessary for the transfer of the case. He entirely disputed the right of the Attorney General for Ireland to call witnesses from one place to another.

Lord COLERIDGE said, he was glad that the question had been raised. As regarded it, he must be allowed to express his entire concurrence in the remarks of the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Cranbrook). He did not quite understand how this matter had been done without any application to the Court. In this country, as in Ireland, on a proper application by the Attorney General, such a transfer of jurisdiction was allowed as a matter of course, where the Court was satisfied that it would be best for the administration of justice; but he had never known it done without the consent of the Court. Most certainly no such power as this existed in the case of anyone in this country, even if it did in the case of the Attorney General for Ireland.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION) — THE LATE PROFESSOR PALMER.

MOTION FOR PAPERS.

Lord WENTWORTH, in rising, according to Notice, to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether he is able to confirm or correct Mr. Campbell Bannerman's explanation of the objects of the Palmer Expedition, and especially as to the fact alleged of that gentleman having received on or about the 6th of August a sum of £20,000 in gold at Suez? and to move for Papers, said, he was about to quote what had been said by Mr. Campbell-Bannerman in the other House——

The Earl of REDESDALE (Chairman of Committees) said, he rose to a point of Order. It was perfectly out of Order for the noble Lord to refer to proceedings taken in the other House of Parliament, or to comment upon statements made there.

Lord WENTWORTH thought that he was at least entitled to refer to the statement of a Minister.

The Earl of REDESDALE (Chairman of Committees) said, he must repeat that it was quite irregular to refer to the proceedings of the other House and comment upon them. That had always been the rule in his experience.

The Earl of NORTHBROOK said, he hoped that their Lordships would not, on any technical ground, prevent the noble Lord from addressing the Question to him, of which he had given Notice. He would be glad to answer any statement made on this subject.

The Marquess of SALISBURY said, that his impression was that where the matter referred to the statement of a Minister it stood upon a very different footing from the debates of the other House generally, and that a Member of that House was entitled to ask a Question and make a statement in regard to it;

but his experience was not so great as that of the noble Earl (the Earl of Redesdale).

Lord WENTWORTH said, that what the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) represented as the ground on which he (Lord Wentworth) wished to place that matter was the correct one. He desired to refer, not to any debate in the House of Commons, but to the statement of a Minister, made in the House of Commons and to the country. One statement made was that Professor Palmer travelled as an Englishman, though he afterwards said that he wore the dress that he had previously worn among the Bedouins. Coming to what was, perhaps, the most important point, the fact alleged some time ago in one of the public journals, and repeated only that morning in a still more authoritative manner by another, that Professor Palmer received £20,000 at Suez, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman was reported to have stated that Professor Palmer received no money whatever for the purpose of securing the allegiance of the Arabs; that the only money given to him was a sum of £3,000 to procure camels for the Indian Contingent; that no money was ever given to him for the purpose of buying the allegiance of the tribes; and that he never was promised £20,000. Mr. Campbell-Bannerman expressed surprise at such a statement being made, and could, he said, only explain it by the writer having had access to the confidential Papers of the Admiralty. The hon. Gentleman again denied that Professor Palmer, or any of his party, had been furnished with any money to buy the allegiance of anybody; and, lastly, he said, in regard to the assertion that Professor Palmer received from Captain Gill, at Suez, £20,000 in gold for the Bedouins, there was no truth in it; that neither Captain Gill nor Professor Palmer received any such sum for that or any other purpose; that Admiral Hewett, at Suez, had asked for a sum of money to prepare for the Indian Contingent as soon as it arrived; that accordingly £20,000 was sent; but that he could not too strongly assert that the sending of that money had nothing whatever to do with Professor Palmer's Mission, beyond the fact that £3,000 was subsequently given to him by Admiral Hewett for the hire of camels. Now, the fact had been asserted that £20,000 had been given him for the purpose pointed out; and in connection with the matter he (Lord Wentworth) had intended to read certain remarkable extracts from Professor Palmer's journal, doubtless the same as that quoted by the noble Earl (the Earl of Northbrook) in a telegram which was printed in the Blue Book; and that was one of the Papers for the production of which he would move. He had a personal explanation to make in connection with that. On reading Mr. Campbell-Bannerman's second statement, his relative, Mr. Wilfrid Blunt, at once placed in his hands the whole of his papers connected with the Palmer Expedition. Among them were numerous extracts from the journal of Professor Palmer just referred to; and he considered it was due to Mr. Blunt that he (Lord Wentworth) should state no condition of secrecy was ever understood by him as being imposed on him in regard to any of the political matters alluded to in that journal. On the contrary, he (Lord Wentworth) had seen written memoranda confirming Mr. Blunt's assertion that the original Papers were shown to him as long ago as last November; and the extracts were left in his hands with the express purpose of making known the truth. However, in a public matter of that magnitude and importance he thought he could not be fairly charged with any breach of confidence, even if the circumstances had been otherwise. Now, he should have taken upon himself the responsibility of citing such extracts as would clearly have proved the accuracy of that description, had he not been that morning forestalled by portions of it which had appeared, on the authority, apparently, of the deceased gentleman's relatives, in the columns of *The Daily News*. He had stated enough to show that it was necessary for the noble Earl to give some better and further explanation than Mr. Campbell-Bannerman had been able to give. In *The Daily News* there were some most remarkable passages given from Professor Palmer's journal, which he would read to the House. It was said in *The Daily News*—

> "I have got £260 for paying all expenses for my journey; but £20,000 in gold was brought by ship and paid to my account here."

The Daily News also quoted from Captain Gill's journal—

> "£25,000 will, according to Palmer, buy up 50,000 Arabs. I intend to urge that the money should be sent down to him at Suez."

In another extract from Captain Gill's journal, it was said that Professor Palmer had travelled much in the Sinai Peninsula, and knew all about the Arabs, and that he had just come from among them, and had said that 50,000 Arabs could be bought for £25,000. In another extract from Captain Gill's journal, it was stated that Professor Palmer had arranged for a great meeting of Sheikhs in a few days; and if he were to go North to cut the wire he would miss this meeting, which might do incalculable injury. He brought Palmer authority to spend £20,000 among the Bedouins. From this it was clear that Captain Gill and Professor Palmer considered that they had authority to spend £20,000. The extracts spoke for themselves, and he thought that the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty would see the necessity of throwing more light on the subject. He did not intend to go further into the details at present, but reserved the right to recur to the subject if necessary. He was not satisfied with Mr. Campbell-Bannerman's strange explanation of the facts. With regard to bribery, that might not have been included in the intention of the person who instructed Professor Palmer to offer money to the Arabs; but it seemed that the Professor had some such purpose designed for him, for he was not only in communication with the Admiralty, but also with the Department officially known as the Intelligence Department—a Department which had control over secret funds; and it might be that he had received instructions beyond those sanctioned by the noble Lord. He hoped the Government would pause in this matter, and that no more lives would be taken in retaliation for what might well have been one of the stern necessities of war. He hoped the unfortunate individuals seized as hostages, and who were now in gaol, might be restored to their tribes. British officers had been employed in the capture of these harmless persons, amongst whom were women and children, and it was due to British honour to see that they were released. He would conclude by moving for the production of Professor Palmer's journal, mentioned at page 42 in the Blue Book, containing the Correspondence of Colonel Warren, and for the Papers mentioned at page 97; also Professor Palmer's Report referred to by Captain Gill in his journal, and dated the 4th of August, 1882, and forwarded to Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour; also Captain Gill's journal, together with any other Papers in the possession of the Government that related to the murder of Professor Palmer and his companions.

Moved, "That there be laid before this House papers and correspondence respecting Professor Palmer's expedition."—(*The Lord Wentworth.*)

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: My Lords, I have to state, in answer to the Question put to me by the noble Lord (Lord Wentworth)—whether I can confirm or correct my hon. Friend Mr. Campbell-Bannerman's statement with reference to the Palmer Expedition—that I am able most distinctly and categorically to affirm in every part and detail the accuracy of Mr. Campbell-Bannerman's statement made upon the subject by him in "another place." I beg to thank the noble Lord for giving me the opportunity, which I have not hitherto had, of saying a few words on the sad calamity which happened in the Desert of Suez, in which Professor Palmer, Captain Gill, and Lieutenant Charrington lost their lives; and in doing so I will answer the three different points the noble Lord has put to me to-night. With regard to the first point—as to what instructions were given to Professor Palmer—I may say that I am the only person now alive to give the information, because I myself gave those instructions; and I wish to explain the circumstances of the case, and how I came to give those instructions. It was in the middle of June last year, before the commencement of hostilities, and before the attack on the forts of Alexandria, at the time when circumstances were so critical that there was great probability that this country would have to interpose in Egypt for the protection of the Suez Canal, that it became necessary for me to endeavour to ascertain something about the position and condition of the Bedouin Tribes bordering on the Canal; and therefore I put myself into communication with my friend Colonel Bradford, a distinguished Indian officer, and Captain Gill, who was then attached to the Intelligence Department of the War Office, who had himself recently travelled in

Tripoli, and had some knowledge of the Bedouins, in order to obtain some information on the subject. After a time, they reported to me that the only person in England who could furnish the information was Professor Palmer—a distinguished scholar and Professor of Arabic at Cambridge. He was good enough to give his assistance. A Memorandum was then prepared giving an account of the Bedouin Sheikhs, their tribes, and their dispositions. Professor Palmer was then asked if he could recommend any gentleman who, from his knowledge of the language, could be employed as an interpreter to deal with these Arab Tribes in the event of any difficulty arising; and Professor Palmer, with great public spirit and with great gallantry, at once offered his services on this difficult duty. This was the origin of my communications with Professor Palmer, which, I lament to say, led to his death. That was before the attack on the forts of Alexandria, and the step thus taken on the part of the Admiralty was one demanded by the circumstances of that critical time, and necessary to be taken to provide against events that might occur. It was arranged that Professor Palmer should leave this country; and, in order to avoid any suspicion of his purpose, the Canal being then in the hands of the Egyptians, that he should travel to Suez across the Desert, and communicate with the senior Naval officer at Suez, and, if circumstances required it, should place his services at the disposal of Her Majesty's Government as interpreter. It must be obvious to the noble Lord that it was utterly impossible for me to have given him any orders to bribe the Bedouins at a time when it was quite uncertain whether the services of the Bedouins would be required. As a matter of fact, I gave him no instructions whatever to bribe the Bedouins, or anyone else. My instructions to Professor Palmer were simply to obtain information as to the disposition of the Bedouins, and to hold himself in readiness at Suez to be employed in case of necessity. About the time when Professor Palmer arrived at Suez Captain Gill, who had been engaged with him in obtaining information about the Bedouins, arrived at Port Said, where he was attached to Admiral (now Sir Anthony) Hoskins, the senior Naval officer on the Canal. At that time the attack on the forts had taken place; but the expedition from this country had not arrived, nor had the Indian troops arrived at Suez. We found that Arabi had received information from Constantinople by means of a telegraph which passed across the Desert through Kantara. It was obviously necessary to endeavour to put an end to such communications, which were detrimental to our interests; and Sir Anthony Hoskins gave Captain Gill instructions to cut the telegraph across the Desert. Captain Gill then left Port Said for the purpose of consulting persons at Ismailia, and he thence went on to confer with Professor Palmer at Suez. In the meantime the expedition from India had started for Suez, and we received reports saying that it was necessary to obtain as many camels for transport purposes as could be found in the neighbourhood of Suez. On the arrival of Professor Palmer at Suez, he reported that he found the Bedouins loyal. I apprehend that he meant loyal to the Khedive, as we were informed from the first that the Bedouins of the Desert had a sincere attachment to the family of Mehemet Ali. That being so, we inferred that the Bedouins would be inclined to favour us rather than Arabi, who had rebelled against the Khedive. Professor Palmer also reported that we should have no difficulty about obtaining any number of camels, of which he was instructed to procure as many as possible for the use of the Indian troops who were shortly expected at Suez. In order that he might carry out his instructions to that effect, he was entrusted by Admiral Sir William Hewett with £3,000. He was accompanied from Suez by Captain Gill, who intended to proceed northwards to cut the telegraph wire in the Desert, and by Lieutenant Charrington, flag lieutenant to Sir William Hewett, who joined the party at Professor Palmer's request, it being his wish that the Bedouins might know, by Lieutenant Charrington's presence, that the Mission was authorized by the British Commander at Suez. Professor Palmer was to go to Nakhl to meet one of the Sheikhs. I can now dispose of the second point in the noble Lord's Question. Professor Palmer and his party did not travel in disguise in the ordinary acceptation of the term, for it was well known that Professor

Palmer was an Englishman. Though he wore, as Englishmen do in that country, the Arab costume, there was no concealment of his identity. The other officers also wore the Arab costume; but there is nothing in the Correspondence to show that there was in anybody's mind the slightest doubt about their real character. It is needless for me to dilate upon the high public spirit which was shown by these gallant men; for I am sure that your Lordships feel with me that their devotion and patriotism deserve the highest recognition. Her Majesty has bestowed a pension from the Civil List upon Mrs. Palmer, and the other House of Parliament has voted a sum of money, which has been settled upon her and Professor Palmer's children. There was no need of any similar grants in the cases of Captain Gill and of Lieutenant Charrington; but your Lordships will, I am sure, be gratified to learn that I have been in communication with the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, and obtained their hearty assent to my suggestion that the remains of these men, who died in the service of their country, shall be interred in the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral. Now, as to the other point in the noble Lord's Question—namely, the reported expenditure of £20,000—some extracts from Professor Palmer's journal do not appear to correspond with the statement made by Mr. Campbell-Bannerman in "another place." This question, however, is settled beyond all possibility of dispute by the Naval Accounts. It appears that £10,000 was drawn by the paymaster of the *Penelope*, the flagship of Admiral Hoskins, on the 26th of July, 1882, and another £10,000 on the 4th of August. This £20,000 was sent by Admiral Hoskins, from Port Said, to Sir William Hewett at Suez, in charge of Lieutenant Grove, R.N., and he went in the same picket boat which took Captain Gill from Ismailia to Suez. The money was not paid to Professor Palmer; it was taken on charge by the paymaster of the *Euryalus*, Sir William Hewett's flagship, and expended for the use of the East Indian Squadron in Egyptian waters, with the exception of £3,000 advanced to Professor Palmer. It is clear that there must have been an impression upon Professor Palmer's mind that the £20,000 was intended for him. The mistake must have arisen from the circumstance that the money came in the same boat with Captain Gill, and that Professor Palmer had shortly before reported to Sir Beauchamp Seymour that he could buy the allegiance of 50,000 Bedouins for from £20,000 to £30,000. This proposal was telegraphed by Sir Beauchamp Seymour to the Admiralty, on the 6th of August; and as there did not seem to be any need at the time for such a proceeding, we told Sir William Hewett, in reply, on the same day, to instruct Professor Palmer to keep the Bedouins available for patrol or transport on the Canal. We added—

> "A reasonable amount may be spent; but larger arrangements are not to be entered into until the General arrives, and has been consulted."

This telegram will be found in the Papers laid before Parliament. Thus, whatever may have been the impression on Professor Palmer's mind, it is clear that the sum in question was not paid to him. I should like to say that I attach very little importance to the controversy about this £20,000, whether Professor Palmer received it or not, excepting in so far as the accuracy of the statement of Mr. Campbell-Bannerman in "another place" is concerned. I can quite understand that Mr. Wilfrid Blunt, who was one of Arabi's allies during his rebellion, would think it a most abominable thing for any money to have been paid to Bedouins by us for any services; but, as we desired to dispose of Arabi, I should not have hesitated for a moment to authorize expenditure for the purpose of doing anything I considered desirable to protect the Suez Canal; and dispose of Arabi and his rabble. I wish to take this opportunity of clearing up a point with reference to a very gallant officer, who has done most excellent service for the protection of the Canal. I mean Colonel Warren. Colonel Warren, as soon as it was rumoured that Professor Palmer and his party were missing, volunteered at once to go out and assist in the search. He has pursued that search with gallantry, determination, good judgment, and a perfectly judicial mind. He has taken the greatest care to ascertain who were the really guilty parties; and I must protest against the inference of the noble Lord that in prosecuting these murderers—for I can find no other term for them — there has been anything whatever done of which an Englishman can be for a moment ashamed. The inquiry has been conducted with the greatest care, and I am as certain as I am that I am now addressing the House that the men who were hanged deserved their fate. By some means or other a letter appeared in a newspaper that had been addressed by Colonel Warren to Moussa Nassier, one of the Arabi Sheikhs, in September last, and this letter contained two statements, one that Arabi was making his escape on a swift camel, and the other that Turkish troops had arrived at Port Said. This letter was written to Moussa Nassier to induce him to escort Colonel Warren into the Desert for the purpose of finding Professor Palmer. It must be observed that this Sheikh was not one of the guilty men, and that the letter was not sent in order to decoy him into our hands. The charge made against Colonel Warren was that he stated these things, knowing them not to be true, for the purpose of inducing the Sheikh to help him in the matter. When Mr. Campbell-Bannerman had to reply to this attack in "another place," he was able only to say that, to the best of his belief, Colonel Warren made these statements believing them to be true. He gave that answer without communication with Colonel Warren; but since that time I have received a telegram from Colonel Warren, who is still in Egypt. He said—

> "The news I sent to Moussa Nassier, on September 14, relative to the 6,000 Turkish troops landed at Port Said and the preparations for Arabi's escape on swift dromedaries, was sent to me in Bombay telegrams from Suez by Admiral Sir William Hewett about September 10."

Colonel Warren, therefore, simply repeated the news sent to him by Sir William Hewett, which was at that time, as the House will remember, by no means an unlikely piece of intelligence. I believe I have now answered every one of the Questions put by the noble Lord, and I am certain of the absolute accuracy of every word I say.

LORD WENTWORTH: How does the noble Earl explain the paragraph in Captain Gill's journal about the £20,000?

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: I have seen Captain Gill's journal, and there is nothing in it to the effect that £20,000 was actually given to Professor Palmer. There is, however, a sentence to the effect that Professor Palmer had authority to spend £20,000. If Captain Gill supposed that this sum was sent to Professor Palmer, he was in error, as I have proved that the money was not sent to Professor Palmer, but to Sir William Hewett, and was taken on charge by the paymaster of the *Euryalus*. My account is not only that given to me by Lord Alcester and Sir Anthony Hoskins, but it is conclusively proved by the accounts which are audited by the Audit Office. The noble Lord asks me to produce the journals of Professor Palmer and Captain Gill and other Papers that may have been found since the murders. Now, I cannot produce any such Papers at all. They do not belong to me; and as regards the noble Lord's relative, Mr. Blunt, I feel bound to tell the noble Lord that Mrs. Palmer asked me to call upon her, and complained to me in strong terms of Mr. Blunt's conduct in having made use of her husband's journal, and that the brother of Captain Gill called on me spontaneously two days ago, and made the same complaint respecting the use made by Mr. Blunt of certain passages in Captain Gill's Papers. I must decline altogether to comply with the Motion of the noble Lord, either to produce Papers over which I have no control, or any other of the Papers for which the noble Lord asks?

LORD WENTWORTH said, he thought that the noble Earl (the Earl of Northbrook) had rather gone out of his way to attack Mr. Blunt, to whom it was due to say that in November last Mrs. Palmer brought her husband's journal, and asked Mr. Blunt to take a copy of it for his use in preparing an article for *The Fortnightly Review* or *The Nineteenth Century*. The noble Earl seemed to him to weaken his own case in denying the fact of the £20,000 having been paid, by his strong expressions as to the necessity of buying the Bedouins if an opportunity had occurred. He would read some extracts which he had before mentioned from the journals of Professor Palmer, both on this point and on the other too, on which the information supplied by the noble Earl was quite inconsistent with the facts as made known in the journals. First, as to the object of Mr. Palmer's Mission, he read from Mr. Palmer's own journal—

EARL STANHOPE: I rise to Order. Is the noble Lord in Order in quoting from a private journal not before the House?

EARL GRANVILLE: Has the noble Lord the authority of Mrs. Palmer for quoting extracts from the journals?

LORD WENTWORTH said, that he had not. He was entirely in the hands of their Lordships; but he must say, in defending Mr. Blunt, that he felt it his duty, from any evidence in his possession, to give their Lordships accurate information.

EARL BEAUCHAMP said, their Lordships had a Standing Order that no reply was to be made; but that Standing Order could be, and was often in practice, waived by the indulgence of the House. There might, however, be occasions on which it would be necessary to insist upon it; and if the noble Lord (Lord Wentworth) insisted upon referring to the journals he (Earl Beauchamp) should insist upon the Standing Order being read at the Table.

LORD WENTWORTH said, he had understood that he had a right to reply by way of personal explanation. He would not, however, quote the journals if it was objected to; but he would restrict himself to the statement of facts within his knowledge. It was a fact that Mr. Palmer travelled as a Syrian officer and as a Mussulman in the Desert, and the war had actually commenced before he went into the Desert, for he received the news of the bombardment of Alexandria before he had gone far from Gaza. He wished to offer an explanation as to Mr. Blunt's authority from Mrs. Palmer. It appeared from a journal kept by Lady Ann Blunt that Mrs. Palmer had called upon her, and left the documents with her, for the purpose of extracts being made for a magazine article. They were given for the distinct purpose of having the truth made known, and there was no violation of confidence on the part of Mr. Blunt. He believed the noble Earl would regret denying the existence of the £20,000, for it was absolutely confirmed by the journal of Captain Gill. He should take another opportunity of bringing the matter before the House.

On Question? *Resolved* in the *negative.*

Lord Wentworth

PAYMENT OF WAGES IN PUBLIC-HOUSES PROHIBITION BILL.—(No. 21.)

(*The Earl Stanhope.*)

THIRD READING.

Order of the Day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3ª."—(*The Earl Stanhope.*)

LORD BRAMWELL pointed out that the Preamble was now untrue, as it recited that it was desirable to extend the provisions in the miner regulation as to the payment of wages to all cases generally; whereas their Lordships determined they should only be partially extended. He said that the objection would be removed by omitting the Preamble.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, there was no reason why the Preamble should be struck out.

LORD BRAMWELL said, that would be the shortest way out of the difficulty, and then the Bill would be gone.

EARL GRANVILLE said, he did not see any reason for the objection. The Preamble directly applied to the object of the Bill.

LORD BRAMWELL thought the objection was well founded, inasmuch as the Preamble said it was expedient to extend the prohibition generally; whereas, by the Amendment which had been adopted, it appeared that it was only expedient to extend it partially. Their Lordships were going to send to the other House a Bill with an erroneous Preamble. Passing over that point, however, he would draw attention to the wording of the 3rd clause, which provided that wages were not to be paid in any public-house, "or any office, garden, or place belonging or contiguous thereto." So that if a builder's yard happened to join a public-house the builder would no longer be able to pay his workmen on his own premises. The objection, however, might be got over by striking out the words, and he would accordingly propose their omission.

EARL STANHOPE said, the interpretation of the Bill did not depend on its Preamble. The 3rd clause really defined the operation of the measure. He would accept the noble and learned Lord's proposal to strike out the words "or contiguous thereto."

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 3ª accordingly.

On Motion of The Lord BRAMWELL, the following Amendments made:—In Clause 3, page 1, lines 26 and 27, omit the words ("or contiguous thereto"); and in Clause 4, page 2, line 14, omit the words ("under the Summary Jurisdiction Acts.")

Bill *passed*, and sent to the Commons.

REPRESENTATIVE PEERS (SCOTLAND) ELECTION PROCEDURE BILL.

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY asked the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, Whether it is true, as he had been told privately, that his Lordship proposed to postpone the Scottish Representative Peerage Bill to the 10th of April?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: Yes.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 1) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be read 2ª on *Monday* next; and Standing Order No. XXXV. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with.—(*The Earl Granville.*)

House adjourned at half past Seven o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 16*th March*, 1883.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee—Resolutions* [March 15] *reported.*

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee—Resolution* [March 15] *reported.*

PRIVATE BILLS (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—North London Tramways*; Manchester Ship Canal.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Army (Annual)* [123]; Consolidated Fund (No. 2)*. *Third Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 1)*, and *passed.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. RAIKES said, he did not rise for the purpose of offering any opposition to the second reading of the Bill; but, at the same time, he was anxious to call the attention of the House, and, not the least, that of his hon. Friend the Chairman of Ways and Means (Sir Arthur Otway), to the rather remarkable circumstances under which this very important measure came before them. The Manchester Ship Canal Bill was one which proposed to create a Company for the purpose of carrying out a very important and extraordinary public work; and for that purpose it proposed to raise a capital, in the first instance, of £6,000,000. To the subscription of that money it was proposed to enable Municipal Corporations and other public bodies in the counties of Lancashire and Cheshire to contribute. In fact, the measure was one of the very most important which had ever engaged the attention of Parliament as a Private Bill. That being the case, they had heard, judging from the ordinary channels of information, of rather an unusual circumstance connected with the introduction, at least, of a measure so important; and he should, anyhow, have felt it his duty to advert to it. He had provided himself with a copy of the Bill in its present state, showing the alteration which it had undergone in consequence of the Resolution come to by the Committee on Standing Orders before whom it had been upstairs upon a point of Order. It appeared that the promoters of this measure omitted to deposit plans for that part of their scheme which was to have rendered the River Mersey navigable for ships of large burden between Garston and Runcorn; and as they had omitted to supply that information, which was clearly necessary in order to enable any Committee of the House to form an opinion upon the entire scheme, the Committee on Standing Orders took a course which he believed they invariably took under such circumstances, and recommended that that part of the scheme should be abandoned. The result was that the House was now confronted with a proposal to create this enormous capital, and to sanction only a part of that very important work by constructing a Ship Canal from the town of Runcorn to the City of Manchester; while they had no materials to enable them to judge as to whether it would ever be practicable or possible to construct the lower part of the scheme, which was to connect the Canal with the sea. He did not wish at all to anticipate the opinion which might be formed by the Committee upstairs as to an important scheme of this sort truncated in the manner he had described. That, he presumed, would be a matter to which the best attention would be devoted. Still less did he propose in any way to question the action of the Committee on Standing Orders, which, he imagined, had been strictly in accordance with the precedents by which they were guided; but he did think that when the House came to deal with a matter of such great importance, and when they found the capital which it was proposed originally to create for the purpose of carrying out that scheme was still to be created, although an important part of the scheme was to be abandoned; when they found that, towards the creation of that capital, it was proposed to authorize the great Municipalities of Lancashire and Cheshire, if they were willing, to contribute; and when they had also to consider the possible vicissitudes which might prevent the scheme hereafter from being submitted to Parliament, or carried out as a whole, he thought it was an occasion on which the House would be glad to hear from his hon. Friend the Chairman of Ways and Means what course he recommended them to adopt in order that they might, at all events, take action under the sanction of some responsible authority. In that view he had risen for the purpose of eliciting an expression of opinion. If any Member of the Standing Orders Committee was inclined to favour the House with any observations as to the course to be taken by them on that occasion he had no doubt the House would listen with great interest to such remarks; but there was one question which he thought he must specially call attention to. He had been told that it was possible that that part of the scheme which had been abandoned, and which related to the deepening of the sea channel through the waters of the Mersey between Garston and Runcorn, was a matter in regard to which Her Majesty's Admiralty might, perhaps, be in possession of some jurisdiction, and that it was not improbable that their jurisdiction, if exercised, might remove the matter altogether from the consideration of that House. If that were the case—and he did not know whether they were in a position to obtain further information upon it or not—it would become, he thought, a matter for additional consideration for Members of that House how far it would be desirable to sanction a scheme and to give the authority of an Act of Parliament to it, by which it was proposed to raise so enormous a sum of money, if it were possible that the necessary complement of the scheme should at any time hereafter be prevented from being carried into effect by the exercise of the jurisdiction of a Department of the Government. That was a point to which the attention of his hon. Friend should be directed; and without, in the slightest degree, wishing to interpose any objection to what he believed to be a very important work, and one which, if carried out, would add greatly to the prosperity of South Lancashire and Cheshire, he thought the House would forgive him if he had interposed for one moment, in order to invite some explanation as to the course which the House should be advised to adopt in a state of circumstances so remarkable, with regard to a measure involving so very large a demand upon public confidence.

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY said, he scarcely knew whether, after the speech of his right hon. Friend, it was expected that he should rise to say a word on behalf of the Select Committee on Standing Orders; because, although at the end of his speech his right hon. Friend invited an expression of opinion on the part of the Committee, he said, in an earlier part of it, that he had no fault to find with them, and that they had come to the only decision they could arrive at in accordance with the precedents they had before them. He (Sir John R. Mowbray) only wished to say that, in the first place, he thought it somewhat unusual at the end of the fortnight, after the Report of the Select Committee had been laid upon the Table of the House —after it had been submitted to the House, and a vote might have been taken on it—it was unusual and irregular for any hon. Member to raise a question upon it. If he had been called upon at the proper time, when he brought the Report before the House, it would have been his duty to have given an explanation; and, even now, if the House wished it, he was ready to go into any amount of detail—["No, no!"]—as to the course taken by the Committee on Standing Orders. This he would say—that they gave most careful and anxious attention to the case, and they had nine Members out of the 11 present; that they were experienced Members of the Standing Order Committee; that the junior Member was his right hon. Friend who, for three years past, had filled the post of Chairman of Ways and Means (Mr. Lyon Playfair), and that, after carefully discussing the Bill, those who had entertained some doubt about it said they were convinced. The decision of the Committee was unanimous, and he trusted that the House would be of opinion that it was unnecessary for him to say more, and that he might safely leave the matter in the hands of his hon. Friend the Chairman of Ways and Means.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he was not going to enter into the point raised by his right hon. Friend behind him (Mr. Raikes), or to say a single word about the merits of the Bill. It was a matter, no doubt, that would require considerable discussion. Some portion of his own constituents were opposed to it, and some part of them were in favour of it; and what he rose for the purpose of saying was this—that on behalf of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board—who, no doubt, saw great objection to the Bill, which objection they would bring before the Committee—they wished to express their opinion that the Bill ought not to be stopped on the second reading.

MR. PLUNKET said, that, on behalf of the London and North-Western Railway Company, who were also very much opposed to the Bill, he wished to express the same view as his right hon. Friend (Sir R. Assheton Cross), that there ought not to be any opposition to the measure on its second reading.

SIR ARTHUR OTWAY said, that, after the observations which had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), it was necessary that he (Sir Arthur Otway) should say a word or two. He had heard with great gratification that the right hon. Gentleman did not intend to continue his opposition to the second reading of the Bill.

MR. RAIKES wished to explain. He had never intended to offer any opposition to the second reading of the Bill.

SIR ARTHUR OTWAY said, he was glad to hear that. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that he had no desire to oppose the second reading of the Bill. If it had been opposed, it would have been his (Sir Arthur Otway's) duty to point out to the House the special and peculiar character of the measure. It was one of a most interesting and important nature, and it proposed to connect two of the largest cities of the Empire next to that in which they were now residing, and to open a great seat of manufacture and commerce to all parts of the world. His right hon. Friend had represented certain matters and called his attention to them. It would be his duty to bear them fully in mind. He was somewhat new to the Office, and he was glad that his attention had been drawn to the matter. But with regard to the observations which the right hon. Gentleman had made in reference to the Bill, they referred principally to engineering questions, and to matters which it was essentially desirable to send to a Committee for investigation. So far as his (Sir Arthur Otway's) opinion went in regard to the suggestions thrown out by the right hon. Gentleman, there was nothing in them to prevent the Bill being read a second time and inquired into by a Committee. With regard to the Standing Orders Committee, it seemed to him that the duties of the Chairman of Ways and Means were very simple in a case of this kind. There had been delegated to the Committee of Standing Orders, by the House, certain duties; and that Committee of Standing Orders was perfectly satisfied with the compliance, by the promoters of the Bill, with the conditions laid down by the House for the regulation of Private Bills. Under these circumstances, the Report of the Standing Orders Committee was only what was to be expected of them; and it appeared to him that the duties of the Chairman of Ways and Means were much simplified by their action. He was glad to find that the opposition to the Bill had been withdrawn, and he hoped the House would consent to read the Bill a second time.

MR. JACOB BRIGHT said, that, as one of the Representatives of the City of Manchester, he had no fault to find with what had occurred in regard to the Bill. It appeared before the House in obedience to the unanimous decision of the Standing Order Committee; and, on the present occasion, it further appeared that there was no real opposition to the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) had taken a somewhat curious course in regard to the measure. He certainly thought that if the right hon. Gentleman had remained Member for Preston, instead of being Member for the University of Cambridge, they would have had his hearty co-operation in the matter. It obliged him (Mr. Jacob Bright) to say that at least in Lancashire there was an overwhelming feeling in favour of the Bill, and not upon slight grounds. There was a belief that the industry and commerce of that county depended largely on more ready access to the sea, and on lower rates of carriage for goods. It should be remembered that the county of Lancaster during the past 10 years had increased in a double ratio to the rest of England, and that increase of population had been accompanied by a corresponding increase of commerce, for which the present means of carriage were altogether inadequate. What they wanted in Lancashire was a real competition in the carrying trade.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

QUESTIONS.

THE WESTERN PACIFIC—THE ORDERS IN COUNCIL.

Mr. ARTHUR PEASE asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, What is the nature and scope of the inquiry into the affairs of the Western Pacific, which is about to be undertaken by Sir Arthur Gordon, Rear Admiral Sir A. Hoskins, and Rear Admiral Wilson; when and where the Commission will hold its sittings, and what will be its mode of procedure?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: Sir, it is not a Commission, but a Departmental Committee, which is about to meet. They at present meet in Sir Anthony Hoskins's office. The large experience of affairs in the Western Pacific possessed by its Members renders it unnecessary that any detailed instructions should be conveyed to them; but the nature and scope of the inquiry can best be gathered from the words of a letter addressed by the Secretary of State to Sir Arthur Gordon on the 1st of March, in which the Committee are requested to institute—

> "A thorough inquiry into the practical working of the Western Pacific Orders in Council, and the nature of the measures requisite to secure the attainment of the objects for which those Orders in Council were issued, and to effect the suppression of evils which still exist in connection with the labour traffic."

STATE OF IRELAND—DESTITUTION IN LOUGHREA.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the following statement, printed in the London papers of 12th of March, has been brought under his notice:—

> "Dr. Roughan, Local Government Board Inspector, held an inquiry at Loughrea this morning in regard to the distress existing in that town. Several priests, a medical man, and some newspaper reporters were examined, and the evidence adduced showed that the inhabitants of the district were in a starving condition. Dr. Roughan said that the state of things was deplorable, and he ordered the relieving officer to give prompt relief;"

whether the Inspector has made a report to the Local Government Board on the subject; and, if so, whether he will lay it upon the Table of the House; and, what steps the Government propose to take to save the people from starvation?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have not seen the newspaper paragraph referred to; but I can assure the hon. Member that its statements, as quoted in this Question, are incorrect. Dr. Roughan's inquiry was confined to matters connected with the management of the workhouse. He has been asked as to this newspaper paragraph, and says, in reply, that the whole statement is untrue.

COMMISSIONERS OF TOWNS (IRELAND) —ACCOUNT AUDITS.

Colonel NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Commissioners of Towns in Ireland are now obliged to defray the expense of an audit of their accounts by a Government official, while several other public bodies have their accounts audited at the public charge; and, if he will take steps to remove this burthen from the town rates?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Commissioners of Towns in Ireland are now, and always have been, required to defray the expenses—formerly under the Towns Improvement Clauses Act, and now under the Local Government Acts. The same rule applies to the accounts of counties, lunatic asylums, and port and dock boards. It is true that Boards of Guardians are not required to pay for the audit of their accounts by the auditors of the Local Government Board; but I can see no sufficient reason to ask Parliament to alter the existing law as to the accounts of Town Commissioners.

PUBLIC HEALTH (IRELAND) ACT, 1878—PROVISIONS AGAINST THE SPREAD OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, under "The Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878," 41 and 42 Vic. c. 52, s. 149, it is the duty of the Local Government Board, of which he is President, to make regulations for the prevention of the spread of infectious diseases, and for the speedy interment of the dead; if so, whether the Board fulfilled the requirements of the Act in the case of Bartholomew Roe, who died recently in Dublin of malignant fever, and over whose remains a wake was held for two days and two nights; whether he has inquired into the facts, and can now state how many cases of fever, and how many deaths followed; how many children have been left orphans; and, whether any steps can be taken to provide for the survivors of this sad calamity?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, Section 149 of the Public Health Act gives the Local Government Board the powers mentioned only in case of the existence or apprehension of any formidable epidemic or outbreak of infectious disease. Its provisions are not applicable in a case like that under consideration. This case has been specially inquired into by a Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board, and this Report shows that the propagation of the fever appears to have been mainly caused by the concealment of the disease by the first families attacked. There is no evidence to show that any cases were attributable to the wake. Seventeen cases occurred in the court where Roe lived; there were three deaths, and 12 children had been left orphans. The Rev. Mr. Heffernan, who first brought the matter before the public, states, in a letter published on the 13th instant, that he has received sufficient contributions to provide for their immediate wants.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—MURDER AT DUNDRUM CRIMINAL LUNATIC ASYLUM.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the murder of a lunatic in the Central Criminal Asylum at Dundrum by a fellow patient; whether it is true that the coroner, as reported in the papers, endeavoured to force the jury at the inquest to alter their finding by threatening to lock them up for the night, and afterwards received the verdict saying he did not like to lock up neighbours for the night; and, if the facts are as stated, whether he will lay the report of the inquest and the finding of the jury upon the Table of the House?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I am informed that the Dublin authorities are not yet satisfied with the result of their inquiry into this matter. I cannot say, therefore, anything with regard to the facts, neither can I say whether I shall be able to lay the Papers on the Table of the House. But the inquiry, which is still proceeding, will be very thorough; and I hope by-and-bye to be able to answer any Question upon the subject.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—THE CROSSMAGLEN CONSTABULARY.

Mr. KENNY (for Mr. O'Brien) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a letter of Michael Banican, Crossmaglen, in the "Belfast Morning News" of 10th March, stating that he had received a letter from Sub-Inspector Bigley, of Newtownhamilton, dated March 5, requesting an interview with him "relative to his complaint against certain members of the Crossmaglen Constabulary;" and, whether, if there is to be any inquiry upon the subject, it will be conducted publicly?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have not seen the letter referred to; but I have seen several letters from Michael Banican. I can only repeat what I have said more than once to the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien), that I cannot answer Questions in the House of Commons in connection with this case.

Mr. KENNY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he has received copies of three affidavits sworn by Banican, his wife, and his mother-in-law, stating the police took him away from his house at 12 o'clock at night?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have received copies of the affidavits; but, without going into the evidence contained in them, I must only say again that this is a case in which I cannot give an answer publicly.

IRELAND—GRAND JURY CESS—CO. WATERFORD.

Mr. KENNY (for Mr. O'Brien) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that, on Tuesday the 27th February, Mr. Thomas Hunt, collector of grand jury cess for the Barony of Middlethird, county Waterford, accompanied by six policemen and two bailiffs, went to the farm of Mr. D. Hally, P.L.G. Island Tarsney, and demanded the amount of county cess for which Mr. Hally was liable, and, without giving him time to produce the money, seized and drove away a horse his property; whether the power conferred by statute upon a collector to levy grand jury cess arises only on refusal to pay; and, whether Mr. Hally had refused to pay?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have received a telegram which shows that the facts as to the cess collector going to Mr. Hally's farm and demanding the cess are as stated. Mr. Hally said that he had not all the money, but would get it if the collector would wait, which he consented to do. He did wait for some time, and the money was not forthcoming; but Mrs. Hally came out and violently abused the bailiff and police; after which, seeing no prospect of payment, he seized the horse and drove it away. The power to levy only arises on refusal to pay. Whether what occurred in this case amounted to a refusal could only be determined in an action. If any wrong has been done Mr. Hally, he has his civil remedy. The Government has neither responsibility nor power in the matter.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether an outbreak of foot and mouth disease has taken place at Barcombe, in the county of Sussex, in cattle that had just arrived from Ireland; and, whether foot and mouth disease was detected in Stanley Market, Liverpool, in cattle also just landed from Ireland; and, if so, if any steps are being taken to prevent the importation of that disease into England and Scotland from Ireland?

Mr. MUNDELLA: It is true, Sir, that there has been an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease at Barcombe, in East Sussex, among animals brought from Ireland; but it is impossible to say whether the disease originated in Ireland, or was contracted on the road. A single case of disease was also discovered in Stanley Market, Liverpool, on the 12th instant. The animal was immediately slaughtered by order of the owner, and no other case of disease has since been reported to us. In reply to the latter part of the Question of the hon. and gallant Member, I beg to remind him that I stated in an answer which I gave some days ago that the local authority of any district in Great Britain is empowered, by an Order passed on the 23rd of February, to prohibit or regulate the movement of animals into their district from the district of any other local authority in the United Kingdom. I am glad to be able to state that the Returns for this week indicate a considerable decrease in the number and extent of the outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease.

ARMY (INDIA)—MUSKETRY RETURNS.

Viscount FOLKESTONE asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true, as stated in the "Bombay Gazette" of Feb. 23rd, 1883, that the British Regiment which happened to be stationed at Aden had "for many years" carried off the first honours in the Musketry Returns; whether this, if so, is due, as stated to the excellence of the range at that station and the absence of wind; and, whether any allowance is made in the figure of merit of other regiments serving in India on account of their inferior ranges?

MR. J. K. CROSS: If the noble Lord's Question refers to British troops in the Bombay Presidency, it is true that the British regiment which has happened to be stationed at Aden has for some years past scored the highest figures of merit at Infantry practice. But this statement would not hold good if applied to troops stationed elsewhere. The range at which the practice takes place is not considered in fixing the figure of merit.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION) — PURCHASE OF CAMELS.

DR. CAMERON asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, Whether it is true that Major Carré was sent along with Veterinary Surgeon The Hon. M. H. Mostyn to Smyrna to purchase mules for the Egyptian expedition; whether Major Carré purchased 700 mules contrary, in the case of a large proportion, to the advice of Veterinary Surgeon Mostyn; and, whether Mr. Mostyn refused to sign the returns for the animals as fit for service; whether, on the arrival of the 700 animals at Ismailia, a board ordered to report upon them ordered two-thirds of them to be destroyed or sold as unfit for service; what was the precise number of the animals thus destroyed and sold; what sum was paid for them at Smyrna; what was the approximate cost of their transport to Ismailia; and, what sum was realised for those of the condemned animals which were sold?

MR. BRAND: Sir, Major Carré was sent to Smyrna with Veterinary Surgeon Hon. H. Mostyn to purchase mules for Egypt. In passing mules these officers differed on several occasions; but there is no record to show that that they did so in a large number of cases. Major Carré was instructed to act on the advice of the veterinary surgeon, and it was unfortunate that he did not do so. The Board on Mules did not order two-thirds or any like number to be destroyed. The number destroyed was eight out of a total of 17 condemned. None were sold on account of being condemned. The cost at Smyrna, including freight to Ismailia, was £26 10s. per mule. It was impossible to distinguish the price realized by the mules coming from different countries.

DOCKYARDS (PORTSMOUTH AND DEPTFORD)—MANUFACTURE OF TWINE.

MR. R. H. PAGET asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he will be good enough to state whether a certain manufacture is carried on at the dockyards at Portsmouth and Deptford, by which twine is prepared for sail making by being steeped in a certain composition and passed through rollers and nippers and then wound into balls for use; whether the composition, machinery, and whole process of manufacture are not practically identical with composition and machinery set forth in patents taken out in the years 1874 and 1881 by Mr. George Good of Yeovil; whether the patentee did not personally explain the details of his patent to the officials of Deptford Dockyard before any such machinery or composition was in use either in that yard or at Portsmouth; and, whether it is now proposed to make any compensation to the patentee?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is a fact, Sir, that a process similar to that described by the hon. Member for Mid Somerset is adopted at our Dockyards in the preparation of twine. This process, however, has been in use for the last 15 years, and consequently antecedent to the date of which Mr. George Good is stated to have taken out his patent; the composition, moreover, used by the Admiralty is entirely different. In 1879 Mr. Good's offer of a personal inspection of his patent process was declined. The samples forwarded by Mr. Good were tested, but found in no way superior to the twine prepared in the Dockyard. Under these circumstances, it is not proposed to make any compensation to Mr. Good, as we do not allow that we make use of his patent. If there are further particulars which the hon. Member desires to know, I invite him to confer with me.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he would take the opportunity to do so. He should like, however, to ask whether Mr. Good had not been led to believe by letter that his claims would be recognized?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he would inquire into the subject.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT, 1875—THE CHIEF REGISTRAR'S RETURN.

MR. ACLAND asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies has directed that a Memorandum shall be attached to the annual return for the year ending the 31st December 1881, of the Independent Mutual Brethren Friendly Society, stating as follows:—

> The item of expenditure (benefit funds) "Loan to Management Fund (balance of £756 13*s.* 6*d.*) £438 17*s.* 7*d.*" is deceptive, and should have stood as follows:—

		£	*s.*	*d.*
Arrears of interest on investment of Benefit Funds		39	18	3
Amount of defalcations by Secretaries (included in the receipts of both funds) against whom proceedings have been taken— ..				
On account of Benefit Fund ..	£271 2 3			
On account of Management Fund	54 4 6			
		325	6	9
Amount of defalcations in Head Office		73	12	7

And, if so, whether sufficient grounds exist for the interference of the Treasury in order to protect the members of the said society from the consequences of the possible continuance of such mismanagement and deceptive statements by those who are responsible for the conduct of the finances of the said society?

Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE (for Mr. Courtney): Sir, the attention of the Treasury has been called to the proceedings of this society by Questions from my hon. Friend and otherwise; and the action of the Chief Registrar appears to the Treasury to be fully justified. But the whole spirit of the Friendly Societies Act of 1875 is to leave the initiation of proceedings in the hands of members of an offending society, the sole duty of the Government being to see that a remedy is possible.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—INSPECTION OF VOLUNTEERS.

Mr. RANKIN asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Volunteer Corps which go through the training necessary to make them efficient, at Aldershot, in lieu of attending some local camp, may be inspected at Aldershot, instead of in their own district; and, if so, whether, in consideration of the probable greater efficiency of those present at Aldershot, the number required to be present at inspection to secure a grant might be reduced to one-half instead of two-thirds of the number on the books of the Corps?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON, in reply, said, there was no good reason why the existing rule should be changed. With regard to the inspection being made at Aldershot, it must be remembered that a comparatively small proportion only of a corps was likely to go into camp; whereas, as nearly as possible, the whole corps ought to be inspected. Again, it was in the Regulations that the inspection should take place in the district to which the corps belonged, in order that the officer responsible for its efficiency might see that the corps was fully assembled.

PARLIAMENT—THE BOARD OF TRADE AND RAILWAY BILLS.

Mr. R. H. PAGET asked the President of the Board of Trade, If, in the event of a Report from the Board of Trade being laid before a Committee of this House, on any Railway or other such Bill, having reference to tolls, rates, or duties as mentioned in the Standing Order adopted by the House on Monday 12th March, he will arrange that, if desired by the Committee, an officer of the Board of Trade shall attend to explain such Report and afford any other information on the matter which may be required?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, that any Committee sitting on a Private Bill, if it desired the evidence of any witness, could come to the House for an order, in which case the witness would be bound to attend. But he thought it right to say that it would be very undesirable for the Board of Trade to volunteer to give evidence on private Railway Bills; and it would be equally undesirable that Committees should, as a general rule, ask for such evidence. The effect would be to make the Board of Trade a partizan in all such matters, and he did not think the Reports which they had undertaken to present to Committees would require any explanation.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Baron DE FERRIERES said, he understood the Secretary of State for War to state on the previous day that the only Bills which the Government intended to bring in before Easter were the Bankruptcy Bill and two legal Bills. He wished to ask whether they adhered to that statement, or whether they proposed bringing in a Parliamentary Elections and Corrupt Practices Bill, seeing it was down as the second Order that evening?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, the Government had already stated that they were very anxious to get the second reading of certain important measures before Easter. It was not possible for them to say absolutely which of those second readings they would take, because they did not know how long it might be the pleasure of the House, or of individual Members, to discuss each second reading; and their intention was, if they could, to obtain the second reading of those four important Bills, on the principle of which they believed the House would be agreed, provided the convenience of the House and of hon. Members would allow of the transaction of so much Business in the time that was at their disposal. That was the only explanation he could give.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked whether there would be a Morning Sitting on Tuesday next?

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked what arrangements would be made for the resumption of the Transvaal debate in the event of its not being concluded in the course of the present Sitting?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he believed it would be advantageous to hon. Members generally to have a Morning Sitting on Tuesday, and, therefore, proposed that course for the acceptance of the House. With regard to the Question of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock, he would rather wait a little before giving a definite answer, the matter being considerably complicated by the presence of more than one Amendment upon the Paper.

THE PUBLIC OFFICES—THE EXPLOSION AT THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government whether there is any further information in their possession which they can properly communicate to the House with regard to the explosion at the Government Offices on the previous evening?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have been in communication very recently with my right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary, and I have also been to the spot where the occurrence took place, and seen those who are connected with the Office; but there is no further information that can be communicated to the House.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE.

Resolved, That whenever the House shall meet at Two of the Clock, the Sittings of the House shall be held subject to the Resolutions of the House of the 30th day of April 1869.—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [March 15] *reported.*

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR asked whether any portion of the Vote granted for Public Works would be applied to the works at Dover Harbour?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, it was usual not to proceed with new works on a Vote on Account, but to await the sanction of the House for the full Vote.

Resolutions *agreed to.*

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Ordered, That the Resolution which, upon the 13th day of this instant March was reported from the Committee of Supply, and then agreed to by the House, be read, and the same was read, as followeth:—

1. "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 137,632, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884."

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £4,121,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge of the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of Her Majesty's Land Forces at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884."

Ordered, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide, during Twelve months, for the Discipline and Regulation of the Army, and that The Marquess of Hartington, The Judge Advocate General, and Mr. Campbell-Bannerman do prepare and bring in the same.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 123.]

WAYS AND MEANS.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 2) BILL.

Resolution [March 15] *reported*, and *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Sir ARTHUR OTWAY, Mr. CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, and Mr. COURTNEY.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—POLICY OF HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.—RESOLUTION.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [SECOND NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [13th March],

"That, in view of the complicity of the Transvaal Government in the cruel and treacherous attacks made upon the Chiefs Montsioa and Mankoroane, this House is of opinion that energetic steps should be immediately taken to secure the strict observance by the Transvaal Government of the Convention of 1881, so that these chiefs may be preserved from the destruction with which they are threatened."—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

And which Amendment was,

To leave out from the first word "the" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "very grave complication that must attend intervention in the affairs of the native populations on the Western Frontier of the Transvaal, this House is of opinion that the action of British authorities in those regions should be strictly confined within the limits of absolutely unavoidable obligations,"—(*Mr. Cartwright,*)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, like the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), I cannot think it right to vote for the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), though my reasons may not be altogether the same as those of the right hon Gentleman. But I confess I am glad that the debate on this important question is upon the Motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman rather than upon the Motion of which Notice was given by the right hon. Gentleman. It is a most difficult question, and my object in taking part in the debate is to seek to confer with other Members of the House as to what can be done in the present and in the immediate future. The right hon. Gentleman will, in the exercise of his rights, rather prefer to turn the discussion upon the question of a decision on the past, as to whether there is blame and to whom blame is due. It will be a long controversy, the question of this blame, if there be blame at all, and to whom it belongs; and I shall be much alarmed if, in merely discussing that question, we should forget the important matter that we have before us, and the duties which it seems to me we are called upon to perform. Now, I think those Members who listened to the debate last Tuesday will feel that, although there was some difference of opinion on many matters, there was general concurrence in the acknowledgment of one fact. This fact is that, since the Convention with the Transvaal Republic, the Natives of the Bechwana country to the South-West have been invaded, despoiled, and robbed, not merely of their independence, but of their property, their cattle, their means of living, and their land, and that from having been a comparatively prosperous people they are now in a state of the greatest distress, poverty, and discouragement. I do not think there is any difference of opinion on that fact, whatever difference of opinion there may be on other matters. The hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Cartwright) has made a remark in regard to this people to which I must allude. I think it is important that we should realize what kind of men these Natives are. They are not savages. The hon. Member said these Native Chiefs were little better than the marauders and filibusters who had invaded their country. We have, from a variety of sources, information in regard to them. There have been Missionaries there for upwards of 50 years, and I do not know that in all the annals of Missionary effort—certainly of English Missionary effort—there have been any much more interesting, and, upon the whole, much more hopeful until now, than the record of the Missionary effort in this particular country. There were great men connected with it. I need hardly allude to Livingstone, who was certainly a great man. Then there was a man who was a hero among Missionaries, old Mr. Moffat. Still living, he settled in the country 50 years ago, and the progress under him, and those who assisted him, has been very great. I do not know if hon. Members have seen a truthful description of these people by the Rev.

Mr. Mackenzie, tutor of the educational institution which has been set up in this so-called savage country, in its capital town. From this book it appears that cash has replaced barter, that there are shops open at which, instead of beads and brass wire being sold, there are cotton and woollen and hardware goods, besides groceries—as tea, coffee, and sugar. I have a letter from Mr. Moffat to a friend about a year or two ago, in which he computed the trade in this Bechwana country to represent, at least, £250,000 per annum. Fountains have been opened up, and watercourses and drains constructed. Potatoes, wheat, and other crops are grown, and cattle are exported in considerable numbers into the neighbouring country. Large numbers of the people have given—such was the expression—outward adhesion to Christianity. That may not be thought much of; but I do not think we have a right to complain, for I am afraid that, even amongst ourselves, our own Christianity is often merely an outward adhesion. The schools are well attended, there are village churches almost everywhere, and actually there was a boarding school for both boys and girls established in the chief town, at which £4 or £5 was paid in advance. The enterprize and progress of these people is one reason why we hear so much about them at the present moment. They have got their lands into cultivation, and have made them so valuable that they are a great temptation to the marauders and filibusters. The hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Cartwright) said it was a land of lawlessness, and warfare, and robbery. It has been so since the Convention. It was not so before. It had been regarded as free from lawlessness and robbery. From 1854 to 1857 there was a war with the old Transvaal Republic; but that was arrested by Sir George Grey in 1858. A great wave of agitation arose among the Natives in 1878; the men from the neighbouring country of Griqualand West came to the Bechwana Chiefs, and the Chiefs had some difficulty in dealing with them. The difficulty was so great that they put themselves under our protection, and obtained the help of the administration of British officers. But the state of the country then was nothing to what it is now. The hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley)—and he must allow me to congratulate him on his speech, and also the House upon the great accession to its debating power—at once faced the real question, and he says—"Here you have these people. Be they good or bad, why should not they be absorbed by the Transvaal? That is not our affair." Well, that is the real question—Is it our affair or not? Now, I will at once state—and I think few Members will go further than I will in enforcing the fact—that war, if possible, especially in these countries, should be avoided, and that annexation is most undesirable, and should be avoided. But there is another result which should be equally avoided, and that is the desertion of an Ally—desertion of Allies in their utmost distress, after assistance has been sought by us and received from them. I gather from what has fallen from those who have spoken on behalf of the Government in the course of this debate, that it is their opinion that we are not very much concerned with the civilization of these Native Chiefs, that the Missionary efforts that are being made to convert them to Christianity are of no particular importance to the British Empire; but I ask, are we entitled to repudiate their claims to be treated as Allies because they are Black men? The noble Lord the late Secretary of State for the Colonies, speaking in "another place," made a remark that very much astonished me, when he said that not only were these Black men never subjects of the Queen, but that they could not even be correctly described as our Allies. As regards the claims of these Black men to be regarded as subjects of the Queen, I do not care to dwell upon that point, and I will content myself with saying that for two years they placed themselves under the Queen's power, and that they were acknowledged during that period by our officials at the Cape as being under the Queen's power, and their affairs were administered by British officers. I am, however, quite aware that their territory was never formally annexed to the British Empire. As to their being our Allies, however, our officials at the Cape certainly do not take Lord Kimberley's view of the matter, because nothing could be stronger than Sir Hercules Robinson's statement that they were our Allies. I need not trouble the House by reading a large number of despatches bearing upon this point; but I will content myself by referring to two. Sir Hercules Robinson, in a despatch, dated July 6, 1882, says—

> "Such being the treatment to which Native Chiefs within the Transvaal are liable, it would certainly be a cruelty and an injustice if we were to assent to the Batlapin and Baralong Chiefs, who have always been our firm Allies, and whose independence we have explicitly recognized, being forced to become Transvaal subjects against their will."

In another despatch, dated January 22, 1883, he refers to the "grievous wrong inflicted upon our Allies, Montsioa and Mankoroane." But there are Allies and Allies. The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, in his very able speech, did not deny that the Chiefs were our Allies; but he said that, after all, there were British Native Allies, and Boer Native Allies, and that our Native Allies were no better than the Boer Native Allies. I do not think, however, that that has much to do with the matter. In making that statement, the Under Secretary is certainly laying down a new doctrine of Alliance. Thus, if during the march of the Allied Powers upon Paris we had said—"The Russians are no better than the French, and are, perhaps, not quite so good, and, therefore, we will cast off our Russian Allies," I think that we should have been laying down a doctrine of Alliance which would have been perfectly new. In entering into an Alliance, you cannot enter into the question of whether they are better or worse than the people with whom you are contending. The hon. Gentleman also stated that these Native Chiefs were our Allies for their own interest. I dare say that they were; Alliances are generally entered into for the mutual interest of all and each of the Allies. It is, however, very important that the House should consider what kind of Alliance this was between ourselves and these Native Chiefs. The month of April, 1881, was a very critical time for our Government; it was just after the rising of the Transvaal, and it was just before the Battle of Lang's Nek. On the 7th of January in that year Colonel Moysey, our Agent at Kimberley, sent a telegram to the High Commissioner, Sir George Colley, in which he says—

> "Bethell reports on the 31st from Molopo, Zeerust and Lichtenburg both taken by rebels. Volunteers and many loyal Boers joined under threats of death. Rebel force collecting near Montsioa, who is sheltering the English and 50 waggons. Boers sent to demand Bethell, and preparing to attack. Moffat nearly murdered in Zeerust. Machalis joined the insurgents. Moshette doubtful. Montsioa has 6,000 men collected, but very little powder. Montsioa's messengers arrived to-day with letter asking for permits to buy ammunition at Kimberley to defend himself and those with him. Says he is also ready to help Government if desired. Mankoroane writes on the 4th asking for ammunition to defend himself, and expresses continued loyalty. Mathlabane also asks through Border Agent on same grounds. I think, without giving Natives powder, we ought, under present circumstances, to let them obtain it for defence, and should throw away their loyalty by refusing. I can get permits here for the asking. Four hundred Boers said to have come down threatening the Native Border, and the Griqualand farms they claim. The messengers are here waiting your reply. Some difficulty in letting powder leave this owing to spies; but difficulties will increase daily."

In reply to this telegram Sir George Colley sent the following telegram, dated the 9th of January, to Colonel Moysey—

> "Encourage Montsioa, Mankoroane, and Mathlabane in their loyalty. Inform them of large forces arriving from England and India, and that troops will shortly enter Transvaal; and tell them British Government will not forget their conduct if they remain true. Let them obtain small supply of powder if satisfied required for their safety. Tell them Government does not desire assistance, is well able to re-establish order, and forbids their attacking Boers, but desires them to remain quiet and faithful, and to give shelter to loyal people."

Unfortunately, the Government was not able to re-establish order. It is perfectly true that we did not ask these Natives to attack the Boers. Had we done so we should, doubtless, have met with unfavourable criticism in this country; but we did make use of these Natives to give protection to fugitive Englishmen, and they did give that protection greatly to their own danger and ultimate loss. It may be said that, after all, this was only Sir George Colley's despatch; but Lord Kimberley himself, almost immediately afterwards, made a most important statement in the despatch, in which he acknowledged the receipt of that of Sir George Colley. In that despatch, the noble Lord says—"I approve the terms of the reply which you forwarded to Colonel Moysey." I am sure that the noble Lord must have forgotten that despatch when he made his recent statement. Let me refer to two other short despatches bearing upon this matter. The first is from Major Buller to Sir Evelyn Wood, dated the 5th of June, 1881, in which he says—

> "Montsioa's conduct, in constantly refusing to have anything to do with the Boer authorities, and giving protection to any loyal Boers or English who chose to go to him (I understand that at one time there were between 60 and 70 Whites at his station) gave great offence. . ."

That is what our own Agent has to say upon the matter; but what does the Transvaal Republic say in reference to it? Addressing Mankoroane, they say—

> "Take notice that as soon as you or any of your people are found armed, fighting against burghers of the South African Republic, which Government is now re-established (Messrs. P. Krüger, Martinnus, Pretorius, and P. Joubert being at its head), or should you give any assistance to our enemies the English Government, which we have already overthrown, we shall consider you and your people as our enemies, and treat you accordingly. We have always considered you and your people as the friends of the Boers, and we are still willing to treat you as such, provided you live peaceably, and we alone are able to work out the English: but you may send us some of your people to gather in corn on our farms, and we will accordingly pay your men and treat them well. Let us know immediately whether you are our friend or our enemy."

We have these facts, therefore, before us—that we availed ourselves of the assistance of these people; that we told them that we would not forget them; that we got them into hostilities with the Boers, and that the Boers informed them that if they aided us they would treat them as enemies, and that they have treated them as enemies because they did aid us. Then came the Convention by which we made our arrangements with the Boers. I believe that it was felt at the time both at home and abroad that these Chiefs and their people had some claim upon us—first, in respect of the fact that they had been *de facto* our subjects, and had been, at all events, under our protection, and then that they had a still greater claim upon us, inasmuch as they had stood by us in our need. These claims, I repeat, were at the time both felt and acknowledged. A good deal has been said about the Award of 1871. That was an Award made at the joint request of the Transvaal Boers, and of the Natives of the Transvaal Republic. After it was made, the Transvaal Republic refused to abide by it, very much to the indignation of the noble Lord the then Secretary of State for the Colonies. At the final settlement which was tried to be made at the time of the Convention, it was thought desirable that a new line of boundary should be drawn between the territory of the Transvaal Republic and that of the Native Chiefs. A new line was drawn, and it was acknowledged by the Convention. It was inserted in the very beginning of the Convention as part of the defined boundary of the Transvaal Republic. That new line is now objected to by both the Boers and the Natives. The Rev. Mr. Mackenzie, a gentleman of high reputation, tells me that he had much intercourse with the Natives at the time, and that they complained very strongly against this line; but he said to them, and they believed it—"This is the line the British Government are drawing; the Boers must not be allowed to transgress it." Therefore, there was this new line made, which the Boers accepted, and which the Natives understood the British Power would protect. Then there were the terms of the actual Convention. I do not know upon what grounds Her Majesty was requested to be Suzerain of this new State except for the protection of the Natives. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister must allow me to allude to the speech he made on the 25th of July, 1881. My right hon. Friend, in defining the Suzerainty of the Queen, said—"It is intended to signify that certain portions of Sovereignty are reserved, and expressly reserved." What were they? "Those which concern the relations between the Transvaal community and foreign countries." It might have been supposed that "foreign countries" meant European Powers—as, for example, Portugal. But my right hon. Friend went on to say—

> "This reservation of foreign relations was a most important one as regards the interests of the Natives, because a very large portion of the Native interests of the country would involve the Natives beyond the Frontier of the Transvaal."—(3 *Hansard*, [263] 1858-9.)

Therefore, questions affecting the interests of the Natives beyond the Frontier of the Transvaal would be retained in the hands of the British Government by the retention of the Suzerainty. My hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Evelyn Ashley), in alluding to this matter, stated that the Convention merely gave us the right to interfere, but imposed no obligation. There might be, he said, obligations on the Government, but they did not arise from the terms of that Convention. I must venture to express some disagreement to this statement. There are obligations. I think there is an obligation to the British public; especially to those of the British public—and they are not few—who care about the interests of the Natives. I believe that the terms of the Convention would have been received with much greater disfavour in the country if it had not been that it was supposed that the interests of the Natives were provided for. I know that would have been my view. But the obligation was not merely to the British public. Undoubtedly there were obligations to the Natives themselves. There was, it is true, no Treaty with them. But what were the terms of the Convention? The Natives were not so ignorant of matters deeply affecting them as not to know that we had declared that we should protect them, and that this was our mode of protection; and, undoubtedly, they felt that they would have a right to call upon us for protection. The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies made one or two remarks with regard to the advisers of these Native Chiefs. I think he said these Chiefs had European White advisers, who, in nine cases out of ten, were not a bit better than the wandering Boers. These were the gentlemen who signed the pathetic "documents"— alluding to the claims which had been founded on the Convention. As to the pathetic documents, the greater number of them are specimens of Native thought and Native phraseology. But I do not think this applies to these particular Chiefs. There have been Agents—Mr. Jenkins, for instance—who have been of the greatest service, both to the Natives and to the British Government. I suppose my hon. Friend must have had in his memory a despatch, signed by Mr. Bethell, on behalf of one of these Chiefs, Montsioa. Mr. Bethell is not an adventurer. He is an Agent whom we employed during our administration of the territory. When the administration ceased, he remained with the Chief. He had been a lieutenant in the Army, and was connected with a most respectable family in Yorkshire. If my hon. Friend alluded to him, it was under a mistake. I will refer to that despatch. If hon. Members will refer to page 58 in the Blue Book, November, 1882, they will find this despatch. It is well worth reading, because it gives the history of what has happened to Montsioa. In it Montsioa states that he was attacked by lawless Boers and by the forces of the Chiefs in the Boer interest; and

> "How each time that these freebooters crossed the line of the Transvaal State I could have followed and destroyed them; but I trusted in the promises of the Government."

Sir Hercules Robinson confirms this statement. In no case did this Chief transgress the Border. He goes on to say—

> "I wrote to the Boer Leaders, to the British Resident at Pretoria, and to Her Majesty's High Commissioner at Cape Town, requesting that now I had driven the invaders over the Convention boundary, the parties to the Convention Treaty would prevent their re-crossing it to attack me; but my appeal was without effect. I have, therefore, lost confidence in the promises of the Pretoria Convention."

In this despatch he makes three proposals to our Government—first, either to annex his country, the Natives to pay all costs; or, secondly, to expel the freebooters from the country; or, thirdly, to "open the sale of powder to us loyal Chiefs, as the rebels obtain it from the Transvaal and Free State." Before that time he had sent, through Mr. Bethell, a similar request. On the next page I find this statement—"The Boer Forces were repulsed by Montsioa with heavy loss." On the same page there is mention of his request to the High Commissioner for ammunition, and the reply that the request cannot be complied with. What happened to this man? He was willing to help himself, and to do what he could. He called upon us, first, to carry out the Convention, or to take him under our protection, or to let him have ammunition. All these things were refused; and now hear the result. On January 22, 1883, the High Commissioner writes—

> "The freebooters have appropriated, as Montsioa says, 70 per cent of the whole of his territory, and 95 per cent of his plough lands, leaving him a corner only, in which the allowance of water is insufficient for a seventh of his tribe."

Montsioa may well ask how he is to live under such conditions. He had no assistance from his late Allies, and on October 5, 1882, he found himself forced to make application to the Transvaal Republic, and requested the Government of the Transvaal to take him under its protection. I could tell the same story with regard to other Chiefs. Let me say one word about Mankoroane; and here

I must allude to a remark of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) in his speech, as it has appeared two or three times in the public organ which he conducts with so much ability. He says that Mankoroane has only himself to thank for his present position; and he quotes the despatch of Sir Hercules Robinson of April 1, 1882. I think, if he had read a subsequent despatch, he would have found that Sir Hercules Robinson acknowledged, and evidently believed, that Mankoroane was acting in self-defence. The fact was that he, at any rate, did not desert his Ally, and, indeed, was only carrying out the advice of the Under Secretary, who says that if the Chiefs would unite, as it were, into one family, the Boers would not be able to carry on successful invasions of that sort. In the end, however, he helped his friend, and they have both been destroyed. In a despatch from the Civil Commissioner at Kimberley, of the 8th of August, 1882, a message was referred to, which was sent by Mankoroane to the High Commissioner, in which that Chief stated that he had lost nearly everything in carrying on a war as much for the maintenance of the English name as for his own protection, and that he desired the British Government not to trouble about him any more, and that his old friend Montsioa was then being threatened by the Boers with invasion. His troubles, however, are not over. Mr. Mackenzie has given me a letter received from that Chief in January, 1883, in which he says that the Peace which he made with the Boers was not a stable one; that the Boers were enraged against him in consequence of the action he had taken, and that they were about to take by force his territory, laying down a boundary line which would leave nothing either for himself or his friend Montsioa. He goes on to ask Mr. Mackenzie to speak to the English people and the Government of the Queen, because it was well known that during the war between England and the Boers he had received and protected the Queen's people. He says that he still has confidence in the Queen's Government, and begs Mr. Mackenzie to plead for him. Well, now I dare say I shall be told that these freebooters are all filibusters and marauders, and that the Transvaal Government is too weak to prevent this invasion of the Native territory. But I very much doubt that. The filibusters and freebooters go into this country together with all the *mauvais sujets* of the neighbourhood. They foment quarrels among the Native Chiefs, and after a state of lawlessness has gone on for some time then steps in a Transvaal Republic, gets a Treaty made, contrary to the terms of the Convention, and the upshot of it is that the Republic annexes the territory. I do not believe that this state of things arises from the weakness of the Transvaal Government. If there be weakness, it is not so much the weakness of the Transvaal Government to prevent outrage as of the British Government to protect people from being outraged. But, at any rate, this Transvaal Government is strong enough to defy our Government, and to treat the engagements of our Representatives with contempt. I doubt whether in any other Blue Book you would find our Representatives treated with such utter contempt. In one case, when 15 Natives were murdered, our authorities proposed that a Joint Commission should be sent from the Transvaal and the British Governments to inquire into the matter. Upon what ground did the Transvaal Government refuse assent to this proposal? Lord Kimberley characterized this as one of the most impudent answer she ever read. They invented some complaint against the Governor of Natal of having received some Natives from the Transvaal, and said that, therefore, they could not join our Commissioner. Again, one of the chief stipulations in the Convention was that the British Government, as Suzerain, should have control over the relations of the Transvaal Government with Native Chiefs. After this —not intending, of course, that the British Government should know of it— despatches were sent, which appear on pages 11 and 13 of the Blue Book of November last, to two Chiefs, in which the Agent of the British Government was called a poison-strewer. Now, the final result of all this is that our loyal Allies have been forsaken, and therefore despoiled and ruined, the Convention has not merely been broken, but it has been treated with absolute contempt, and all assurances to the Natives and to the English people for the protection of these Natives have proved of no value. And now, what is to be done? My hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the

Colonies says— "Appeal to the public opinion of the Boers." [Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: No, no!] Well, my hon. Friend said "that the Boers were much more amenable to public opinion than hon. Members opposite supposed."

MR. GLADSTONE said, his hon. Friend referred to the public opinion of this country.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Well, as to our opinion acting on the Boers, I am afraid that that will not have much effect. I shall not be surprised, in that case, if we should have some clever despatches appealing to public opinion as represented by my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley). The noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Derby) says—"Let there be a remonstrance." Well, a remonstrance may have some effect if it is supposed to be in earnest. But if not, it will have no effect, and merely be a humiliation for us and a trap for the Natives. There are really only two courses open—either to fulfil our duty, or to delare with honesty and due humility that we will not and cannot—or, at any rate, that we will not. We must submit to the humiliation of deserting our Allies, or we must protect them. Both in this House and in the other there has been some allusion to some middle course—that is, to compensation; but I really am afraid that that cannot come to much. It was stated in "another place" that a message was sent to Sir Hercules Robinson asking whether the Chiefs should be compensated in land or in money. If in land, how are we to get the land? I suppose that there is no unpeopled, cultivated land available such as these Natives had. We should have to put them among some Natives, who, in all probability, would not like their coming; and I appeal to my hon. Friends below the Gangway that that might be a costly matter—that that might require some compulsory action—some use of force to protect these Natives whom we put in the fresh land against the wish of the other Natives. Well, is the compensation to be in money? The Under Secretary said yesterday that it was proposed to give small pensions from the Imperial funds to these two Chiefs, and such other Native Chiefs as may appear to have special claims on this country. Well, I am afraid we cannot settle the matter like this. It is not the Chiefs only with whom we have to deal, but the people. In the remaining territory of Montsioa there is only land enough for one-seventh part of the population. I perfectly admit that the Chiefs are not those with whom we feel most sympathy. They very often have not headed the Native Tribes in the progress of civilization. It is the people you have to look after and protect; and I think, also, there would be some protection and compensation due to the Missionaries. ["No, no!"] Hon. Members say "No, no!" I will just put it before the country. These English Missionaries, who do great credit to the English name, and are loved and revered in that country, have succeeded in civilizing, to a great extent Christianizing, these people. They have built churches, chapels, and schools in this territory; and what will be the result of our deserting our Allies? I think these buildings would be in danger of being destroyed; and would not this give a claim upon this country for some compensation? I agree with the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) that the Vote which gave compensation in money would not be easily passed; if it was a small Vote it would be thought paltry; and if it was a large one there would be a strong feeling about it, and hon. Members would ask—"Are we brought to that point that we have to compensate our Allies by paying them to live in compulsory exile?" I confess that my opinion is that we should not desert them. The hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Cartwright) speaks of "absolutely inevitable obligations." I think this an absolutely inevitable obligation, and I think it would not be so costly or dangerous as is supposed. In my opinion, there has been great exaggeration on that point. A few months ago, if the filibusters had thought that the Government meant to notice them, they would have desisted, for directly they heard that the Government was taking the matter up they immediately began to act in a very different manner.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: That was on the reported joint action of all the neighbouring States.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Not at all. I will read a letter from a Native teacher to Mr. Mackenzie. It has the following passage:—

> "We find that when the false report that the English were coming to Mankoroane's help was first heard, they (the filibusters) were very much frightened . . . . but in a day or two, when they heard it was not true, they began again."

Even now, I believe, when the Transvaal Envoy comes over, and I understand he is coming shortly, if the Government say—"We have duties to fulfil towards these Natives, and we shall take care that they are fulfilled," if the Envoy believe the Government, and I think he might be made to believe them; if he really come to the conclusion that the matter would be seriously taken up, I believe it would not be at all difficult to put an end to this business. There is an immense amount of exaggeration with regard to this district; it has been said to stretch northward as far as the Equator, but that is not the case at all; it is a well-defined district, between the Transvaal and British territory, and this is not a question which implies anything except the management of that particular district; and I believe that at the worst the cost would not be greater than was the cost of the administration of Basutoland under the British Government, which was an undoubted success, and not at all costly. Well, I am obliged to hon. Members for having heard me. They may, perhaps, be surprised at the warmth of my feeling in the matter. It is no new feeling; it has grown with my growth, this feeling of our duty towards the Natives, and especially the Natives of South Africa. But now I must say a word about the actual Motions before the House. I cannot vote for the Amendment. If I might put my own interpretation upon the terms "absolutely inevitable obligation," I would vote in favour of it; but I am afraid there are persons who would say that no obligations were absolutely inevitable the fulfilment of which could possibly be got rid of. I should prefer that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Cambridge should come before the House, because I think that points out a mode in which the Government should act; and I repeat I am very sorry that we should have turned off this most important question of what should be done into what has been done. Therefore, I regret the Motion of the right hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach). But, after all, it is not a question of votes. It is a question of bringing the facts before the Government, and the House, and the country, and obtaining the verdict of the country upon it. I must be allowed to make an appeal to my old Colleagues in this matter, and to the hon. Members around me with whom I act, and to the hon. Members below the Gangway who do not agree with me. Now, I shall be supposed to be partial; but, after all, it is a very serious matter for such a country as England to make the acknowledgment that it is too weak to protect its Allies. It may turn out to be a dangerous and even a very costly act. Carry it out logically, and it implies withdrawal from the Cape altogether, except, perhaps, some Naval Stations. There may be some Members who would adopt that policy; but I doubt whether the country is prepared for it, and if not, then this first acknowledgment, that we are not strong enough to protect our Allies, or, at any rate, that we are not willing to use our strength to protect them, will increase the cost when at last we do protect them. But, supposing this policy of desertion adopted, you could not stop at the Cape; logically, withdrawal from India would result. I do not think there is a Member present who could dispute that our Indian Empire would never have been formed, and could not be maintained, without supporting our Allies. The announcement of this inability to interfere or protect will be a new departure. It is new in the history of British policy; but it is not new in the history of Britain. Centuries ago the Roman legions were withdrawn from this country on the ground that the Empire was too weak to protect the Britons, and history tells us what became of the Roman Empire.

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I think there cannot be a more suitable moment for me to intervene in this debate than after the speech of my right hon. Friend. My right hon. Friend has, indeed, put out of sight in great part, probably effaced from many minds, the recollection of the speech with which the debate was introduced. But as distinctly and as plainly, and as ingenuously as my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) represented what may be called, in Parliamentary phrase, the extreme view of non-intervention, on the one side of this very difficult question, so my right hon. Friend who has just sat down, being, as he says, a man of peace, has, notwithstanding, in the most unequivocal terms, taught us to-day the doctrine of war—["No!"]—in circumstances which I shall endeavour briefly to describe; and he has gone even a point beyond that, by doing everything in his power to make the adoption of any measures, in discharge of such obligations as we may have contracted to any South African Chiefs, as difficult and as ridiculous as he could. [*Cries of* "No!"] I hear some hon. Gentlemen say "No;" but I am not well aware of the grounds of that negative. I thought it was to be by military means—by military means distinctly—that we were to announce our intention as to what my right hon. Friend called the fulfilment of our duty. If there is any mistake in that, let him correct me. If there is no mistake in that, as I judge from his silence, I trust those negatives will not be repeated; but that Gentlemen who used them will perceive that they were wrong.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Since my right hon. Friend has challenged my assent on his interpretation of what I said, I think I must remind him that I stated it was my firm belief—and I repeat it—that if an Envoy of the Boers comes over, and representations should be made to the Transvaal Government that we were in earnest in the matter, I did not believe military measures would be necessary.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I understood my right hon. Friend scoffed at all remonstrances which were not couched in such language as to show that we were what he termed in earnest. What did he mean by the words, "in earnest?" He meant that if the remonstrance was not successful, it was to be assisted and enforced by military measures. That is exactly the thing that I mean, and neither more nor less, when I say that my right hon. Friend has preached unequivocally the doctrine of war. Sir, although, as I have said, the appeals made by my right hon. Friend had, in some degree, put out of view the able speech with which the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) introduced this subject to the notice of the House, yet common justice compels me to refer both to the tone of his speech and of his Motion; and I must say that both the speech and the Motion were couched in language which appeared to me to deserve the frank acknowledgment of the Government. The hon. and learned Gentleman, in his Motion—and his speech concurred with his Motion—did all that was in his power to separate from this subject retrospective controversy and Party issues, and to direct the mind and attention of the House, without embarrassment and without complication, to the grave issues that were involved, both in regard to the honour of the country, and in regard to the welfare of the Natives of South Africa. Sir, I offer my acknowledgments to the hon. and learned Member for pursuing that course. In my opinion, it is a course eminently fit to be pursued, not only as a general rule, but especially with respect to the questions of South Africa. Some Gentlemen who have addressed the House, and others who have interfered by their cheers in this debate, appear to suppose that the question of South Africa is a very simple one. I listened to the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the North Riding (Mr. Guy Dawnay)—an animated speech, with the expression of many honourable sentiments, but delivered apparently without the slightest consciousness that South Africa had had a history, and that our Colonial relations with South Africa were a history of difficulties, continual and unthought of. Sir, this is not the first time that it has been my duty to represent the embarrassments of the South African people. It has been the one standing difficulty of our Colonial policy, which we have never been able to settle. In other parts of the world difficulties have arisen—difficulties in the West Indies, difficulties in Canada, difficulties in New Zealand. Every one of these has been dealt with, and has been satisfactorily disposed of; but never in South Africa. It was my lot, Sir, in the latter part of the Administration of Sir Robert Peel, to be Secretary of State for the Colonies; and on the breaking up of that Administration I held, as is not uncommon, a friendly interview with my distinguished Successor in that Office, the present Earl Grey, and handed over to him the cases, as I conceived them to stand, of the several Colonies of the Queen, and on that occasion I distinctly told Lord Grey that the case of South Africa presented problems of which I, for one, could not see the solution. And so, Sir, it has continued from that day to this—difficulties appeased, and were sometimes, as it seemed, driven underground for a time, but always recurring, never solved. My right hon, Friend thinks it quite easy. "Oh," he says, "you have nothing to do but to make a certain announcement to the Dutch Representative, and it will be all right." Considering that the right hon. Gentleman has had experience at the Colonial Office, he ought to have known better. ["No, no," *and* "Order!"] I will take no notice of that. I think he ought to have formed a more adequate estimate of the magnitude and the complication of the question with which we have to deal. I must tell the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) what are the reasons why, while we appreciate the manner of his proceeding, and while I, for one, heard with the greatest satisfaction his emphatic disclaimer of the construction which he will agree with me has been largely put upon his Motion—namely, that it meant another South African War—why we cannot concur in and adopt the terms of that Motion. The hon. and learned Gentleman calls upon the House to assert the complicity of the Transvaal Government in the outrages and crimes which have been committed beyond the Western Frontier of the Transvaal. Now, Sir, upon that question I would point out that it may be a matter of controversy whether this complicity exists. I am not here to assert with confidence the negative; I am here to say that, with respect to the fulfilment of the Convention of 1881, we, as a British Government, reserve entire liberty to do that, and act not only with regard to the Bechuanaland, but in regard to all the other stipulations of the Convention. But I will point out to the House that it is a very serious matter for an Assembly of such dignity and authority as belong to the House of Commons to assert, upon evidence which is necessarily imperfect, the complicity of the Transvaal Government in these outrages. I do not think it would be just, upon such knowledge as we possess, to embody in a vote of this House an assertion of that complicity. I must say I differ entirely from my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), as upon many other subjects, so upon the belief, which I am surprised he has expressed, that it is in the power of the Transvaal Government to restrain the feelings of the Boers and those influences among the Boers which have undoubtedly been productive of crime and outrage in Bechuanaland. The Transvaal Government, whatever else it may be, is eminently a popular and representative Government. In its virtues, if it has them, and in its vices, if it has them, it represents the sentiment of the community over which or among which it rules; and if wrong has been done by the Transvaal Government, you may rely upon it that the root of that wrong lies far deeper than the surface. It lies in the feeling of the population which is behind that Government. Nor is the matter confined to the Transvaal. One hon. Gentleman who spoke in this debate stated—and he thought he was adducing a strong argument in favour of his own view, though it appeared to me to have a very different bearing—that in the Orange Free State, at the time of the action which took place a couple of years ago, he heard the people of the Orange Free State exulting in the miscarriages which had befallen British arms in the Transvaal. Then, that sympathy that exists between the Transvaal Government and the Transvaal population you admit goes beyond the Boers of the Transvaal, and pervades the Orange Free State as well. Does it stop there? Does it not go into the Cape? Are you not aware that a strong feeling of sympathy passes from one end of the South African Settlements to the other among the entire Dutch population? And let it be borne in mind by Members of this House that what my right hon. Friend invites us to do, in holding out to us the prospects of resort to those military measures, is to go into conflict with the sentiment of the mass of that Dutch population forming a considerable majority in the European Settlements of South Africa. Well, Sir, that is a very serious state of things. I have no doubt it was the consideration and a sense of that state of things which prevented the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) from attaching to his Motion the construction that he contemplated warlike measures, and which may, perhaps, have deterred the right hon. Gentleman opposite the

Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) from promising support even to the Motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham, because it is open to that construction. I am bound to say that I must take a second objection to the terms used by the hon. and learned Gentleman, for I do not think he can secure the interpretation that he attaches to it. If we are of opinion that steps ought to be taken in this matter, undoubtedly they ought to be not deficient in energy; but he has himself seen what construction is placed upon those words, and although it is a construction he has absolutely disclaimed, yet I think he will feel that the majority of those who in some sense sympathize with his Motion adopt the view which lies at the basis of the speech of my right hon. Friend, and consider that these energetic steps must include the contingency, the alternative, of a distinct resort to force—that is, of a military expedition and a military occupation. The hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. R. N. Fowler), who seconded the Motion, did not hesitate for a moment frankly to accept that construction, being also, as he said, in perfect truth and sincerity—no one will question that—a man of peace, but thinking that this is a measure which must be contemplated with a view to the fulfilment of our obligations. Well, Sir, what are the propositions from which I am inclined to differ in the speech of my right hon. Friend who has just sat down? He seems, in the first place, to resent exceedingly the reference made by the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) to the conduct of the European Agents in South Africa, as having been a source of great mischief—not European Agents friendly to the Boers, but European Agents hostile to the Boers—of much of the mischief that we have so grievously to lament. Sir, I would refer my right hon. Friend to an authority—to a Missionary—Mr. Bevan, who has said something on the subject, and I must quote what he has said, although it tends to illustrate the unsafe nature of the ground on which my right hon. Friend treads with such confidence, for he seems to think these are cases perfectly simple, and cases where, on one side, there is nothing but guilt, and, on the other, nothing but innocence and purity. But the Missionary, Mr. Bevan, in a letter which he writes on the 19th February, addressed to Major Rowe, says—"Mankoroane," that is one of the Chiefs on whose behalf we are asked to interfere with military measures — "Mankoroane has persistently tried to force Montsioa to war for a long time past." That is the testimony of a Missionary with regard to Mankoroane, and in this he has been urged on by the Agents and other White people, who, as you know, are the bane of Native Chiefs; and also, indeed, are, in a great degree, responsible for the wars which are going on in that country. I am not at all surprised at my right hon. Friend when he speaks highly on behalf of the Missionaries, and I sympathize with him in the language he used; but I think it was a little too much when he cast the shield of his protection over those Agents of South Africa. My right hon. Friend, if I understand him aright, has represented that before the Convention of 1881 lawlessness and robbery had been suppressed in Bechuanaland. It is represented as a land which before that time was a land of peace. Now, we do not agree with that description of the country. It has been a land of turbulence and disorder, which has hardly known peace; for instead of being in the position of a considerable district of country under a single authority—such as happily prevailed in Zululand some six years ago—Bechuanaland has been divided among a multitude of independent Chiefs, each of them anxious for the supremacy, and none have been strong enough to reduce it to unity and to order; and at this moment, perhaps, the greatest mistake that is made upon this question is, that this is represented as if it were a case where we were invited to interfere on behalf of the Natives of Bechuanaland against the freebooters and the Boers. But, Sir, it is not so. The Boers have their friends in Bechuanaland just as they have their enemies. What that friendship will be ultimately worth to the Natives I do not at present venture to predict; but they have their friends and their Allies faithful to them, and taking their side, just as there are others who are hostile to them, and who have leaned rather to British connection. It is a question of taking part when my right hon. Friend says we are called upon to admit that we must acknowledge our inability to protect our Allies. What he really means is, that we are not sufficiently willing to please him—not sufficiently willing to interpose in a Native quarrel between one part of the people of Bechuanaland and another part of the people of Bechuanaland, where one portion only are favoured by the Boers, and the other are hostile to the Boers. And those who are hostile to the Boers are, at the present moment, the weaker party. I say at the present moment the weaker party, although my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies is perfectly right in saying that the rational thing for these Chiefs to do would be to unite among themselves; and if they did unite among themselves, they would have something better to rely upon than the appeal now made to us to interfere by military aid in the intestine quarrels in South Africa. My right hon. Friend also says that we asked certain Chiefs for assistance. He quoted a passage, but I think he must have been conscious that the passage he quoted contradicted the statement that he had made. I will refer to the latter part of the passage which he quoted. When you are said to ask Allies for assistance, I apprehend the meaning of that is tolerably well known. The meaning is that you want military aid. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] You want their aid in military measures in some shape or other. So far from that, it was "expressly desired of them to tell them that the Government does not desire assistance." It forbids them from attacking the Boers. It desires them to remain quiet and faithful, and to give shelter to British settlers. We are not here to deny that we do not adopt the language,—we never adopted the language of saying that this was to us a matter of indifference. We could not take the ground with perfect consistency which was taken up in this debate by my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley). But do not let it be supposed for one moment that we have asked assistance from these Native Chiefs; on the contrary, our great object has been at all times to exclude their assistance. We have declined to avail ourselves of their assistance. We should deem it to be a fatal mistake to enlist them as fighting Allies in a quarrel with Europeans in South Africa. Next, my right hon. Friend says that the Natives for whom he speaks represent the people of Bechuanaland. They represent one of the sections into which Bechuanaland is divided. It is not a question between Bechuanaland and some other country or some other people; it is a question between one portion of the people of Bechuanaland and another portion, which other portion is backed unquestionably both by sympathy and co-operation, and which in the strictest sense—I will not say the strictest sense, but which is in a substantial sense, in alliance with the Boers of the Transvaal. Then I want to know what is the meaning of the right hon. Gentleman's views of the obligations we have undertaken by the Convention of 1881? He objects to the definition given, or the description given, by my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, who said that we had acquired a right, but that we had not incurred an obligation. There is nothing strange in that language. It is language which was habitually used with great authority by Lord Palmerston in respect of territorial guarantees, and I believe it is language which most justly describes the position in which we stand. Under the Convention of 1881 we acquired a right—that is to say, we reserved a title, as against the Boers of the Transvaal, to support the Natives, and to restrict their action upon the Natives to whatever extent justice and equity might seem to recommend. But if I understand my right hon. Friend his construction of that Convention is this—that we invested every Native unjustly suffering on the frontiers of the Transvaal all round the country with the right to call upon us to go to war in his behalf with Bechuanaland. When I say to war on his behalf, I beg to insert the same qualifications that he leaves, to remonstrate on his behalf with the intention of going to war. But I say that this is not a rational construction of the Convention. It is our duty in these matters to consider what lessons we have derived from experience, and what means we possess, and what is the magnitude of the ends in view as compared with the operations that are necessary to obtain those ends. Sir, we are not without experience of war in South Africa. It is a melancholy history. We have not had a Colony in South Africa yet for a century, but we had wars in 1811, in 1819, in 1834, in 1846, in 1850, in 1877, in 1879, and in 1880-1. The people of

England know something of the cost of those wars. £12,000,000, I am persuaded, do not represent it. The cost of the Zulu War was £4,890,000, the military operations in the Transvaal cost £2,720,000, and in the earlier times the war between 1846 and 1850 cost little short of £3,000,000. If these were matters which belonged to clear obligation; if they had contemplated ends; if they had proceeded on reasonable calculations and upon just aims, far be it from me to quote their cost against them; but their elements must be taken into view. And what were the causes of most of those wars; indeed, all of them? Even the Zulu War, which I look upon as one of the most monstrous in our history; one of the most monstrous in point of policy —and one of the most clearly indefensible in point of principle—was a frontier war. It depended upon frontier considerations. It has always been the defence of a frontier which has been in question. A fighting frontier has been incessantly the cause and object of war. But my right hon. Friend says that in this case there is no frontier to Bechuanaland.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: No, no; I said there was a defined frontier.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I understood my right hon. Friend to say it was a land included between the Orange Free State and the Transvaal.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: It is quite true that the Orange Free State is one of the borders; but what I mainly said was that it was the dividing territory between the Transvaal and British territory.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Between the Transvaal and British territory; but that does not include the whole of Bechuanaland. No; there is another frontier to Bechuanaland towards the North; and if you now, in compliance with the advice of my right hon. Friend, go and plant yourself in Bechuanaland with a military force, putting up the Natives whose cause you befriend, and putting down the Natives whose cause you oppose, with the filibusters who support them, or the freebooting farmers who support them, you will have this difficulty—that the emigrants who come in among you will go out again beyond your frontier to the North, and never, as long as there is fresh land to occupy, will you be able to restrain them. All along it has been the same. The tendency of Colonists has been to go beyond the frontier, beginning long ago with the rivers nearer to the Cape, and gradually extending from one river to another; and thus it has been a process of indefinite extension. And whatever country you occupy you will have the same difficulties to contend with. You must still face this difficulty in South Africa—that your emigrants will go out beyond your frontier wherever they find farms convenient to be taken; and you will have the same difficulties and conflicts with the Native Tribes as you have here. The wars that we have at former times undertaken took place, however, under very different circumstances from the war which my right hon. Friend urges us to undertake; or, at any rate, to signify to the Transvaal Government that we are ready to undertake if it does not comply with our wishes. They were wars which were fought close to our base of operations. My right hon. Friend urges us to undertake what I shall take leave to designate as a war which is 1,100 miles from the base of our operations. My right hon. Friend does not take into view the fact that in these former wars we had facilities for carrying them on by the aid of the sea, which made the conveyance of supplies a work of comparative ease. This is a proposal to march 1,100 miles into a country with respect to which we would have the aid of a railway for the shortest part of the way; but which, with regard to the rest, everything would have to be done over miserable roads. But greater difficulties still are those which arise when you consider the nature of the country into which you would send your expedition; for it is impossible to contradict the fact that whereas, when we were dealing with the Kaffirs, we dealt with an organized community, the Chiefs of which could answer for the covenants into which they entered, we are now invited to proceed to make war in a country where the Chiefs are divided one against another—in fact, to take part in a hopeless Native conflict. Well, Sir, I apprehend the House will agree with me that a march in such a country of 1,100 miles, especially after what has happened in South Africa, is an undertaking which ought not to be attempted except with an ample military force. It is quite true, as the hon. and learned

Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) has said, that we contemplated some time ago the establishment of a very limited mounted police force, numbering no more than 200 men, which, as we were given to understand, would be sufficient to cope with and to put down marauders. But then, Sir, the essential feature of the plan, which we found ourselves totally unable to realize, was that those 200 men were to represent the united authority of the whole South African Settlements, as well as the authority of the Crown in this country. Two thousand men would hardly effect, by the invasion of the country—where there was no support from the European population of the Transvaal and the Orange River Free State; but, on the contrary, the strongest reason to expect anything but support—2,000 men would hardly be able to effect what, under happier circumstances, 200 men might have effected. It is very difficult and very perilous, especially for one in official responsibility, to refer to many topics which are involved in this question. But I must say that I hope the House will consider that we are not entitled to speak either with contempt or with disrespect of the Dutch portion, which is the majority of the South African population. We cannot, in fact, pronounce sweeping condemnations upon the Dutch race without running the risk of pronouncing a good deal of condemnation upon ourselves. They are our near kindred; their vices have been our vices as regards policy towards Native races. We have made, perhaps, an earlier repentance. Our earlier repentance possibly may have followed upon greater sins and offences. Be that as it may, we are in contact with them there. They did not create the conflict in South Africa. The Natives were there before them, but they were there before us. We went into South Africa and planted ourselves there; but the influence and the strength of the Dutch race are not diminished in consequence. They still continue to be the dominant influence, not absolutely throughout the whole of that country, but through the principal parts of it, with the exception of the Colony of Natal; and it is essential to a sound policy in South Africa that you should well weigh your relations to those people. If it were the fact that there was an outlying handful of those people, severed from the rest and isolated from the rest in sympathy and feeling, that would be one thing; but it is not so. If there is one thing comes out more clearly than another in the history of recent years it is that the Dutch population is, in the main, one in sentiment throughout South Africa, from the Cape to the Northern Border of the Transvaal; and that in dealing with one portion of it you cannot exclude from view your relations to the whole. These are considerations which, I must own, I am unable to view lightly; but I cannot be too explicit, I think, in saying to my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) that, whatever scorn he may bestow upon any measures, except warlike measures, in this case it was not necessary for his purpose. My right hon. Friend went on to show the difficulties—amid the delighted expressions of the Party opposite —and, as it appeared to him, even the absurdities that would attend measures taken on behalf of any injured Chiefs of the Bechuanas, except measures to be enforced by the sword and by the cannon. Sir, I believe the enormous efforts, risks, and uncertainties of the expedition which my right hon. Friend contemplates, and would place at the back of his earnest remonstrances, are entirely out of proportion to the objects that are in view, or to the ends that you could possibly achieve. I doubt very much whether my right hon. Friend will find that there is that disposition in this House or out of this House to overlook the enormous difficulties of the question in deference, I admit, to a high and honourable sentiment which he seems to support. It was only yesterday that a deputation—I believe a very influential deputation—of the Wesleyan Methodists, who are foremost in the ranks of Missionary effort, waited upon the Secretary of State to urge the important considerations connected with this subject; but these Wesleyan Missionaries, when asked what they would recommend, distinctly refrained from recommending the measures which my right hon. Friend would undertake. They decline to be responsible for those measures. It is not quite true my right hon. Friend says—"Only speak firmly, and you will never have occasion to resort to the sword." I say no Government is worthy to hold Office in this country for a day that would hold firm language of that kind without being perfectly prepared to support it. What is the value of the opinion given by my right hon. Friend that there would be no occasion to resort to war, and what would be our predicament if, after holding that firm language, we had to support our remonstrances by a difficult, a costly, and almost hopeless military expedition? What would be our position if, when we were involved in the difficulties and responsibilities of that expedition, we endeavoured to turn round upon my right hon. Friend and say that his sanguine assurances and his confident prophecies were not borne out by the facts? I will not now say what it may be our duty to do, or what it may not be our duty to do, in regard to the Transvaal Government. I advisedly repeat what I stated upon that subject, because—especially if there be an Agent coming to this country—and we, I believe, do not know at this moment whether there is an Agent coming or not—it is desirable that no false inferences should be drawn from this debate. But what we decline to do is to undertake a military expedition for the purpose of rectifying disorders in a country which has always been disorderly, although we know that those disorders are now aggravated partly by the intervention of Boer freebooters. That is a responsibility we cannot assume, and which we will not impose upon the people of this country. I have said that we do not deny that there are obligations, within the limits of reason and prudence, which we ought to acknowledge and desire to fulfil. I am not so clear about the extent of them as my right hon. Friend (Mr. W. E. Forster); but still it is our belief that there are Chiefs, and there may be—I cannot say to what extent—others besides the Chiefs, who have claims of equity and justice upon us. We have acted upon that principle. We have recognized that it was our duty to study measures for the pacification of that country if they could be hopefully undertaken. When we failed in that which was by far the best measure—that devised by Sir Hercules Robinson for united action on the part of the several States with a complete and combined authority—we quite recently, and as if almost in despair, inquired whether it would be possible for us by our own means to proceed against those freebooters and others implicated in those transactions who were British subjects. Do not let it be supposed that they are all Dutchmen. There are others, deserters from the Army, who are Englishmen, against whom you would have to act. However, it is part of our duty to repress the misdeeds of those men whenever we can get at them. We did it in New Zealand. New Zealand was a distracted and an unhappy country before the British occupation. We occupied it and reduced it to order. New Zealand was a country of unlimited space, and unlimited space, as history has often shown, is a more formidable foe than armed hosts. We believe that, even if we were in Bechuanaland, there is no possibility of composing it and quieting it. It is a question of armed occupation. It is, therefore, a question of annexation with the certainty that in making that annexation you are only preparing the way for a new and further discontent. The old settlers in Bechuanaland can go beyond the frontier and again involve you in a similar controversy; so that to speak of proceeding to the Equator, or as far as a cultivable or desirable land extends towards the Equator, is no figure of speech and is no exaggeration. But we shall do the best we can, subject to jeers and perhaps Party taunts, to obtain justice for those who have in any manner acted on our behalf, nor will we renounce any right whatever that we now possess as against either the Transvaal Government or freebooters proceeding from the Transvaal—I say we will renounce no rights. We will leave it open to ourselves to take whatever measures we may find to be practicable; but we will not delude this House by undertaking to go to war until and except we may see our way to making a just war, with a reasonable computation as to the means to be employed and the ends to be attained, and as to the satisfactory arrangements in which it is to terminate. This is the method in which we intend to deal with this subject, and I believe that if we attempted to deal with it on any other basis we should receive the support neither of this House nor of the nation. It is necessary for me to refer again to the question of procedure as it stands before us. We have before us the Motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), with regard to which I have pointed out the anomalous position in which he stands in placing a construction upon the most important part of it, which I think I may say is not admitted by the generality of the House. Then comes the Amendment moved by my hon. Friend the Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Cartwright). In the terms of the Amendment we agree; but I cannot feel very anxious, for the reasons I have explained, that the House could adopt it. If the House were to adopt the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Oxfordshire as an adequate expression of our intentions in regard to this very serious question, in which, undoubtedly, the obligations of equity and humanity are involved, it would seem like an expression on the part of this House that either nothing was to be done, or that everything was to be cut down to an absolute minimum. Speaking in one simple phrase, it would be a negative expression on the part of the Government. Well, under the circumstances, and considering the nature of the topics involved, and the length of this discussion, and considering the freedom with which we have admitted from the first that the state of this remote country is a grievous mischief which we ought to be most desirous to mitigate, as the question has been raised here, I should not think it would become the dignity and the duty of the Government to depart from it with an expression purely negative. I hope I have made my meaning clear, and if I have I cannot help hoping that the hon. Member for Oxfordshire will not put us in the position of having to vote against the additional words which I cannot disapprove of, but which I must admit do not quite meet the demands of the case under the circumstances in which the Motion is submitted to the House. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) interposes another Motion, under the name of an Amendment—a wider Motion, involving different sets of topics, and carrying us back to a renewal of the discussion of matters which we have formerly had before us. We should be obliged to vote against the words of the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). We then hope that the hon. Member for Oxfordshire will, perhaps, be so good as to withdraw the words of which he has given Notice, as they do not raise a perfectly clear issue. If that is done, the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire can be moved as an Amendment on the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham. That, of course, we shall meet with a negative; but it would not, perhaps, be right that the Government should leave the question in a position purely negative, and we shall be prepared to move words of this description. I am supposing now that the three impediments—the three obstacles have been removed. If this is done, we shall be prepared to accept the words of my hon. Friend the Member for Oxfordshire down to the word "Transvaal," and move these additional words—

> "In view of the grave complications, and of the inability of the Transvaal Government to restrain those agencies which have been productive of crime and outrage in Bechuanaland, and have aggravated the disorder, the House trusts that Her Majesty's Government will make adequate provision for the interests of any Chiefs who may have just claims upon them."

That, we believe, would leave it open to us to take any measures we thought fit, and which we may find to be recommended by policy and justice. I do not think the House should leave this question without some expression of opinion, and if an opinion is to be expressed, that is the form which we hope it will take; but in no circumstances can we undertake, as matters now stand, and with the views now held out to us, to give the pledge which has been demanded from us in terms of so much animation by my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: There is one sentence in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down with which I cordially agree, and that is his reference to South Africa as one of the standing difficulties of our Colonial policy. I am, however, bound to add that I was sorry to hear, in spite of the full appreciation which he has of the difficulties not only of the present, but of the past, the right hon. Gentleman go on to characterize the Zulu War as one of the most monstrous wars of our history, without a thought of justice to those who had to meet difficulties equally great with those which have had to be met by the Government of which the right hon. Gentleman is the head. [Mr. GLADSTONE: I said monstrous on the ground of policy.] The speech of the right hon. Gentleman has thrown doubts upon certain facts on which the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) was founded, and which I had understood had been practically admitted in the course of this debate. I understood that both in this and in "another place" it was frankly admitted by those who spoke on behalf of the Government that the Convention of 1881 had been directly violated by the Transvaal Government. I was surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman express some doubt upon that point. I thought that it had been admitted that the Bechuana Chiefs were persons to whom we are under special obligations; though I am afraid that it cannot be considered as admitted that those obligations are unavoidable, because we have the most practical evidence that Her Majesty's Government have made up their minds to the contrary. I thought that it was clear from the speech of the noble Earl who was for some time Secretary of State for the Colonies, and who is now Secretary of State for India (the Earl of Kimberley), and from the speech of the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), that these Chiefs were our faithful Allies, and had done everything for us in times of peculiar difficulty which we had permitted them to do, by protecting our fellow-subjects from our enemies; and that it was perfectly clear from the Blue Books that the very reason why the territories of these Chiefs were excluded from the boundaries of the Transvaal by the Convention was that on account of their great services to this country they had made themselves obnoxious to the Boers. The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies stated the other evening, fairly and frankly, that the acts that had occurred in the territory of these Chiefs were a disgrace to humanity. I regretted to hear from the right hon. Gentleman who has just addressed us no expression of sympathy for the Natives. He contented himself with giving utterance to an expression of sympathy with the Boers. Yet what has been done in these territories has been done—to use a word which fell from the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India—with the connivance of the Transvaal Government, who had accepted the cession of part of them, and had profited by the mischief which has been caused. And there can be no question in anyone's mind who is conversant with the facts that, whereas it is admitted by the Under Secretary of State that during the occupation of the Transvaal these territories were peaceful and progressive, they are now described by the British Resident as the scene of disease, starvation, and death, and that the murders and crimes committed there against children and defenceless prisoners are at least as worthy of the indignation of the right hon. Gentleman as any outrages committed in Bulgaria. Now, Sir, it is clear from the Convention, and from the arguments used by Her Majesty's Government at the time at which it was concluded, that the Government retained control over the foreign relations of the Boers, precisely in order that they might deal with circumstances of this kind. I think we are fairly entitled to ask, what is to be done? What is the answer of the Government? Nothing. I venture to say absolutely nothing, but this—namely, the suggestion that these Native Tribes should unite among themselves for their own defence—a course which would probably lead to a far more serious war in South Africa than anything which has yet occurred, and the statement of the Under Secretary of State that donations are to be made to these Chiefs, and provision made for them, if possible, in British territory. I believe the country will object to such an interpretation of our obligation to control the external arrangements of the Transvaal; and I agree with the right hon. Member for Bradford in the remarks which he made on this point. I think the real question at issue is this—Why have the Government suppressed what the Under Secretary of State terms "their natural impulses of humanity," and their desire, with which I am perfectly ready to credit them, to carry out their obligations so recently undertaken? Why are they not prepared to enforce the terms of this Convention? The right hon. Gentleman has given us several reasons in proof of the difficulties which such a course would entail. He has spoken of the danger of an indefinite extension of our boundaries in South Africa. He has shown how an intervention of this kind once begun might have to be persisted in *ad infinitum*. He has spoken of the difficulty of unlimited space, and it is the most formidable one with which any Government could have to deal in such a question. He referred to the distance from our base of operations; of the difficulties of an Expedition solely undertaken by this country without the co-operation of the South African Government; and in all that I cordially agree with him. But how is it that the Government have only now recognized these difficulties? How is it that these difficulties did not enter into their minds before they concluded the Transvaal Convention? Surely when they concluded that Convention, they believed in the reality of the obligations they were undertaking, and in their power to perform them; surely they recognized that it might become necessary, looking to past history, that such obligations should be met even against the will of the Transvaal Boers. Did they really believe that the stipulations which they made on behalf of the Natives could be practically carried out? I have always myself felt, and ventured to express an opinion in this House in 1881, that there is one difficulty in the way of the working of that Convention to which the right hon. Gentleman has not alluded. It might have had a chance of satisfactory working, but on this condition only —that before its conclusion the Boers should have been taught to respect those with whom they concluded it, and that the Government should not have shrunk, through a false notion of "blood-guiltiness," from carrying to a successful termination their operations against those who were in arms against the authority of the Queen. By the manner in which this Convention was concluded after the defeat of our Army in South Africa the Government absolutely threw away any chance of its being observed by the Boers in those stipulations which were at all repugnant to the Boer people. Now, I do not think that it can be asserted that the Government did not put forward the Convention as a reality in 1881. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford has already quoted the terms in which the Prime Minister then referred to this very stipulation on behalf of the Natives. I remember that the right hon. Gentleman was not the only Minister who alluded to that question. We also had a speech from the President of the Board of Trade, who said that the Government had not employed their strength to conquer those Boers, because they were satisfied that peace gave this country everything that victory could have given. Those were the arguments used at that time. There were, as the right hon. Member for Bradford had said, very many persons in this House and the country—and I must say I was one of them—who felt the gravest doubt whether anything whatever had really been done to secure the interests of the Native population. If the language had been then held by the Government which they now employ, I think the House would not have expressed the blind confidence in the future which it then exhibited. Even if the obedient majority which follows the Ministry had saved them from defeat, their policy would, at any rate, have been censured by no inconsiderable number of persons in the country at large. I should now like, Sir, with the permission of the House, to put forward a wider view of the case. It seems to me that this Convention must have failed, because, from the first, the terms of peace on which it was based were interpreted in directly opposite senses by the Government and by the Boers. The Government always put forward the terms of peace as practically giving to the Boers nothing more than they had been willing to concede to them before military operations were undertaken. The Boers, on the other hand, regarded the terms of peace as giving them their complete independence; and during the discussion, and before the ratification of the Convention, objections were raised by the Boers on almost every point which limited the perfect independence of the Transvaal Government. I think it is clear that a Convention of this kind had in itself the elements of almost certain failure. We have had now from the right hon. Member for Bradford and the hon. and learned Member for Chatham a full statement of the particulars in which this Convention has failed with regard to the Bechuana Chiefs. I do not want to dwell upon that case, because it has been fully established. But I will allude to certain other points which ought to come under consideration. The Correspondence, I think, shows that, from the very outset, the Boers determined that their view of the peace—namely, that it gave them complete independence—should be carried into practical effect, whatever there might be to the contrary in the Convention. The obligations upon them were made, in all important particulars, a dead letter. The authority it gave them was not only carried to its fullest extent, but was stretched beyond anything warranted by the Convention. Take, for instance, the provision that they should strictly adhere to the boundaries of the Transvaal. How did they interpret that obligation? They have referred, in their official Correspondence, to schemes involving the extension of those boundaries as proposals to insure the necessary preponderance of the Whites over the Blacks. They have claimed, as the right hon. Member for Bradford has told us, this Bechuana country as land cut off from theirs, but as lawfully belonging to them, and this in spite of the boundaries laid down in the Convention to which they themselves agreed. And more than that. Circumstances have occurred which show a deliberate intention on the part of the inhabitants of the Transvaal, unchecked by their Government, to extend their boundaries in a more dangerous direction to the peace of South Africa—namely, in the direction of Zululand. And when remonstrated with by Her Majesty's Government on the subject, the Transvaal Government say they are going to take no steps at all in regard to the matter—a statement which was properly characterized by the Earl of Kimberley as "impudent." But had they done anything to protect the rights of the Native population within their territory? In 1881 the Prime Minister insisted at great length on the provisions which had been made for the protection of Native rights, and especially on the extent of the control that Her Majesty's Government had acquired by those provisions over the relations between the Transvaal Government and the Natives within their territory. I should, however, be glad to hear from Her Majesty's Government if anything has been done in this direction. The Native Location Commission has never yet done anything at all; and why? Because of the war with Mapoch. And what was the real cause of that war? In spite of the expressed hatred of Mapoch, and of hundreds of thousands of other Natives to the Boers, Her Majesty's Government included their territories within the limits of the Transvaal; and the majority of the Royal Commissioners justified this inclusion, on the ground of its enabling them to obtain better provisions for the protection of the Bechuanas and other Tribes on the South-West border. The result had been ruin to the Bechuanas, and a war between Mapoch and the Transvaal Government, which still continues, and is attended by those terrible circumstances which invariably attend wars of this nature. There are other less important considerations. There is the financial question. I do not know what view the Chancellor of the Exchequer may take upon this point. Nothing could be more unnaturally liberal, I was going to say, than the treatment which the Transvaal Government received from the Treasury with regard to the amount of the debt. Allowances were made even for the salaries of ministers of religion during the time of their employment in the Boer camp, while the Boers were in arms against the authority of the Queen. And yet, notwithstanding that liberal treatment, I will venture to say that there is hardly any of the financial obligations undertaken by the Transvaal Government which has yet been performed. They have paid, it is true, the interest on part of their debt; but they undertook to pay £100,000 last August towards the capital of the debt, and not a penny has been paid. According to the terms of the Convention, it was agreed that a Joint Commission should be appointed to decide on the amount of compensation to be given for injuries or losses occasioned to private persons by the fault of either party during the war. That Commission was appointed; the Boer Government was to pay half the cost of the Commission; they have not paid their share. They were to pay the claims decided against them. Her Majesty's Government have advanced £120,000 to meet those claims; and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer professes to think that the money will ever be repaid, I must say he is of a more sanguine disposition than I am. Then there is another point—the question of Suzerainty. The Suzerainty of the Queen was described by the President of the Board of Trade as something practically undistinguishable from Sovereignty. How has that Suzerainty been interpreted by the Boers? According to their view, the Transvaal is not the Transvaal State at all, but is entitled by them in all their official communications with Her Majesty's Government as the "South African Republic." And it is a small, but a very significant fact, that at an official banquet at Pretoria, to which the Representative of this country was invited, the toast of the "South African Republic" was given first, while that of the health of the Suzerain, Her Britannic Majesty — as the Transvaal Government call her—was only fourth on the list. The Suzerainty of the Queen in the Transvaal amounts to the responsibility for the misdeeds of a State to which Her Majesty's Government have given independence, though it is, in their opinion, unable to control its own subjects, but which is, nevertheless, too strong to be dealt with by Great Britain. I have gone over these points because I was anxious to show the House that the questions brought before it by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham by no means exhaust the whole matter of the working of this Transvaal Convention, which I think may be described as a complete and absolute failure. We are fairly entitled to ask, then, what is to be done in the circumstances in which we are placed? That is the question which the hon. and learned Member for Chatham has propounded to the House. It seems to me to be a question, primarily, at any rate, rather for Her Majesty's Government than for the House to reply to. I am not prepared to recommend a policy to Her Majesty's Government in a condition of things which it seems to me they have brought upon themselves. I am not prepared to support a Motion which, to my mind, can mean nothing but a war which nobody wants, though that interpretation is repudiated by its Mover. I should like to know—and on that point there is great force in the remark of the right hon. Gentleman—if this Motion does not mean that this country is to go to war, what it does mean? What are the "energetic measures" which the hon. and learned Member for Chatham would recommend? It cannot be mere inquiry. We have had enough of that; the facts are established beyond dispute. It cannot mean further remonstrances. Our remonstrances are received with evasive answers, if not with contempt; and even the remonstrances of so energetic a Minister as the present Colonial Secretary will have no better effect. Therefore, I am unable to support the Motion. What I feel is this, that in our present position we have a choice between the alternative of a South African War—which, in the present state of feeling in South Africa, would be the most serious war ever undertaken by Great Britain in that country—and the disgraceful desertion of our Native allies. That seems to me to be a position in which we ought not to be placed, and assuredly somebody must be responsible for it. Who are responsible, unless it be the right hon. Gentlemen who, nearly for the last three years, have sat on that Bench, who are the Government of this country, who concluded this Convention, and who now have failed to carry it into effect? What I am anxious to do is to bring before the House and the country what appears to me to be the real question at issue. Has the policy of Her Majesty's Government in South Africa, especially in the Transvaal for the past two years, been a success or a failure? That is the point on which, I think, this debate should turn—that is the question which I am anxious to submit, and which the concluding portion of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman gives me hope that I may be able to submit to the deliberate judgment of Parliament and of the country.

Lord COLIN CAMPBELL said, that as he listened to the powerful speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) he could not help thinking that, but for the obligation of Party discipline, the cheers with which that speech was greeted by the hon. Members opposite would have been re-echoed from the Ministerial Benches. The Prime Minister, in referring to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford, had alluded to him as a man of peace, yet who had taught them, in unequivocal terms, the doctrine of war. Surely, if there was anybody in the House who might deserve the title and designation of a man of peace it was the right hon. Gentleman himself. But had he not taught the doctrine of war—and some of them, perhaps, might think a rather novel doctrine of war—in Egypt? He ventured to say the war in Egypt, when contrasted with any war which they had waged in South Africa, or were likely to wage in South Africa, would suffer by the contrast. With respect to our general policy, the Prime Minister said that the difficulties in South Africa were "constantly recurring," and he alluded to the great difficulties there as almost an "insoluble problem." He charged the right hon. Gentleman with thinking the settlement "an easy task." The question arose, why were these difficulties always recurring? The question had relation to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who spoke first. It was mainly because of the weakness, the vacillation, the irresolution of British Governments. It was the want of a consistent policy; it was the want of continuity in their policy; and the right hon. Member for Bradford's offence was really this—that he called upon the Government to put an end to this deplorable vacillation, even at the cost of war, and not to allow their action to fall short of the Convention; or else frankly to avow that by making that Convention they had made a very great mistake. The speech of the Prime Minister seemed to him, from first to last, to be an argument against the Convention itself. He spoke in favour of a forced and strained interpretation of that Convention. Nobody had laid it down — nobody had said—that the British Government in South Africa should be at the beck and call of every Native who chose to ask for assistance; but they had to deal with many flagrant instances of the violation of the Convention, and the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister throughout his speech minimized the gravity of these violations. He thought the House was placed in a difficulty by the Amendment of the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Cartwright), and which it was now proposed to withdraw. If it became the substantive Motion, he did not see why the hon. and learned Member for Chatham and those who supported him should not go into the Lobby in favour of it, because the Amendment and the Resolution were really identical. They were so, because the duty of succouring the Bechuanas, the duty of binding the Boers to observe the Convention, and the duty of proving ourselves in earnest, whatever might be our policy in South Africa, were duties and obligations of paramount importance, and might be fitly described in the language chosen by the hon. Member for Oxfordshire as "absolutely unavoidable obligations." He had not previously had the opportunity of expressing the conviction formed after a visit to South Africa, and after some careful study of the South African Question, that the Convention which they concluded with the Transvaal Boers placed this country in a position essentially false, precarious, and uncertain. It embodied, in fact, a wholly indeterminate policy; it embodied neither the policy consistently and ably advocated by the Secretary to the Treasury, nor did it embody the opposite policy as consistently and as ably advocated by the great bulk of the White Colonists in South Africa, exclusive of the Dutch—the policy of intervention. It was essentially a halting-place; it was not, and it could not be, a resting-place. By that Convention the country was placed in a position in regard to which it depended not upon our own action, not upon our own wishes and our own will, whether we should advance or recede from it, but it depended absolutely and entirely upon the action of the Boers themselves; it enabled them to force our hand at any moment, and compel us either to undertake a war, which we were not willing or not able to undertake, or to beat a most ignominious retreat. He believed no one could expect peace from the Convention who did not entertain most extravagant opinions regarding the character and good faith of the Boers. He believed no one could expect peace from the Convention who remembered their former cruelties, their policy, and their aims. He did think it was time that we shook ourselves free from great delusions with respect to them; from the delusion that they had been grossly maligned, that they were the most harmless, because they happened to be the most Bible-reading nation of the world, and that if they were only left to themselves they would show to what extent they had been maligned. Their policy, their tendency, their actions in every way might be forecast and predicted as certainly and as accurately as it was possible to forecast and predict any human affairs. There were two parties in the Transvaal; one friendly to the British Government, earnestly desirous of keeping faith with us, and observing their obligations under the Convention; the other implacable, moved by an inveterate hatred of the British Government, embittered by our former dealings with them, and resolved, at all hazards, and by every means, whether fair or foul, to break the Convention, and free themselves from their obligations. It was really absolutely immaterial which party was in power. The relation of the Frontier Boers to the Central Government at Pretoria might be compared to the relation of certain Russian Generals to the Russian Government at Petersburg. It was sometimes impossible to control these Frontier gentlemen, and at other times it was highly inconvenient. Nobody could read the despatches without seeing that Mr. Bok, the State Secretary, had the smallest possible regard not only for the Convention, but for Her Majesty's Government. These despatches seemed to him to be couched in a tone of insolence and of thinly-disguised hostility which made their perusal humiliating in the extreme. The facts of the case were extremely simple, although their gravity had been minimized by the Prime Minister. They might be told almost in a single sentence—the Frontiers of the Transvaal had been wantonly, unscrupulously, impudently extended. Not the smallest regard, not the slightest deference, had been paid to the Queen's Representative. Mr. Bok had absolutely nothing to say with a view to palliate the atrocious aspect which these hostilities with the Natives bore throughout. He had nothing, or next to nothing, to say with respect to the gross breach of faith involved in the Treaty with Montsioa. He contented himself with the remark that if there was anything wrong it was a mere "defect of form;" and he concluded with the ironical question, "Has Her Majesty's Government any other suggestion to make with a view to bring peace to these disturbed districts?" It would be almost impossible to point to any communication ever made to a Representative of the British Government which was more insolent, more barefaced, and more unscrupulously insincere; and this was the conduct, and this was the writing, which met with a somewhat mild and honeyed remonstrance which they found in the 38th despatch of this series! If they were to content themselves with such remonstrances, it would be much better, it would be far more honourable in every way, if they were to make up their minds to tear up this Convention, and withdraw our Resident in the Transvaal, who was now a sort of diplomatic "Aunt Sally," placed there for the private delectation and recreation of Mr. Bok. The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies had drawn attention to the character of what he somewhat ironically and cynically termed "our Native allies," and in doing that he had followed the example of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley); but although it might be very convenient to disparage our Native allies in this manner, it did seem to him that the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) was perfectly correct when he pointed out that this had really nothing whatever to do with the question. There might be little to choose between Natives and Natives in South Africa, although he must say that, when they read these despatches, it was impossible not to have a feeling stronger than pity for these unfortunate people; but the point the House had to consider was the conduct of the Boers, who, in order to extend their frontiers, had employed one set of the Natives as a catspaw with which to carry out their object at the expense of another set of Natives. There was one exception to his agreement with the speech of the right hon. Member for Bradford — namely, when he laid it down that they had no right to consider when a question arose between allies as to a *casus belli*. He believed it was the fact that it was lawful for allies to consider whether a *casus belli* had or had not arisen. But surely on that point they might be satisfied by the despatches of Sir Hercules Robinson. Again, the Under Secretary of State had said that the English troops were not sent into the Transvaal in order to protect the Native Tribes. Well, that might or might not be true. It was a point that had relation, and relation only, to the policy of the late Government. But this at least was certain—that if British troops were not sent into the Transvaal in order to protect the Natives, they were only withdrawn from the Transvaal on the condition that the Natives should not be oppressed. Again, it might be true that the destruction of the Zulu Power was the source and origin of all these troubles; but if that were so, truly one might make the remark that the Zulu War, at the time that Convention was completed, was a matter almost of ancient history, and its effect and bearing upon our policy in South Africa, its effect upon our Treaty with the Boers, was as plain and intelligible as it was at this moment. The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies had said that it would be "almost criminal to give way to our natural feelings of humanity in this question." He must say that was a most remarkable sentiment. It condemned a very large amount of the British policy in South Africa, and, indeed, in every part of the world. But if it were true that it would be criminal, this seemed to follow from it—that the Convention itself was criminal, and they had been very insincere about carrying out their "criminal" intentions. These Papers contained abundant evidence of the most horrible atrocities. He thought these atrocities had taken nobody by surprise, except those who had insisted upon investing those people with a wholly imaginary nobility of character. Everybody who knew the Boers, everybody who had taken the slightest pains to investigate their character, knew that, with respect to the Natives, they had absolutely no feeling of humanity, and for this very plain and simple reason—that they denied to the Natives all the attributes of humanity. In their own language, the Natives were known by a word he did not know how to translate—"skepsals." It did not correspond to the "missing link;" it was not half-brute and half-man; he must leave it to the House to translate the word. It was quite certain that the Boers thought it the greatest folly and weakness to pay to these "creatures" the regard due to humanity. Consequently, the Boers flogged, shot, and destroyed the Natives whenever it suited their purpose to do so. The Convention which they had concluded with the Transvaal Boers was founded on the desire—and, it must be confessed, the very noble desire—to free this country from the charge of blood-guiltiness; but he ventured to question whether it was possible for this country to wash its hands of that charge, when it fulfilled in a feeble or incomplete manner the great duty of affording that degree of protection which was commensurate with their position as a great nation and a civilized Power. He thought it was far better that they should abdicate—that they should withdraw from a position which could not be honourably maintained except by firm, consistent, and vigorous action, than that they should remain, and, by a display of weakness, give occasion to Boers and Natives alike to disbelieve in their sincerity. Let it be one thing or another. If they were going to protect the Natives, let them cease from this pottering, drivelling action. Let them require reparation to those who had been injured. Let them demand the prompt and condign punishment of the offenders. He knew well that this might cost the country a war—and a very great and terrible war—greater, certainly, and more terrible than the war from which they had just issued; but, for his own part, he must say that it would be less selfish, and do infinitely more for the cause of progress and civilization.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, the Motion of which the Prime Minister had given Notice had, to a great extent, changed the colour of the debate; but the House was now in the difficult position of having four separate Motions on the same subject to decide upon. He had, however, no doubt that, so far as his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gorst) was concerned, the matter would be much simplified. He was glad that the Government appeared to understand that the Motion was not in any way a Vote of Censure upon them, nor that it implied any want of confidence. He quite agreed with the Prime Minister that the question ought not to be made one of Party; but he might remind the House that the Prime Minister was himself the first to make South Africa a Party question in his Mid Lothian speeches. The Motion of his hon. and learned Friend was intended to be a Vote of Censure upon the Transvaal Government, and that was the essential difference between the Motion and the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach). The only object of the Motion was to bring under the notice of the House the imminent jeopardy of the Tribes which were long our allies. He understood that the Motion was not to receive the support of the Front Opposition Bench. He was, of course, very sorry; but he must say that such a loss was not absolutely fatal to the Motion. The Motion affirmed the complicity of the Boers in atrocities against the Natives, and the necessity of taking steps to protect the latter. It was not necessary to detain the House with reference to the first point, nor could he understand the extreme caution of the Prime Minister in dealing with it, for the Earl of Kimberley had stated plainly that he had not a word to say in defence of the Boer Government; and after such an expression from such an authority the House might accept the charge of complicity as fully proved. It did not appear to him that the want of ability to restrain was sufficient defence; and if the Boers were guilty, as the Earl of Kimberley said they were, what an extremely awkward position the Suzerain Power was placed in. If this country remained the Suzerain Power over the Transvaal, and if it did nothing to put a stop to the atrocities, he affirmed that it would become as morally guilty for the atrocities as the Boer Government itself. The Government could not retain the name of power without incurring its responsibilities. No one denied that they had the power, but naturally they were not anxious to send out a large Military Expedition. The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Prime Minister had asked what they could do. There was one thing which he thought they could do—that was, without loss of time to renounce and repudiate for the future all title and all claim to the Suzerainty of the Transvaal. They could so act that the people of this country should not be implicated in the extermination of those Tribes; and by withdrawing all power over the Transvaal, the English Government would stigmatize the Boer Government as being outside the pale of civilization owing to their persistent extermination of human life, and a Government with which Great Britain, therefore, refused to associate with either as Suzerain or as Ally. He would probably be told by some of the Members on that side of the House that such a course would be extremely agreeable to the Boers, and would do nothing for the Natives. It might be agreeable to the Boers for the moment; but the time would probably arrive when the Boers would bitterly regret the loss of the protecting power of Great Britain. The annexation of the Transvaal was welcome to the Boers because they were in danger at that time of being overwhelmed by the Natives; and if that were to happen again, England would be called upon to protect them as Suzerain from the danger which their own cruelties and misrule had brought about. Again, if the Native Tribes knew that all communication between the British Government and the Transvaal was broken off, and that they would no longer be responsible for Transvaal affairs, then the Natives would combine and carry on the war; and he thought that in such a contest the sheer weight of numbers would carry them through. Thus it was that the Suzerainty over the Transvaal not only directly and indirectly implicated them with Boer misrule, but was actually a source of danger to the Natives in whose interests it had been mainly and originally undertaken. But the Government might do more; they might act on the suggestion of Sir Hercules Robinson, without waiting for the concurrence of the Orange Free State and the Cape Colony, and at once raise a small force of mounted police to keep order on the Frontier where those disturbances were occurring. He could not see the difficulties which were raised by the Prime Minister on that point; and he believed that if such a force were to treat the Boer marauders as the Texas Rangers treated the pirates and half-breeds who infested and plundered the prairie settlers, and do this for the protection of the Natives in alliance with the Natives, they would very soon put an end to those ruffianly Boer aggressions. He wished to point out that they certainly owed something to these Natives. They might carry out the suggestion of the hon. Member for the North Riding of Yorkshire (Mr. Dawnay) — allow English Military officers to go out to instruct the Natives in the art of war; and he believed, with his hon. Friend, that there were many officers who would glory in performing such a duty, if only to pay off the debt incurred at Lang's Nek and Majuba Hill, the more particularly when they knew they were fighting against oppression. There were numberless ways in which the Government might bring pressure to bear upon the Boers to compel them to see the advisability of amending their pernicious policy. The Resolution of his hon. and learned Friend, to which the Government had said they could not altogether agree, asked them to take energetic steps, and it had been said that energetic steps meant war; but he thought it would be an energetic step to accept the Resolution. He did not see why they should assume that the Dutch population in the Cape Colonies sympathized with the atrocities; and if there were such a sympathy it would not justify them in neglecting their duty. It was known that an Envoy from the Transvaal was coming to this country to negotiate upon certain points affecting the Convention. Let the first thing to meet his eye when he landed here be a Vote of Censure passed by Parliament on the Transvaal Government, expressive of the indignation of both Parties, who alike condemned the cruelty and wickedness of the Boers. Look what the Government had done for these people. They could have followed them up and scattered them to the four winds of Heaven when they had 14,000 troops on the spot; yet they had forborne to do so, and in consequence had incurred the obloquy of Europe. Never before did an English Minister make such sacrifices for an alien race, and yet what a return had been made. The Natives were being robbed, murdered, and exterminated. Englishmen could not reside in the Tranvaal, and the Convention which was negotiated when their Armies were on the spot, was violated contumaciously and contumeliously the moment their Armies had withdrawn. It was not possible, therefore, that the Government should refuse to accept the spirit of the Resolution, which, to his mind, simply expressed the indignation of Parliament at the conduct of those whom they had saved from imminent destruction. Their responsibilities in South Africa were very heavy; and he thought he might imitate an expression of the Prime Minister, that there was not a spot on which you could put your finger in South Africa and say there England had done good. As the Prime Minister had admitted, the South African Colony had been a constant source of discredit and shame; and at this moment, if they refused to stir a finger to save the Natives, their cup of misdeeds would indeed be filled to overflowing. The Under Secretary of State had stated that they must not yield to the ill-regulated impulses of humanity. Well, that was a remark which sounded peculiarly—he would even say badly—coming from one who bore the name of Ashley; and he could not help thinking that when the hon. Gentleman said this he was making a most audacious attack on his Chief, who had been remarkable for his constant and prompt compliance with the ill-regulated impulses of humanity. It was those ill-regulated impulses of humanity that had made him the friend of Italian, Grecian, and Neapolitan freedom, which induced him to extend the electoral franchise at home, and made him justify it by saying that the class who received it were our own flesh and blood; that had made the Prime Minister the deadly foe of the unspeakable Turk; and, finally, it was those same impulses which led to conclude this disastrous Convention with the Transvaal. And surely the right hon. Gentleman was not now, at the bidding of an Under Secretary of State, going to turn his back on those ill-regulated impulses of humanity, on which so large a measure of his power was secured. It was the ill-regulated impulses of humanity which as much as any other cause had directed and driven the British race to every quarter of the globe; and he could not imagine any more certain indication of decay than if they were to suppress those impulses which had had so large a share in the extension of their Empire all over the world. He regretted that Her Majesty's Government did not see their way to accepting the Resolution of his hon. and learned Friend; and he was bound to say he should have liked a stronger Resolution in place of it than the one Government had proposed. They must recollect one thing, however—that everything said in that House would be telegraphed to Pretoria; and, if the Resolution of his hon. and learned Friend was rejected, and if a Resolution not strong enough for the occasion was accepted by the House, the construction the Boers would put upon it would be that they were free to work their wicked will to the utmost against the Natives. If the House were to accept the Resolution, they might for a time check the ruin of the Natives; but if they accepted a Resolution not sufficiently strong enough to express their sense of the deeds of the Boers, they might positively precipitate cruelties and atrocities worse even than those that had taken place. But he admitted that the Resolution of the Prime Minister was better than the Amendment of the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), and the Government were in a better position to judge how far they could go with prudence. It certainly did promise to the House that the Chiefs referred to should not be destroyed, and on that account he preferred it to an Amendment which simply proposed to revive a barren past and to re-open controversies on which the House had decided. Therefore, he hoped his hon. and learned Friend would obtain the permission of the House to withdraw the Motion he had brought forward, so that the Resolution of the Prime Minister might become the Main Question, and that they might be able to give a decided Vote.

MR. RATHBONE asked permission to say a few words, as he had the honour to move the Resolution by which the House approved, by a large majority, of the action of the Government in withdrawing from the Transvaal. They must all admit that it was impossible to read Mr. Rutherford's Report, or Mr. Hudson's letter of the 6th of January, or Sir Hercules Robinson's despatch of the 22nd of January, without a feeling of horror at the series of cruel, cowardly, and cold-blooded murders which were described. He was, however, much impressed, after perusal of these despatches, with the danger of this House interfering with the discretion of the Executive Government, and of their wise Representatives on the spot. The real question was, Were they going to make themselves responsible for everything that went on between White and Native Races in South Africa? If so, had they recognized the fact that this meant the control of another great Empire — an Empire likely to prove as expensive in the blood and treasure of Englishmen as their Indian Empire? They would find it impossible in Africa, as it had been found in India, to limit the extension of their rule. They would be dealing with a poor country, without the rich material resources which made India self-supporting. They would be met, too, with this enormous difficulty — that they would have in Africa a race akin to ours, as pugnacious, almost as energetic, more numerous on the spot than ours, and intensely jealous of our rule. In fact, they had got the most vigorous savage races in the world, and one of the most tenacious and vigorous European races mixed up in a climate in which they could both exist, multiply, and flourish; and they, though fewer in number than either of these races, were going to undertake, at the expense of the blood and treasure of the unfortunate English nation, to keep the peace between these races over this vast region. It was impossible for them, consistently with their present responsibilities and duties to their vast Empire, to undertake the police duty over these vast, thinly-populated districts, inhabited by such races as he had described. It was the blood-tax more than the money-tax, which an African Empire would inevitably involve, that made every prudent statesman—that made the country at the last General Election—shrink from the extension of their Empire in Africa. He would only detain the House while he stated one other point. He read the history of the past to show that the Native African Races did not require them to attempt the impossible task of becoming their special providence all over the world. They might do much by influence and example; but until they were both omniscient and omnipotent, they could not benefit them by undertaking this responsibility. Cruel and arbitrary as the rule of the Boers had often been in the Transvaal, results showed that it was a distinct improvement on the anarchy and misery which preceded them. The stronger races in Africa had almost annihilated the Hottentots, and were at constant war with one another. The Transvaal, when the Boers came there, was almost depopulated. During their sway the population had increased enormously. While the Government might, perhaps, do something towards putting things right, he hoped they would follow the course which their Representatives in South Africa clearly indicated, of leading the Natives, as soon as possible, to rely upon themselves, and make their own arrangements with the Boers, and enforce them without looking to us. The speech of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) was a most statesmanlike speech, and there was a great deal in what he said about the influence of public opinion in this country upon the Transvaal Government. He (Mr. Rathbone) thought they might impress upon the Transvaal Government that their conduct had excited the reprobation of the civilized world; that they were degrading themselves below the level of the savages they despised; and that should the time come, as it undoubtedly would, that they were again face to face with the retribution they deserved, if they proceeded in their present course, they would find the people of this country not only unwilling to give them the slightest protection or aid, but powerful to prevent any aid reaching them from any other quarter. This country must never forget that in their great Indian and Colonial Empire they had undertaken a task and the responsibilities of an Empire more extended, more scattered, and greater than any nation had ever succeeded in performing; and it would be simple madness to add to obligations already so heavy the responsibilities which the formation of a vast South African Empire would entail.

It being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *this day*.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked the Prime Minister what course he proposed to pursue as to the continuance of the debate?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked the Prime Minister when he would put on the Notice Paper the Amendment of which he gave Notice on behalf of the Government?

Mr. GLADSTONE said the Amendment should be placed on the Notice Paper immediately; and with regard to the continuance of the debate, the next two weeks must be considered as non-existent for that purpose. In these circumstances, the best course to adopt would be that the debate should be adjourned until the first Tuesday after the Recess, at 2 o'clock.

The House suspended its Sitting at Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

Mr. Rathbone

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at five minutes after Nine o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 19*th March*, 1883.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Second Reading Committee negatived—Considered—Third Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *, and *passed*.
Committee—Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) * (17).
Third Reading—National Gallery Loan * (18), and *passed*.

The Lord Blackburn—Chosen Speaker in the absence of the Lord Chancellor and the Lords Commissioners.

House adjourned during pleasure; and resumed by the Lord Chancellor.

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92. and 93. be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—POLICY OF HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT—TREATY OF 1879 BETWEEN GERMANY AND AUSTRIA.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

Lord STRATHEDEN and CAMPBELL, in calling attention to the foreign policy of Her Majesty's Government, and moving for a copy of the Treaty formed between Germany and Austria in 1879, said: My Lords, let me return my thanks to the noble and learned Earl upon the Woolsack, who has withdrawn the Notice which stood first upon the Paper. He merits thanks, whatever reasons have directed him, since his Notice might have led to the exclusion of other topics for the evening. It is superfluous to point out that this House ought sometimes to devote itself to foreign matters, as it has done in recent years with credit and advantage. It is clear that the best time for such a purpose is the interval between the first day of the Session and the Recess at Easter, when legislation makes no great demand upon your Lordships. The debate on the Address gives no sufficient opportunity—if it gives any opportunity—of this kind. We have two ceremonial performances—a speech from the Opposition, a speech from the Government, when the House at once collapses, unless an Amendment has been moved, which scarcely ever happens. Besides, foreign policy has no special title to discussion at that moment. It is only before the House in a congeries of topics. If this Notice is a wide one, its intention is merely to give noble Lords a choice of the ground they may resolve to tread, which, at all events, is limited to the transactions of three years, all more or less conducing to the present state of Egypt. As to the Motion I conclude with, everyone knows that the agreement between Germany and Austria has led to more discussion in the autumn which has passed than it did even soon after the celebrated journey of Prince Bismarck to Vienna, which is thought to have produced it.

With the permission of the House, I will go back a minute to the formation of the Government under its present Head in 1880. I shall be cautious not to wound the sensibilities of those who are indebted to him for their Offices or Peerages. It is only necessary to remark that his sudden elevation—no outcome of the General Election—when he had ceased for many years to be the Leader of a Party, begot a certain antecedent probability as to the tenour of the foreign policy he influenced. Men who recollect—perhaps with admiration, or, if you like it, with well-founded admiration — his pamphlet on Bulgaria, his movement at St. James's Hall, his speeches in January, 1877, when war upon the Eastern Question was impending, those which followed at Mid Lothian—above all, his laudatory criticism of a Russian work intended to direct opinion in this country, must acknowledge that his unexpected advent to political supremacy had a tendency, at least, to stamp two characteristics on the direction of the Foreign Office. They had a tendency to stamp upon it undue antagonism with the Porte and frequent deference to Russia, by which grave difficulties might be possibly created. I propose to touch on one or two transactions—there have not been many—which may show how far that antecedent probability has been supported by events, and verified in action. If it has, a practical conclusion may suggest itself, or I would not detain the House this evening.

The first conspicuous step was the recall of Sir Henry Layard from Constantinople. No doubt, as the noble Marquess who leads upon the other side once pointed out, every Government must exercise its judgment in the choice of representatives, as, indeed, it must do in the choice of legislative measures. But it does not follow that the judgment is correct. It does not follow that a bad and culpable decision may not arise in one sphere or the other. The motives for that recall may have been excellent and virtuous. They may have been free from all vindictive animosity. They may have had no reference to any previous differences between the First Minister and the Ambassador. The consequences, as may be quickly seen, have been deplorable. Sir Henry Layard had this particular advantage. Appointed by another Government, even if he went on serving under this one, in the eyes of the Sublime Porte, he was not thoroughly identified with the implacable hostility the First Minister had shown to that Power. Whoever came directly from the Government inevitably was so. Sir Henry Layard was the only person who had any chance of influence at Stamboul, under a Government at home, so thoroughly obnoxious to the leaders in that capital. The Government destroyed a force for gaining their own objects; they could not possibly replace by any force they might create — however good — because they had created it, because it was their offspring and their reflex. But the recall of Sir Henry Layard had another consequence, which has never yet been properly appreciated. It finally restored the arbitrary power of the Sultan. Sir Henry Layard was the convinced and zealous patron of the Ottoman Assemblies. Among his last despatches he insisted on them as the only safeguard against risks which were approaching. He would have had a prospect of restoring them after the fall the Russian war had brought upon them. He was acquainted with their mechanism; he had seen them at work, and he could dwell upon their action before the war and after it began down to the time the Russian Army reached San Stefano. No one else could hold such language as was open to him. It would have been absurd for Mr. Goschen—although he was instructed in some manner—to attempt it. This untoward step restored to confidence and vigour the despotic system of the Palace and its labyrinth of influences. The triumph of the Softas, the fall of Abdul Aziz, the kind of revolution which had happened and been so favourable to our objects, were quite obliterated, or wholly thrown away, when Sir Henry Layard was compelled to turn his back upon Constantinople. But if the Government determined to fence round the arbitrary power of the Sultan—an extraordinary scheme for those who had a Liberal majority behind them—but one course remained—namely, to draw towards themselves such an important and necessary factor in our policy. Having rendered him omnipotent when he might have been restrained and counteracted, they were forced either to propitiate or lose him altogether.

Can it be said, my Lords, if we refer even in a perfunctory manner to the transactions which ensued, that there was any such conciliating effort? The affair of Montenegro followed. No doubt, the Prince of Montenegro was entitled, by the Treaty of Berlin, to certain acquisitions. It is true that great embarrassments arose from the revolt of the Albanians against the transfer stipulated; that many substitutions were invented for what the Treaty had laid down, and that a long time elapsed before the princely claim was satisfied. But we were not bound to interfere in any manner beyond the other signatories of the Treaty. The aggrandizement of Montenegro was ceded by the Treaty, as many other things were ceded, to the position of the Czar, the force of arms, the vestiges of conquest. It was not a British object to enforce or to accelerate it. The gain, if any, was to Russia, who, in the Prince of Montenegro, sees a vassal and a pensioner. Russia may have been entitled to a leading and energetic part upon the subject. It was not so with Great Britain. She ought to have stood still, when another Power was quite sufficient for the difficulty. But the language which was held, the naval combination which was organized, the menace about Smyrna, without gaining to any great extent the Prince of Montenegro—if that had been desirable—were inevitably calculated to alienate the Sultan, whose power of reprisals the withdrawal of Sir Henry Layard had imprudently consolidated.

The case of Greece was stronger in the same direction. Greece had no title of any sort under the Treaty of Berlin. No acquisition was secured to her. The signatory Powers were engaged only to mediate between Greece and the Sublime Porte as to any change which they desired in their frontier. The Government were ready, by means of violence and arms, had other Powers concurred, to deprive the Sultan of his territory, to enforce an act of useless spoliation, to insist upon a frontier recommended by a Conference indeed, but which that Conference had no authority to settle, unless both parties acquiesced in it. To establish it, the Government were ready to make an unprovoked, unjust, unprofitable war upon the Sultan. It would have been unprovoked, as he had done nothing to their prejudice. It would have been unjust, as no ground for it existed. It would have been unprofitable, because the extension of Greek territory, although it may be an Hellenic, is not in any way a British object. It has been long ago established that to extend Greece does nothing for the permanent solution of the Eastern Question, and that a Grecian *régime* at Constantinople would be useless to defend it. Greece, like any State, is perfectly entitled to look for acquisition by the ordinary methods, such as marriage, which conferred Bohemia upon Austria; such as purchase, which drew Louisiana to the United States; such as conquest, which re-united Alsace and Lorraine with the German Empire. But that Great Britain should contemplate, by land or sea, a war for her aggrandizement, would be incredible unless the Papers thoroughly disclosed it. Who ventures to deny that our conduct on this question was adapted to lead the Sultan—whom we had rendered more despotic—into new and well-founded resentment?

The further system of the Government was to incite, to animate, and keep up an European Concert, as they termed it, to direct him. It is true that Spain and Sweden were excluded from it. The European Concert having passed away is not entitled to much notice. We need not trample on a spectre. Nothing of the kind had ever been invented since the Concert which so long struggled to assert itself at Carlsbad, Troppau, Laybach, and Verona. It may have arisen partly from the Congress of Berlin attempting to maintain itself in other shapes and modes after its business was accomplished. The principle on which a Congress sometimes endeavours to perpetuate itself admits of serious objection. The normal object of a Congress is to restore the balance of power, when war has interrupted it, or been occasioned by its absence. It is so laid down, at least, among the Treaties of Vienna. But if a Congress which unites the great preponderance of European States resolves to be immortal, the balance of power can have no existence. The Congress defeats itself when it survives the temporary object which created it. I merely throw this out for the reflection of diplomatists. Whether it is just or not, there can be no doubt that the so-termed European Concert was most obnoxious to the Empire against which it seemed to be arrayed, and that for a long time the Government exulted in the shibboleth.

At last the well-known mutinies of February, 1881, and September, 1881—for I have brought the House to Egypt—created so much apprehension that the Sultan—arbitrary Sovereign as we had made him at Constantinople—became far more essential to us than he had been. On those events it must have been seen at once that we might have to ask his military succour—as we did—and that the whole value of that succour would depend upon the mind and temper with which he looked upon Great Britain. What course was taken to improve them? By what measures was it sought to calm the deep and bitter animosity so long and so elaborately kindled? He was ordered not to send even Commissioners to examine a disturbance in his Empire. When his Commissioners proceeded, adverse gunboats counteracted them. The Dual Note—allowed to have been useless—was resolved on in defiance to his wishes. Against his protestation, French and British ships advanced to Egypt, to do no good to Europeans—their sole pretext—but to remain the idle and humiliated witnesses of massacre. Alexandria was bombarded, for no purpose which has ever been explained, against the judgment of the French implied in their departure, to the dismay and horror of Mahometan society. At last a Conference—against the usages of independent Powers—was forced upon his capital. The antagonism of the First Minister could not go much further. In the meanwhile there was a long course of retaliation from the Sultan. His measures were, in a high degree, precipitate and hostile. He thwarted us on every chance, on every occasion. He declined to send troops to Egypt on any acceptable basis. He gave a decoration to Arabi, which was utterly unwarrantable. He seemed to foster every movement with which Great Britain was contending. The fact is, he had a long course of outrage to excite, and no political Assemblies to control him. Her Majesty's Government had administered the one, and been a fatal bar to the revival of the other. Your Lordships will remember they had organized the arbitrary power which they were unwilling to assuage, and, as it seems, unable to contend with.

The outcome is complete incompatibility between Her Majesty's Government and the Suzerain of Egypt. It is avowed, however, that the state of Egypt is embarrassing. It is not necessary to establish it by details. The Government avow it in a manner pointed and emphatic. They avow it by withdrawing Lord Dufferin from Constantinople at the time when he is indispensable to the post which properly belongs to him. The accord of the Porte is seen to be desirable. A long despatch—unanswered still—is seeking to obtain it. It can hardly be obtained by a Chargé d'Affaires, who, according to the law of nations, is but accredited to the Minister, and has no access to the Sovereign. But still the pressure of embarrassment in Egypt is so urgent that—to bring Lord Dufferin to bear upon it—the British Embassy at Constantinople is virtually shut up when nearly all depends upon its action. The British Embassy at Constantinople is virtually shut up when the person who directs it, in times like these, has no sufficient *locus standi* to demand an audience of the Sultan. It cannot happen otherwise in the despotic system which the Government determined on reviving, when they withdrew the only person qualified to alter it. To keep up tranquillity in Egypt there are but two agencies—one, cordial relations with the Sultan; the other, a British garrison permanently settled in that country. Cordial relations with the Sultan have been, as I hold, wantonly destroyed—at all events entirely abandoned. The occupation therefore promises, or rather threatens, to be lasting. Some Members of the Cabinet have pointed to the hazards of a lasting occupation. They are so great that even now the subject has not been exhausted, and I should wish to add a few remarks upon it.

A lasting occupation is a strain on our Military Force in one direction, when Ireland is a strain upon it in another. We are not strong enough to bear it. Let noble Lords read what General Sir Lintorn Simmons has lately written on the Army. Suppose, however, that by changes brought about we become stronger, and the objection ceases altogether. A lasting occupation, in the Continental world would be regarded as possession. When Great Britain possesses Egypt, we know by the avowal of a former Czar that Russia will conceive a valid title to Constantinople to have come into existence. Some men have blindly reasoned or asserted that, so long as we are placed in Egypt, Constantinople is indifferent to us. They forget that a strong Power at Constantinople would make our garrison in Egypt utterly untenable. They forget, also, that we uphold Constantinople not only to secure a passage into India, but far more immediately in order to defend the Mediterranean from an adverse force, and Asia Minor from a conquering invasion. Who ever stood upon the Bosphorus without perceiving that the Mediterranean and Asia Minor may be equally commanded from it? The lasting occupation in Egypt, towards which we are inclining by the want of any hold upon its Suzerain, tends to draw Russia across the Pruth, and make two Powers, at least, less vigilant in watching her.

Such is the effect in Egypt of the line into which foreign policy, since 1880, has been driven. But it is worth while to estimate its tendency in different capitals which the Egyptian difficulty renders more important to us than they would have been. In Constantinople—but that was rendered clear before—Great Britain is not listened to. Do you require an authority? A week ago, upon the 12th of March, the Under Secretary, speaking for the Foreign Office, declared, in "another place," that remonstrances addressed to the Sublime Porte about the Treaty of Berlin are wholly ineffectual. The catastrophe we always have to fear has come about. The Sultan appeals to Russia for protection against the conduct of Great Britain. It is affirmed by M. de Giers in the despatches now before us. What comes from him will not be lightly disregarded. In St. Petersburg the kind of Russian banner we hold up in the person of the First Lord of the Treasury gives strength to the Party who are restless for the Treaty of San Stefano, and weakness to the Party who are contented with the Treaty of Berlin. In Vienna we all know—as we were officially informed—in what manner our Ministerial position is regarded. In Berlin its effect may be more positively dangerous, although I would not speak with confidence upon a workshop of events so difficult to penetrate. In that capital the Seven Years' War must still be recollected, although with us it is forgotten. Its great lesson was that Austria, France, and Russia may possibly unite against the House of Hohenzollern. In exact proportion as Great Britain proclaims her deference to Russia it is more hazardous for the German Empire to maintain a separation from her. The influence of Russia over Germany in its disjointed state was formerly supreme. If we look back to the accounts of travellers or residents in Germany some 50 years ago they will abound with illustrations of it. In the Crimean War it had not vanished, as recent memoirs have explained to us. Down to 1877 it still continued, or the war of that year would scarcely have been possible. In 1879 a new departure was inaugurated, and we are doing our utmost to reverse it. But if it is reversed, how long can you depend upon the safety of Constantinople?

It may be said that these are speculative arguments, and that the capitals referred to have not pronounced themselves in such a sense as I ascribe to them. The answer is that they have done so. So far back as last May, when all the world, in common with ourselves, was under the impression of the tragical occurrences in Ireland, there was a chorus from the European Press, anticipating the immediate downfall of Mr. Gladstone as a Minister. I have at home a chain of telegrams to prove it. On what ground was the result anticipated by nearly all the organs of the Continent, except the eager wish of many States for its arrival?

In the outset I adverted to a practical conclusion as not unlikely to suggest itself. It is idle to dilate on inconveniences without adverting to a remedy. I would not come down to the House or trespass on your Lordships for that purpose. The remedy is not, indeed, original. In requires neither meditation nor invention to produce it. It is the project of the First Minister himself. For six years he incessantly explained to us that if a Liberal majority was formed it ought not to be directed by himself, but by the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in this House, and by a noble Marquess well known in the other. Whoever shares in that opinion, whoever fearlessly proclaims it, is but the organ of his judgment, although he may not be the minion of his power.

To return, however, strictly to the domain of foreign policy, it is seldom you are able to give it an augmented dignity or an improved direction, or more security and steadiness upon terms so easy. It generally happens that to accomplish such results, some extraordinary armament, or some costly work, or some difficult alliance, or some adventurous decision is required of you. It now arises from the turn of history that to gain confidence in States where confidence is necessary, to inspire fear where fear is more desirable, to win gratitude where gratitude is useful, and to encourage fortitude where fortitude would aid you, you have only to take down from the façade or frontage of the Empire a human emblem which never should have been set up—if you believe the gifted personage who forms it.

To bring that end about we do not want the action of the Legislature, although it might be grave and patriotic. We do not want the interference of the Crown, although principle and precedent would justify it. We only need the resolution of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the noble Marquess with whom he used to be associated. When they resolve to imitate the high-minded example of their departed Colleagues in the two Houses of Parliament the problem will adjust itself. It will be but a temporary sacrifice. It will only be the movement of a lifeboat. They will come back into the air of place, after a rapid plunge into the sea of honour and integrity.

In my remarks upon the course which foreign policy has taken, I have not intended to deny that the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs may frequently have exercised a wholesome influence upon it. But for him Sir Henry Layard might have been replaced with far less judgment than he has been. But for him Smyrna might have actually been occupied. But for him we might have afterwards become in the defence of Greece the criminal invaders of the Sultan. But for him the European Concert might have longer been prepared, in the Old World and the New, to overthrow the boundary of Empires, and to disturb the equanimity of Sovereigns. But Secretaries of State were not invented to control and mitigate First Ministers. In looking back to these events we see two mighty elements of force erroneously distributed. The balance, which Europe deeply wants, is found to work with energy in Downing Street. The Concert, which Downing Street imperatively asks for, is suddenly exported to the Continent; although it does not flourish in that region. Let me add that I have never for a moment censured the decision of the Government to go to war in Egypt by themselves rather than leave it to the perilous dominion of Arabi. It was the remark, however, of a philosopher in the last century that, when heroic virtue is required, it is usually to overcome the difficulties which wisdom might have previously averted. There is a *primâ facie* case against a Government which sends a warlike expedition. No doubt, the laurels of a soldier are an impenetrable barrier to guard the nudity and weakness of a Minister. They ought at times to be withdrawn from what they shelter. They will not fade by such a process.

Before sitting down, I wish to add another word about the Motion. It is not a merely formal one. The greatest possible importance ought to be attached to the concurrence in 1879 of Germany and Austria. The Holy Alliance which had re-appeared was interrupted, possibly concluded by it. It is a landmark in the diplomatic history of the world. It is a germ from which the European balance may be gradually elicited. It revived a hope which had become almost extinct. It suddenly bestowed what reason and persuasion had laboured idly to appropriate. And if, since 1880, we have done our utmost to subvert it, by indirectly driving Germany towards Russia, it now requires acknowledgment and tribute from your Lordships and the country. It is not irregular that we should have a Treaty between two independent Powers, which Great Britain never signed, or that of Unkiar Skelessi would not be before us. At the same time, should counsels in Berlin, which I have no pretension to interpret, withhold it from the light until a later period, I am the last person, upon many grounds, to urge the Motion on your Lordships.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Copy of the Treaty formed between Germany and Austria in 1879."—(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell.*)

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, it is, perhaps, my fault; but I had very great difficulty in following the long and discursive speech of the noble Lord. I entirely agree with him that on the Address it is very often impossible to discuss very important questions of foreign policy except in a very general and desultory manner; and I think, as regards particular points of foreign policy, it is clear that they can be advantageously raised and thoroughly discussed in this House at a subsequent period. But, for that purpose, I think it is desirable that some indication should be given, not only to the Government, though that is important, but also to the House at large, as to what are the points of foreign policy it is intended to discuss. The noble Lord, so far as his Notice of Motion goes, was to have called attention to the foreign policy of Her Majesty's Government; but he might as well have quoted from the poet—

> "Let observation, with extensive view,
> Survey mankind from China to Peru."

I speak under correction; but the only indication of what the noble Lord intended to discuss was the Notice of the Motion he has just made. The noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) may know something more than I do of this matter, and this Treaty may exist; but we have no official knowledge of it in the Foreign Office. The text of that Treaty has never been officially communicated to the Government during the three years I have been there; and I have very great doubt as to whether it was communicated to the noble Marquess before me. But the use made of it by the noble Lord raises an interesting question. Anything that affects the relation between two such great military countries as Germany and Austria is highly important for every country in Europe to consider; but, so far as we are concerned, our interest is not one of a direct character. It is of the highest importance that these countries should be on friendly terms with one another, for the purpose of maintaining peace; but, so far as this Treaty goes, the noble Lord has hardly said one single word about it. He began by referring to the appointment of Mr. Goschen in the place of Sir Henry Layard. I remember, three years ago, hearing the noble Marquess say that these things must, except under exceptional circumstances, rest upon the discretion of the Secretary of State. If there is any truth in that observation, it surely does apply still more strongly, three years afterwards, against a complaint of a change which I think I justified, not upon personal, but upon political grounds. The pith of the speech of the noble Lord seemed to be that our policy had been entirely based on enmity to Turkey. I am content to deny that statement; but, seeing the noble Lord so favourably disposed towards Turkey, I think it will be, on the whole, more prudent that he should not force me, in my own defence, to make out the different grounds of any complaint I might possibly have against the Ottoman Government. The views of the noble Lord with regard to Egypt are also very cursory. On the whole, he appears to approve our having interfered with that country; and he seems to think that it was a mistake that we did not induce Turkey to interfere. I think, however, your Lordships are all aware that Turkey was not willing to interfere. I do feel that it is rather difficult, after the speech of the noble Lord, to make a defence of the whole foreign policy of the Government, not knowing to what portion of it his observations apply.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: My Lords, I do not wish to carry any further the discussion raised by the noble Lord (Lord Stratheden and Campbell), because I infer from the criticisms of the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville) that the noble Lord's Motion includes matter for several debates rather than for one debate, and that it would not lead to any unity of sequence to pursue the very interesting subjects which the noble Lord touched upon. The precise questions the noble Lord has touched upon are of so extensive and varied a character that I hardly think we could usefully pursue them now. At all events, as far as I am concerned, I only rise for the purpose of saying—having had no opportunity of consulting documents, and speaking only from memory, though I have a very strong impression on the subject—that no official communication whatever has taken place of the terms of the Treaty to which the noble Lord referred, and I do not think that the details were ever brought to my knowledge. Of course, I have a general knowledge, in common with the noble Lord, as to what the Treaty meant to enact; but no text or copy was ever given me, and I do not think I was ever informed, by any authority on which I could rely, of the precise conditions it contained. A great deal of speculation undoubtedly took place as to what they were, and I dare say most of us know pretty well what the provisions are; but, as far as my recollection goes, I must entirely confirm the statement of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that it would be impossible for him to assent to the Motion, even if he desired to do so, because the materials are wanting.

Lord STRATHEDEN and CAMPBELL, in reply, said: I need not detain the House, as no answer has been given to the views I brought before it, and as the noble Earl has not received the Treaty which I moved for. Whatever the noble Earl the Secretary of State may have expected, I have not endeavoured to "survey mankind from China to Peru;" but, on the contrary, have gone over a series of transactions all belonging to one region, all linked with one another, and all contributing to form the great Egyptian difficulty which engages us at present.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

SALE OF LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 17.)

(*The Lord Privy Seal.*)

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clause 1 (Short title) *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Perpetuation and amendment of Act of 1878, 41 and 42 Vict. c. 72.).

The Earl of MILLTOWN, in rising to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice, said, that he trusted in doing so he should have the support of those noble Lords who were opposed to the Bill, as well as of those who were in favour of it, because no one could desire to see the law turned into a farce and a mockery, as it was under the present interpretation of the law. There was a clause in the Licensing Act of 1874 which said that a person to be a *bonâ fide* traveller must be at least three miles distant from the place where he lodged on the previous night; and, unfortunately, the wording of that clause had led to a great deal of confusion. It had led the magistrates to decide that anybody who was three miles away from the place where he slept the previous night was a *bonâ fide* traveller, and a great deal of abuse had followed. The Committee of the House of Lords, which inquired into the subject of Intemperance, had recommended on that question that it should be made clear by law that, even if a person was proved to be three miles away from his residence, it still rested with the magistrate to decide whether he was a *bonâ fide* traveller who should be supplied with liquor. He thought that had been provided for in the first part of his Amendment. A man could hardly say that, because he happened to be three miles away from the place where he slept the previous night, therefore he was a *bonâ fide* traveller, in the sense that he was entitled to be served with liquor in prohibited hours. Yet advantage was taken of that interpretation of the law; and the result was a great amount of demoralization, because people went out just far enough to be beyond the three miles' limit, and were able to indulge in any amount of drinking. It was more than ever necessary to consider the question now, because the Bill before the House proposed to extend the Sunday closing to the five large towns in Ireland which had hitherto been exempted. Upon the policy of the Bill he would say nothing; but he did not wish that to remain in it which would make the Act a mockery and a delusion. If the law was left as at present, they would simply render the suburban districts of the large towns in Ireland uninhabitable, because the roughs would turn out just the distance required to enable them to get drink, and would then indulge to their heart's content. He thought it was quite obvious that it was necessary to reconsider the question, and he therefore trusted the Government would accept his Amendment.

Amendment *moved*, at end of Clause, to add—

"(2.) No person shall be deemed a bonâ fide traveller for the purposes of this Act or of the Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Act, 1878, unless, in addition to being such bonâ fide traveller, the place where he lodged during the previous night is at least twenty miles distant from the place where he demands to be supplied with liquor, such distance to be calculated by the nearest public thoroughfare."—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRIVY SEAL) said, if he attempted to go into the question of amending the law as to the *bonâ fide* traveller, he should have a good deal of comment to make on the Amendment of the noble Earl, and especially as to the distance he named—20 miles—as the substitute for the three miles now requisite before a man was entitled to be considered a *bonâ fide* traveller. He must say it was an extraordinary suggestion, which went far beyond any he had ever heard made for the reform of this law. In fact, he must decline on the present occasion, and in connection with that Bill, to go into the question of amending the law as to the *bonâ fide* traveller in Ireland. First of all, because the Irish Government were convinced—and they had taken great pains, by all the means which were at their disposal, to arrive at the truth in the matter—that such a statement of the abuse of the law, as it at present stood, as they had just heard from the noble Earl was very much exaggerated. They were convinced that, though there was, no doubt, a good deal of abuse of the privilege and of evasion of the law, yet it was not anything like so serious as the noble Earl seemed to think, and that it by no means reduced the working of the Act to what the noble Earl had called a "mockery." He (Lord Carlingford) believed the existing Act had worked very well on the whole, although it might be said that magistrates were very apt to deal in a lax way with infringements of it. He would allow that the magistrates had not always understood the meaning and intention of the *bonâ fide* traveller clause. If they had, they would be able to do a great deal more than they were in the habit of doing to prevent the abuse of it. The truth was that the magistrate simply had to consider whether the person before him had been in the common sense of the word a "traveller" or not, whether he had actually been travelling, which was a very different thing from a man being simply three miles away from his home. The limitation of the three miles simply came in as a condition of the Act. The Act said that at all events, whatever the other circumstances of the case might be, no man was to be considered a traveller who had not gone a distance of at least three miles from the place where he slept; but the mere fact of going three miles did not constitute him a traveller within the meaning of the Act. His main reason for not being able to accept the Amendment was that he was sure the Bill would run very great peril in "another place" if it was accepted, and it would be extremely unwise to attempt to weight the Bill with legislation of that kind. He should also like to point out that the question of the *bonâ fide* traveller was not necessarily connected with Sunday closing at all, as the privileges of the *bonâ fide* traveller were universal. The traveller was entitled to his liquor at any hour of the day or night; but, as he had said, his main reason for refusing the Amendment was that it would endanger the progress of the measure. If the noble Earl wished to see the Bill become law—

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN: No; I do not.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRIVY SEAL): Well, that explained the motive of the noble Earl. He (Lord Carlingford) thought the Amendment came from a friend and not from an enemy; but anyone who wished to see the Bill become law would not insist on the Amendment.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE said, he was sorry the question had not been thoroughly investigated. It was perfectly true that there might have been some exaggeration in regard to the extent to which the Act had been abused up to the present time; but they must remember that the question now raised had acquired a new importance from the fact that the operation of the Act was now to be very considerably extended. Five large towns in Ireland, which had hitherto been exempt, were to be included, and there could be no doubt that the law would have the effect of inducing the Sunday migration of a great portion of the population of those towns to districts in which they would be able to obtain a liberal supply of drink. There would be a temperate zone round each town, and further out what might be called an intemperate zone.

LORD FITZGERALD said, he trusted the noble Earl (the Earl of Milltown) would not press his Amendment, as he (Lord Fitzgerald) thought it was unnecessary. It would be better, in his opinion, to strike out the exemption clauses altogether, which, no doubt, had led to a considerable amount of abuse, than to adopt the Amendment. The *bonâ fide* traveller question had always been one of great difficulty; and down to the Act of 1874 he could not find that there was any definition of what a *bonâ fide* traveller was. The present law in Ireland was that in order to get drink as a *bonâ fide* traveller a man must prove two things—first of all, that he was a *bonâ fide* traveller; and, secondly, that he was at least three miles from the place where he last lodged. But it did not at all follow that because he was three miles from his lodging he was a *bonâ fide* traveller. There had been a very lax administration of the law; but the fault was not in the law, but in its administration; and if the magistrates would only see that the two things were properly proved, there would be little abuse. He would rather support his noble Friend in an Amendment to strike out the exemption altogether, than support him in an Amendment that said that unless a man went 20 miles, even if he was a *bonâ fide* traveller, he was to get no refreshment. He would appeal to the noble Earl to show his usual discretion by not pressing the Amendment, which, besides being unworkable, would, if carried, endanger the progress of the Bill in "another place."

THE EARL OF BELMORE said, he would join in the appeal to the noble Earl (the Earl of Milltown) not to press his Amendment. He quite agreed with the noble Lord who last spoke (Lord Fitzgerald), that the failure to carry out the law was due to the magistrates, and not to the law itself. He would suggest that the Lord Lieutenant should order a Circular to be sent round to the magistrates calling attention to the correct interpretation of the law, and that persons should be obliged to prove that they were *bonâ fide* travellers, and not that it should be taken for granted, if they had come three miles from home to the public-house. That might be a useful thing to do, as affording a way out of the difficulty; but he thought the passage of the Bill ought not to be imperilled by pressing such an Amendment as the one before the Committee.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, he would admit that the law was administered in a very lax manner, and he merely wished to make the matter plain by inserting the provision of 20 miles in his Amendment. He would, however, reduce the number of miles from 20 to seven. He hoped the Government would agree to the proposal, and that they would allow a definition of *bonâ fide* traveller to be put in the Bill.

Amendment *negatived.*

Clause *agreed to.*

House *resumed.*

Bill *reported;* to be read 3ª *To-morrow.*

CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 1) BILL.

Read 2ª (according to order); Committee *negatived:* Then Standing Order No. XXXV. *considered* (according to order), and *dispensed with;* Bill read 3ª, and *passed.*

House adjourned at Six o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 19*th March*, 1883.

MINUTES.] — New Member Sworn — The hon. Alan de Tatton Egerton, *for* the Mid Division of the County of Chester.

Private Bills (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Barry Dock and Railways*; Goole, Epworth, and Owston Railway*; Leeds, Church Fenton, and Hull Junction Railway*.

Public Bills—*Ordered—First Reading*—Maintenance of Children* [124]; Registration of Voters (Ireland) (No. 3)* [125].

First Reading—Payment of Wages in Public-houses Prohibition* [126].

Second Reading—Bankruptcy [4]; Ballot Act Continuance and Amendment [5], *debate adjourned;* Consolidated Fund (No. 2)*; Parliamentary Elections (Closing of Public Houses) [102], *debate adjourned;* Bankruptcy (No. 2)* [82].

Withdrawn—Borough Franchise (Ireland)* [22].

PARLIAMENT — STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Leave given to the Chairmen's Panel to make a Report:—

Mr. LYON PLAYFAIR *reported* from the Chairmen's Panel, That they had appointed Mr. Goschen to act as the Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures; and Mr. Sclater-Booth to act as the Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, which may, by the Order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committees, until such Chairmen be changed by the Chairmen's Panel under Standing Order XXIV.

Report to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS.

—∽:o:∽—

GENERAL REGISTER HOUSE, EDINBURGH—THE RECENT FRAUDS.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Lord Advocate, Whether, with reference to the frauds in the General Register House, Edinburgh, which have recently formed the subject of criminal trials (on the 9th November last and on the 8th instant), measures have been taken to thoroughly investigate the extent of the frauds, the length of time during which they were practised, and the circumstances of their committal; whether means have been adopted to secure in future the proper supervision in the Register House, the want of which was remarked upon by the jury in their verdict, on the 9th November last, as having given facility for the commission of the crime; and, whether his attention has been called to a letter in the "Scotsman" newspaper, of the 9th instant, by Mr. James Drummond, Writer to the Signet, in which there is an allegation of great carelessness in the custody of volumes of the General Register of Sasines, in the practice of the officials of the Register House; and, if so, what action he proposes to take in the matter?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): Sir, measures have been taken to thoroughly investigate the matters referred to in the first part of this Question. It appeared that the assistant cashier had conspired with certain of the engrossing clerks to credit them with more work than they had actually executed, and consequently with more money than they truly earned, and that the principal cashier had omitted to perform the duty of checking the returns of the work of the clerks. I am informed that the comment of the jury on 9th November regarding want of proper supervision could have reference only to the insufficiency of the checking of these returns, as no other matter affecting the conduct of the Register Office was in evidence before them. Means have been adopted to secure efficient checking of the returns for the future, and to prevent the recurrence of such frauds. My attention has been called to the letter referred to in the last part of the Question, and I have made inquiry in regard to the matters stated in it. I am informed that while there was no direct evidence on the subject, there was reason to suspect that a clerk had taken home a volume for the purpose of engrossing deeds in it at home, and that measures have been adopted to prevent the like occurring again. The inquiry has not resulted in evidence being obtained of carelessness of the custody of the volume.

Mr. FRASER MACKINTOSH asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the recent trial in Edinburgh of John Rose, clerk in the Sasine Office, Register House, Edinburgh, for embezzlement, when he was acquitted of the charge; whether the evidence disclosed great looseness in the administration of the business of the office, the Counsel for the accused being reported as having stated "that the whole place, so far as one could see, was rotten from top to bottom;" whether the Keeper of the Register is the senior leading and active partner of a firm of Writers to the Signet, commonly reported to be in large practice; and, whether, having reference to the twentieth section of the Act 31 and 32 Vic. c. 64 (passed in 1868), whereby, on a vacancy occurring in the office of Keeper of the Register of Sasines, it is provided—

> "That the person to be then appointed to the said office, and his successors, shall hold no other office, and shall not, directly or indirectly, by himself or any partner, transact any business for profit, other than the business devolving upon him as Keeper of the said Register,"

the time has not come for steps being taken to bring about the immediate operation of the above provision?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): Sir, I am well acquainted with the circumstances of the trial, which resulted in a verdict of "Not proven," by a majority. In regard to it, as well as with respect to the trial of 9th November, the report I have received is that the evidence showed the defect of proper checking of the clerk's returns of work; but that, except in this particular, it did not establish looseness in the administration of the business of the office. It is the fact that the Keeper of the Register is the senior partner of a firm of Writers to the Signet in large practice. With regard to the last part of the Question, I have to say that there is no power to accelerate the operation of the statutory provision there quoted, but that even if such power existed there would not, in my judgment, be any ground for exercising it. Several most important improvements in the system of registration and searching the registers have been introduced by the present Keeper, which are in course of being perfected under his supervision.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—CONVICTION OF REPORTERS.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware that, at the trials (for attending the Ballamuna meeting) of four reporters at Loughreaen, 29th December, under the Crimes Act, before Mr. Saul, R.M. and Mr. Crotty, R.M. the Chairman, Mr. Saul, R.M. in passing sentence, stated—

> "That the three reporters who were served with the Lord Lieutenant's proclamation forbidding the meeting would be sent to gaol for one calendar month, and that the other reporter, who was not so served, would be imprisoned for three weeks;"

and, if he will inquire into the case of Edward J. Barrett, one of the three reporters sentenced to a month's imprisonment with hard labour, inasmuch as it is alleged that there was no evidence that he was so served with the proclamation?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, Mr. Paul, R.M., informs me that he has no recollection of using the words mentioned in this Question; but, whether he did so or not, the fact of the proclamation having been served upon certain persons only aggravated their offence without making others less guilty. The Act of Parliament only requires that the proclamation shall be served on the promoters of the meeting. I see no special reason for inquiry into the case of Edward Barrett. I may add that I have received the following information on this subject, which, after careful inquiry, I know to be absolutely correct. The so-called reporters, two of whom have been in prison on suspicion of being accessories to murder, were convicted of riotous conduct as well as of defying the Lord Lieutenant's proclamation. They were also proved, in the opinion of the Court, to have been the ringleaders of a large mob of very disorderly persons, inciting them to riot. The police were hooted for over two hours by this mob, which surrounded them. The most disloyal and violent language was used, and altogether the scene was a very tumultuous one.

EGYPT—CASE OF COLONEL DULIER.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (for Mr. O'DONNELL) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether a certain M. Dulier, having some time ago married into a British family, took out to Egypt a letter from Earl Granville strongly recommending his employment by the Egyptian Government; whether, in consequence, M. Doulier was appointed to the Egyptian Land Revenue Survey Department, whence he was promoted to, and is now in, the Egyptian Military Service; whether it is true that, on the strength of Lord Granville's introduction, M. Dulier, on being recently ordered by the Egyptian Government to proceed on active service to the Soudan, refused to do so unless a sum of £25,000 were first deposited in the Bank of England on his account; whether M. Doulier was eventually induced to commute this ready money claim by being offered a monthly pay equal to something like three times his former salary; and, what steps will be taken to secure that recommendations from influential members of Her Majesty's Government shall not be abused for the purpose of extorting money from the Egyptian Government?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, Colonel Dulier's name appears in the list of Europeans in the service of the Egyptian Government sent home by Sir Edward Malet in May, 1882, as one of the Inspectors on the Land Survey. His first appointment is stated to have been in 1873. In February last the Belgian Minister forwarded to Lord Granville a statement of Colonel Dulier's services, together with testimonials from Colonel Drury-Lowe and the Duke of Connaught, and requested that his claims to a full colonelcy in the Egyptian Army might be considered. These Papers were forwarded to Lord Dufferin by Lord Granville's direction, with a letter stating that Lord Granville did not wish to interfere with Sir Evelyn Wood's full discretion in dealing with these matters, but that it might possibly be useful to Sir Evelyn to see the Papers, and that Lord Granville left it to Lord Dufferin to show them to him or not as he thought best. The Secretary of State is not aware whether any action was taken by Lord Dufferin in the matter; nor has he any reason whatever to believe the statements about Colonel Dulier made in the Question.

Mr. A. ELLIOT asked whether the gentleman referred to had not rendered important services to the British Army in Egypt, and whether those services had received any recognition or reward from Her Majesty's Government?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, I have to state that the services of Colonel Dulier were very distinguished, and received the highest approval and appreciation of the British Commander-in-Chief. I have in my hands a short letter from Lord Wolseley, which, if the House wishes, I will read, especially as the Notice Paper of this House has been made the means of making an unfounded charge against that gentleman. [*Cries of* "Read!"] The letter is as follows:—

"November 25, 1882.

"Colonel Dulier, of the Egyptian Army, rendered very valuable service to the Army under my command during the recent campaign. General Lowe, who commanded the Cavalry, spoke to me in the highest terms of Colonel Dulier and the great use he was to the Cavalry that entered Cairo on the 14th, the last expedition. I can myself strongly recommend him for employment under the Khedive.

(Signed) "WOLSELEY."

I believe that Colonel Dulier has not received any recognition from Her Majesty's Government.

EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION)—SIR AUCKLAND COLVIN.

Captain AYLMER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that Sir A. Colvin, the Financial Adviser to the Khedive, appointed by Her Majesty's Government, has been offered and accepted the appointment of Governor or Chairman of a French Banking Company, hitherto known as the Credit Foncier Egyptian; and, whether, if this is the case, Her Majesty's Government are prepared to sanction this proceeding?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government have been informed that the Crédit Foncier of Egypt, an Egyptian Company, has proposed to put itself into more direct relations with the Government by the nomination of a Governor and two Commissioners to be appointed by the Government, and the name of Sir Auckland Colvin has been suggested for the former post. Her Majesty's Government have expressed no opinion as to the advisability of this appointment. Nothing will, however, be settled until the general assembly of the Company meets in April, and until then the Presidency will continue to be held by its present occupant.

CRIMINAL LAW—THE CONVICTS HARDWICK AND WALFORD.

Mr. BURT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If it is true that Henry Hardwick and Richard Walford, who were sentenced, one to twenty and the other to fifteen years' penal servitude, about four years ago, have been released from Chatham Prison on a ticket of leave; whether other prisoners now in Chatham Prison have confessed that they committed the crime for which Hardwick and Walford were sentenced, and have asserted that the latter had nothing whatever to do with it; whether there is corroborative evidence to show that these men were innocent of the crime for which they have suffered four years' imprisonment; and, whether he would relieve Hardwick and Walford of the stigma which still attaches to them by recommending Her Majesty to grant them a free pardon?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that this was one of the most difficult and embarrassing cases he had ever had to deal with. He had examined it over and over again, and had got every authority he could to examine it; but it had been impossible to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion at all about it. The Solicitor General had also been unable to determine that the men were innocent, and he (Sir William Harcourt) therefore considered that the matter was invested with so much doubt that the best course would be to give the men licences; and if, after their being at large, further proof should be obtained of their innocence, of course the question of a free pardon would be given consideration. After the most careful attention having been given to the matter, they did not feel justified in at present giving a free pardon.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS asked whether the Judge who tried the men was consulted?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he was, and he, also, was unable to come to the conclusion that the men were innocent.

CATHEDRAL CHURCHES—THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

MR. CARINGTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, considering that the Royal Commission on Cathedral Churches has been occasionally sitting since the month of July 1879, and that no Reports on Cathedrals have yet been delivered to honourable Members, he will urge the Commissioners to complete their labours before legislation on this subject is proceeded with?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that three Reports had, up to the present, been completed. The question of further legislation must depend on the character of the legislation; but he thought it was a matter for serious consideration whether further legislation should go on until the Commission had completed their labours.

PRISONS (ENGLAND)—FLOGGING ESCAPED PRISONERS.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that a certain Forster, who escaped from the Cambridge County Prison, and who was recaptured, was severely flogged, and that another convict confined in the same prison who attempted to escape was also flogged; whether he is aware that in Germany it is held that a prisoner commits no crime in escaping or endeavouring to escape from prison, and consequently is liable to no punishment for doing so, it being considered that if he succeeds the fault is with those whose business it is to prevent him; and, whether he will see that in future, if prisoners are punished for escaping or endeavouring to escape from prison, the punishment will not be a degrading one?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that the question of the infliction of punishments in prison was not in the hands of the Prison Commissioners, or of the gaolers, but in those of the Visiting Committee. Whatever view might be taken in Germany of a prisoner escaping from prison, the view taken in England, in which he concurred, was that a prisoner escaping from prison committed a breach of the law; and certainly he should not interfere to prevent prisoners being punished for such a breach of the law. His hon. Friend did not suggest what the form of punishment should be which was not degrading.

ARMY—CASE OF SERGEANT BEATTY.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Sergeant John Beatty served in Her Majesty's 27th Regiment of Foot for twenty-one years and eight months, and never found a defaulter in any way for want of proper conduct as a soldier, or any mental faculties; whether the then Secretary of State for War stopped 1*s.* 6*d.* per day of said John Beatty's pension, to pay for caring him as a lunatic; and, if so stopped, by whose report, either a medical officer or otherwise, as the said John Beatty declares he never was interviewed by any person in authority to do so?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, I rather regret that the hon. Member has not revised the phraseology of his Question, the grammar of which, it seems to me, is somewhat peculiar. In reference to the facts, I have to state that the transaction referred to occurred 30 years ago. The Secretary of State for War at that time had satisfactory proof that Sergeant Beatty was unable to take care of himself, and for about five years and a-half 1*s.* 6*d.* of his pension was paid to his sister, with whom he lived, and by whom he was taken care of. The case cannot be re-opened, after so long a lapse of time.

PARLIAMENT—RIGHT OF PETITION—INLAND REVENUE OFFICERS.

Mr. GORST asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, prior to the anticipated discussion of the matter in the House of Commons, officers of the Inland Revenue will be allowed, without censure or punishment being inflicted on them by the Board of Inland Revenue, or by Her Majesty's Government, to petition Parliament for an inquiry into their case, and to apply to Members of this House representing constituencies to which they respectively belong, to support the motion for such inquiry; and, whether the sanction of the Treasury was given, in his absence, to the General Order of the 3rd of January; and, if so, whether the Treasury Minute, or other document giving such sanction, can be laid upon the Table?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, the hon. and learned Member asked the same Question on Thursday last, only he now asked that the answer might have relation to a limited time, until he raised the Question in debate. With every respect to the hon. and learned Gentleman, he must decline to go beyond the answer he gave on Thursday, and for the reasons he then gave in that answer. In reply to the second part of the Question, he had to say that the General Order was approved before he acted as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he could not lay any Papers on the subject on the Table.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked if approbation was given to the Order, in the absence of the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the only two Members of the Board who were Privy Councillors?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, that his right hon. Friend was in London at the time.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: But was he consulted in the matter?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): That is a matter which it is not usual to state.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked when the Papers would be presented to the House?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, he laid them on the Table a week ago. He would inquire how soon they could be printed; but that was a matter he had no control over.

POST OFFICE—MAILS BETWEEN ENGLAND AND MADAGASCAR.

Mr. A. M'ARTHUR asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether, in view of possible interruption of the mails between England and Madagascar, the Government intend to take any steps, by stationing a despatch boat at Tamatave, or otherwise, to keep open communications between the British Consul in Madagascar and this Country?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, Her Majesty's sloop *Dryad* left Zanzibar on February 25 for Tamatave. There is no English mail service to Madagascar, letters being sent by French packets, which usually run about once a month. There seems no reason to suppose that this mail communication will be interrupted.

ARMY—INFANTRY COLONELS.

Colonel CLIVE asked the Secretary of State for War, How many of those officers at the head of the list of Infantry Colonels, who have been passed over in the promotions to the rank of Major General, dated 1st and 25th October 1882, gazetted on 17th November 1882, have been permanently passed over as not having been stated by the Commander in Chief to be competent to command in the field?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The Royal Warrant requires, in the case of a colonel promoted to be a Major General, a certificate from the Commander-in-Chief of his competence to command in the field. As regards a colonel who may be passed over, no certificate in an opposite sense is required. The selection of a colonel for promotion is a question of relative fitness for the higher rank, and does not necessarily imply that a colonel passed over may not be chosen for promotion at a subsequent time.

POST OFFICE—CONTRACTS—THE IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

MR. GIBSON asked the Postmaster General, Whether it was contemplated by the Postal Department that steamers equal to those at present on the Irish Mail Service should be employed under proposed contract by the London and North Western Railway Company; what was the gain of time contemplated, and was it on the land or sea voyage; what was the net difference between the estimates of the Irish and English Companies for the carriage of the Irish Mails between Holyhead and Kingstown; was any opportunity afforded to the London and North Western Railway Company to change or modify their proposal before it was accepted; and, was any similar opportunity afforded to the Irish Company before its estimate was rejected?

MR. FAWCETT: Sir, in answer to the first part of the Question of the right hon. and learned Member, with regard to the character of the steamers, I think it will be the best plan to quote the exact words of the draft contract, which stipulates for a sufficient number of good, substantial, and efficient steam vessels of adequate power and speed, and supplied with appropriate, first-rate steam engines, and in all respects fitted to the performance of the service. These are the conditions which were referred to in the printed advertisement which invited tenders, and they would have been applicable whichever of the two tenders had been accepted. The vessels which the contractors propose to employ will be carefully inspected, with the view of insuring that they comply in every respect with the conditions first mentioned. The acceleration offered in the accepted tender of the London and North-Western Railway Company was half-an-hour each way both on the day and night mails, to be effected on the land and sea services combined. No acceleration was offered in the tender of the City of Dublin Company. An acceleration of even half-an-hour is very important, in view of the urgent representations which have been made from all parts of Ireland in favour of an earlier arrival and later departure of the London mail. The Dublin Company offered to carry the mails between Holyhead and Kingstown for £60,000 a-year; the London and North-Western Railway Company sent in two tenders—the one for the combined land and sea service, for £76,000; and the other for the sea service alone, for £66,000. Assuming that the present payment for the land service—namely, £20,000 a-year—was not increased, the net gain by adopting the proposed arrangement will be £4,000 a-year. Before the Government decided which tender to accept, the London and North-Western Railway Company were asked whether they were prepared to tender for the land service alone, with or without the proposed acceleration of half-an-hour. Their reply was that they would afford an accelerated land service for an extra payment of £13,000, or would continue to perform the present service for an increased payment of £7,500. If this offer for the accelerated land service had been accepted, the service would have cost £17,000 a-year more than under the arrangement now contemplated.

MR. GIBSON: May I ask if any facilities such as those afforded to the London and North-Western Railway were given to the Dublin Company to modify its proposals?

MR. FAWCETT: The question addressed to the London and North-Western Railway arose out of the fact of their having sent in two tenders. They were not asked to tender again for the sea service; the simple question was, what they would charge for the land service?

MR. GIBSON asked if any opportunity was given to the Dublin Steam Packet Company of saying what they would do, or would not do, before their estimate was summarily rejected?

Mr. FAWCETT: Not that I am aware of. Several communications, however, passed between the Company and the Post Office; in fact, one of the Directors of the Company is an intimate private friend of my own, and had an interview with me at the Post Office. Of course, it was perfectly open to them to have offered a lower tender. In the communications they were led to understand that, although money would not be the sole consideration, still that it would have an important bearing on the disposal of the contract; but, so far as I am aware, no letter passed.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON asked what guarantee the Government had from the London and North-Western Company, in the shape of penalty or otherwise, that the service would be performed in a shorter time?

Mr. FAWCETT: All that will be stated in the draft contract. I forget for the moment what the penalties are; but I have no doubt that, as in all cases, the penalties will be enforced.

Mr. DAWSON asked if it was not after the London and North-Western Company had been put in possession of the terms of the proposal of the Dublin Company that they made their second proposal, and whether that was not unfair information to give to any Company in competition with another?

Mr. FAWCETT: So far as I am aware—I was away part of the time—every possible care was taken to prevent either party from knowing what the terms of the other Company were; and I believe so much was this the case, that, up to the last moment, it was supposed that the contract would be given to the Dublin Company.

Mr. MACARTNEY asked if the acceleration proposed to be made by the London and North-Western Company would be partly by land and partly by sea, or whether it would be open to them to make it entirely by land, and not at all by sea?

Mr. FAWCETT: I stated that their tender was that they would guarantee an acceleration on the land and sea service combined. They do not pledge themselves as to what part the acceleration will be over.

Mr. LEWIS asked if the House and the country might take it that this question of the mail packet service was definitely concluded in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General?

Mr. FAWCETT: The decision does not rest with me. I did not conclude it at all. I am quite ready to accept responsibility for it as a Member of the Government; but all I did—and I think the Papers will show it—was to state the case as to the advantages and disadvantages to the Treasury frankly, and the decision must rest with the Treasury.

Mr. TOTTENHAM asked whether the arrangement had been concluded entirely from a Post Office and mail point of view, or whether the requirements of the travelling public had in any way been considered?

Mr. FAWCETT: I cannot state what are the considerations that influenced the Government. It was our duty at the Post Office—and that duty we endeavoured to do—to point out what we thought would be the advantages and disadvantages from a postal point of view.

Mr. LEWIS: I beg to give Notice, as the right hon. Gentleman evidently does not approve of the contract——

Mr. FAWCETT: No, no! I must correct that statement. There is nothing I should more regret than that it should be supposed for one moment that I wished to avoid one atom of responsibility. What I stated was that it was not my business to decide the matter; that rests with the Treasury.

Mr. LEWIS: I beg to give Notice that I shall ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, immediately after the Easter Holidays, Whether, having regard to the strongly expressed opinion of all portions of the Irish public, and Members of this House, the Government really intend to carry out a measure so obnoxious to almost all sections of the Irish people?

Mr. GIBSON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the Treasury Minute of October 19th, 1855, recognises that the question of the communication between England and Ireland is not a mere Departmental one, to be settled on purely economical grounds, but is a matter of national importance, vitally concerning the interests of the whole United Kingdom; whether that Minute will be included in the Papers to be presented to Parliament; why the option of having the Irish mails carried to the North Wall was introduced into proposed contract; and, whether vessels of the size of the present mail packets could be run into the private harbour of the London and North Western Railway Company at Holyhead?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Sir, in reply to the first part of the Question of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, I have to say that the Minute to which he refers does recognize the importance, on social and political grounds, of the communication between London and Dublin, *viâ* Holyhead, being as rapid as possible; and, perhaps, I may be allowed to read two short extracts from the Minute—

> "Her Majesty's Government by no means desire to leave out of view the enormous social and political advantages, which may be expected to be derived from such an improved communication between the two countries, as the progress of art and science entitle the public to look for. Nor can my Lords leave out of view the great advantage and convenience which such an improved service would confer upon Irish Members of Parliament, whose public duties necessarily lead to their frequent passage between the two countries, and who are entitled to expect every fair facility for that purpose."

And, again—

> "In taking a review of the whole question as it now stands, it appears to my Lords that, in order to justify such a public expenditure as would insure the quickest possible communication twice a day, it is imperative that some great advantage in postal arrangements over those at present in use shall be gained, and that security shall be taken in any contract to be made for such a revision from time to time of the service as shall keep it up to the highest point of perfection which any improvements hereafter to be made may render practicable; and that the public interests shall not be made merely subservient to the advantages of shareholders in the Companies referred to under the plea that they are promoting the convenience of passengers."

In reply to the second part of the Question, I have to say that the Minute has been already laid before Parliament *in extenso*, but that I will consider whether it might not be reprinted with some other Papers of dates antecedent to the recent negotiations with the two Companies. The Postmaster General will answer the latter part of the Question.

MR. FAWCETT: With regard, Sir, to the part of the Question which my right hon. Friend wishes me to answer, I may state that, although the Government hold a strong opinion as to the advantages of the Kingstown route, and have no intention of allowing the mails to be sent by North Wall, yet so many opinions were expressed by influential persons in Ireland in favour of the North Wall route that it was thought desirable to secure the possibility of using it if at some future time it should be found advantageous to do so. I believe that vessels of the draught of the present mail steamers cannot at all times of the tide run into the harbour referred to by the right hon. and learned Member.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked whether the same sentiments which actuated the Lords of the Treasury in the Minute which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had quoted still actuated the present Lords of the Treasury; and also whether they considered that the comfort and convenience of passengers and the travelling public were as likely to be provided for in vessels of 1,000 or 1,100 tons as in vessels of 1,400 or 1,500 tons?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Sir, that is a Question which should more properly be answered after the Treasury Minute is laid on the Table, and the whole circumstances can be explained to Parliament. That will be done as soon as the contracts reach the Treasury and they have time to prepare the Minute.

MR. DAWSON asked whether the Postmaster General was aware that a Memorial had been presented to the Prime Minister, signed by 75 Members, and another Memorial signed by many Members of the other House; and whether, with that general expression of Irish opinion, he would state who the party or parties were who asked for the North Wall route?

MR. FAWCETT: Sir, as the right hon. Gentleman is aware, I received a very influential Irish deputation in June last. I knew very little of the relative merits of the North Wall and Kingstown routes at that time; but if the right hon. Member will refer to my speech on that occasion he will see that I stated in reply that it was evident, after the expression of opinion from the deputation, that one of the chief points which I had to consider from a postal point of view was the relative advantages and disadvantages of the North Wall and Kingstown routes respectively.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—THE M'MAHON EVICTION CASE.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the following statement in the "Times" of 15th March—

> "At the weekly meeting of the Board of Guardians of Killarney Union held yesterday, a respectable looking farmer named M'Mahon applied to the Board for relief. He said he had recently been evicted, and that his daughter Ellen, aged 18 years, died immediately after they were evicted. In order to shelter her he took a door off its hinges, but the bailiffs pulled it away again, and they had nothing with which to cover the remains but a sheet. The Guardians unanimously expressed their opinion that the case was one of unprecedented inhumanity, and called the attention of Government to the matter;"

whether, in consequence of the representations of the Board of Guardians, any inquiry has been ordered; whether the death of Ellen M'Mahon was caused or accelerated by casting her out on the roadside in this wintry weather without shelter; whether an inquest was held in the case; and, what steps the Government propose to take to prevent similar cases in future?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I regret to say that the circumstances are in the main as described. The case is certainly one demanding further investigation, and an inquiry is in course of being made by the Local Government Board to see, among other matters, whether the relieving officer was in fault. I have also ordered a magisterial inquiry into the graver circumstances of the case, to ascertain whether they are such as to authorize the institution of any further proceedings.

Mr. SEXTON: Was an inquest held?

Mr. TREVELYAN: No, Sir.

DIPLOMATIC SERVICES — BRITISH RESIDENT AT THE VATICAN—MR. ERRINGTON.

Mr. MACARTNEY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been drawn to a statement contained in the "Standard" newspaper of the 10th March, purporting to be written from Rome on Friday night the 9th instant, to the following effect—

> "I learn from the Vatican that the English Government and the Holy See have found the difficulties of establishing a British Resident at the Vatican too serious to be overcome, and that, having regard to the present circumstances of the British Ministry, it is determined to abandon the scheme for the present, and to content themselves on either side with endeavours to remove obstacles, and keep up a continual interchange of communications. Meanwhile, Mr. Errington was received at the Vatican on the same day as the regular Diplomatic Representatives to congratulate the Pontiff on the anniversary of his Coronation and birthday;"

and, whether, if the circumstances are as alleged in the correspondent's letter, Mr. Errington is admitted with the other Diplomatic Representatives to the presence of the Roman Pontiff in the capacity of an agent of Her Majesty's Government, though not officially accredited as such?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government have not proposed, and have, therefore, not had occasion to abandon, a scheme for establishing a British Resident at the Vatican. I believe that Mr. Errington was received by the Pontiff on the occasion of his birthday, among other distinguished foreigners, many of whom were members of the Corps Diplomatique.

LAW AND POLICE—THE METROPOLITAN COURTS—THE CHIEF CLERKS.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether a memorial from the Metropolitan Police Magistrates in favour of an increase of the salaries of the chief clerks of the Metropolitan Police Courts has been received; and, whether the matter is still under his consideration?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, the matter had been considered by the late Government, and also by himself; and no sufficient grounds had been found for assenting to the proposal of granting an increase of salary to the officers referred to.

LIGHTHOUSES AND BEACONS—ILLUMINATING POWERS OF GAS, OIL, AND ELECTRICITY.

Mr. DAWSON asked the President of the Board of Trade, When the proposed experiments to test the relative powers of gas, oil, and electricity as illuminants for lighthouse purposes shall take place?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, it had been thought desirable to increase the scope of inquiry by the Committee. He could not say when the proposed experiments would take place; but he had every reason to believe that no time whatever would be lost in the matter.

SPAIN—THE CORTES—PRESENTING OF CORRESPONDENCE WITH ENGLAND.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Spanish Government have laid any Papers before the Cortes on questions under discussion between that Government and the Government of Her Majesty; whether Her Majesty's Government was consulted before such Papers were laid before the Cortes; and, whether translations of those Papers can be presented to Parliament?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Yes, Sir; Papers have been presented to the Spanish Cortes on questions which have been under discussion between Her Majesty's Government and that of Spain. Those relating to the commercial negotiations have already been presented to Parliament. Her Majesty's Government were not consulted before the Correspondence was laid before the Cortes. It would not be in accordance with the usual practice to present translations of foreign Parliamentary Papers; but there will be no objection to lay before Parliament the Correspondence relating to Gibraltar which has passed between the two Governments. I may point out that this Correspondence does not relate to the supposed demand of Spain, and consequent arbitration, raised in the Question put to me.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) ACT, 1878—INCREASE OF DRUNKENNESS.

MR. CALLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the charges delivered in the course of last week to the grand juries of county Clare at Ennis, on Tuesday, when, as reported in the Dublin "Freeman's Journal" of March 7th, Lord Justice Fitz-Gibbon told the grand jury that drunkenness in county Clare had increased from 960 to 1,511 cases (nearly 60 per cent); of county Tipperary, at Nenagh, on the same day, when, as reported in the Dublin "Irish Times" of March 7th, Mr. Baron Dowse said the cases of drunkenness in the North Riding of Tipperary had risen from 512 to 1,037 (over 100 per cent); of county Cavan, on Wednesday, when, as reported in the Dublin "Daily Express" of March 8th, Judge Harrison told the Cavan grand jury that the crime of drunkenness had trebled in their county; and on Friday, at Limerick, when, as reported in the London "Times" of March 10th, Mr. Justice O'Brien called the attention of the grand jury of the county to "the very large increase of drunkenness," and, as also reported in the London "Times" of March 10th, Lord Justice Fitz-Gibbon told the grand jury of the city that—

> "While the convictions for drunkenness show a decrease, there was a considerable increase of that offence in the rural portion of that district;"

and, whether it is a fact that these counties, in which it is stated by Her Majesty's Judges of Assize that drunkenness has enormously increased, are subject to the existing Sunday Closing Act; and that, whilst in the exempted portion of the city of Limerick the convictions for drunkenness show a decrease, there was a considerable increase of drunkenness in the rural, non-exempted, portion of the said city?

SIR WILFRID LAWSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether there has been a continuous decrease in the arrests for drunkenness all over Ireland since the year 1877, the year immediately preceding the passing of the Sunday Closing Act; whether the Irish Criminal and Judicial Returns show that the arrests for drunkenness in 1877 numbered 110,903; for 1881, 78,573, or a reduction of 32,330 cases; whether in the four counties of Clare, Limerick, Tipperary, and Cavan, the decrease, comparing these two years, amounts to close upon 50 per cent; and, if so, is not the increase referred to by the Judges in those four counties on the Returns of the previous half year, and not on the Returns for 1877?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have seen the newspaper reports referred to, and have no reason to doubt their accuracy, or the correctness of the statements made by the Judges, though I have not had opportunity to verify them. In regard to the Question of the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), the decrease has not been quite continuous. It was so in the years 1878, 1879, and 1880; but the numbers rose somewhat in 1881. The figures for last year are not yet available. The numbers of persons proceeded against for drunkenness in 1877 and 1881 are correctly quoted. The decrease in the latter year was 32,330. Comparing 1877 with 1881, in the case of the counties Clare, Limerick, Tipperary, and Cavan, the decrease in the latter year amounts to about 42 per cent. The increase referred to by the Judges in the four counties named was on the Return for the corresponding period of the previous year, and not on the Returns for 1877.

Mr. CALLAN said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman had not answered the latter part of the Question.

Mr. TREVELYAN: I did not omit to answer it. If the statements of the Judges are correct, then the inferences of the hon. Member are also correct.

MERCANTILE MARINE—INCREASE OF SCURVY—MR. GRAY'S REPORT.

Mr. DILLWYN asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he is prepared to take any action in respect of the increase of scurvy in the Mercantile Marine, as shown in the Report of Mr. Thomas Gray?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, the Board of Trade had issued a Circular, recommending an altered dietary scale for the Mercantile Marine. There would be a certain proportion of fresh meat and vegetables and potatoes. He had no authority to enforce such a scale; but in any proposal relating to merchant ships which might be introduced into Parliament, this was a matter that would receive attention. A Circular had been issued to the Superintendents of the Mercantile Marine, pointing out that lime and lemon juice alone was not sufficient for the prevention of scurvy.

DOCKYARD AND STEAM BRANCH—COMPULSORY RETIREMENT—GRATUITIES TO HIRED MEN.

Captain PRICE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he has considered the scale of gratuities given to hired men of the dockyards and steam branch on their compulsory retirement at the age of 60, and can hold out any hopes of their being increased, with the option of remaining on service until the age of 65?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The case of the men in question was brought under my notice when at Devonport some time ago. It is one of the questions contained in the Memorials from the Dockyards now being inquired into. That inquiry is not yet completed, and I can assure the hon. and gallant Member that this particular case will not fail to receive full consideration.

POST OFFICE (SAVINGS BANKS DEPARTMENT)—IRISH DEPOSITS.

Mr. DAWSON asked the Postmaster General, Whether he will apply the savings of the people of Ireland deposited in the Post Office to the promotion of works of a reproductive and profitable nature in that Country?

Mr. FAWCETT: In reply to the Question of the right hon. Member, I may state that the funds deposited in the Post Office Savings Banks are vested by Act of Parliament in the National Debt Commissioners. The only control I have over them is to receive the deposits, repay them when demanded, and secure the interest being properly credited to the depositors' accounts.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE GLENDALE CROFTERS.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to the sentence passed upon the three Glendale Crofters who had voluntarily surrendered themselves to answer the charge made against them; and, if, in consideration of the fact of their voluntary surrender, and that their offence arose more from ignorance than deliberate resistance to the Law, he will remit the whole, or at least a portion, of the sentence of two months' imprisonment to which they have been sentenced?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: As a matter of law, Sir, I have frequently stated in this House that, this being contempt of the orders of a Court, I have no authority to remit the sentence. I do not wish, however, to rest upon that alone. If I had such authority, I should not think it right to interfere with a sentence pronounced by a Court to vindicate the law from what was pronounced to be a deliberate and organized combination to resist the law. I may, perhaps, be allowed to state what I have been frequently asked, and could not answer. The Royal Commission to inquire into the condition of the crofters and cottars has now been sanctioned by Her Majesty; and, with the permission of the House, I will mention the names of the Commissioners. The Chairman will be Lord Napier and Ettrick; and the other Members will be Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, of Gairloch; Mr. Donald Cameron, of Lochiel; Mr. C. F. Mackintosh, M.P.; Sheriff Nicolson, of Kirkcudbright, and Professor MacKinnon. Mr. Malcolm McNeill, who recently visited Skye for the purpose of inquiring into the question, will be the Secretary. The terms of the Commission will be—

> "To inquire into the condition of the crofters and cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and all matters affecting the same or relating thereto, and to report thereon."

Mr. MACFARLANE: May I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman whether the county of Caithness will be included in the designation "Highlands and Islands?"

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have given some consideration to that matter, and I thought it better that the term should be as general as possible, leaving it as largely as possible to the discretion of the Commissioners as to what places they thought should be properly and fitly inquired into.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) ACT, 1878—INCREASE OF DRUNKENNESS.

Mr. CALLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that since 1877 intemperance has decreased in a much less degree in the portion of Ireland in which total Sunday closing is enforced under the Act of 1878, than in the cities exempted under said Act; whether it is a fact that the official statistics show that in the city of Galway, in which the public houses are totally closed on Sunday under said Act, drunkenness increased by about fifty per cent. from 1877 to 1881; whether it is a fact that in the Dublin Metropolitan district, which is exempted under said Act, drunkenness decreased by about forty-five per cent. from 1877 to 1881; whether there are any official statistics of intemperance in Ireland of a later date than 1881; whether it is true that the official statistics show that in 1881 drunkenness was somewhat greater, allowing for the diminution of population, in the portion of Ireland subjected to total Sunday closing than it had been in 1871; whether it is true that in the cities exempted under said Act drunkenness had decreased from 1871 to 1881 by about 36 per cent. allowing for increase of population; and, whether it is true that the Report of the Inland Revenue Board for the year ending 31st March 1882 gives the number of detections for illicit distillation as follows: England 5, Scotland 8, Ireland 881?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, it is a great labour to put upon the staff of the Irish Office to examine figures in Returns which are quite as much open to the hon. Member as to us; and the argumentative conclusions which the hon. Member intends the House to draw would be put in a very different light if the full case was stated, as I shall be able to show in case the Sunday Closing Bill passes the Lords, and I have the honour of introducing it to the House.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—INQUEST AT THE DUNDRUM CRIMINAL LUNATIC ASYLUM.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can now state the circumstances connected with the inquest held in the Criminal Lunatic Asylum at Dundrum; and, whether it is true, as alleged, that the coroner tried to force the jury to change their verdict by threatening to lock them up for the night?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I am informed that it is true that the coroner threatened to lock up the jury unless they agreed to a verdict, and that he afterwards said that being neighbours he would set them free. The coroner is not an officer of the Executive Government; but there is no objection to the depositions at the inquest and the finding of the jury being laid on the Table if the hon. Member wishes to move for them.

PUBLIC HEALTH (IRELAND)—OUTBREAK OF FEVER IN DUBLIN.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that nineteen cases of fever and five deaths occurred, as alleged, from the holding of a wake in Dublin; and, whether he will cause a full inquiry into the facts?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have already stated, Sir, in reply to a former Question, that the Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board, who investigated this case, reported that there was no evidence to show that any person contracted the fever at the wake, and that the spread of the disease was mainly caused by concealment. As at present advised, I do not see that there is any reason for fuller inquiry; but I have asked the Local Government Board for their opinion on that point.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION—WORKHOUSES—WOMEN TEACHERS.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the result of the further inquiry into the refusal of the Local Government Board to sanction the appointment of two women to teach useful industries to the children in Mountmellick Workhouse?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have just received a Report of the result of the further inquiries I ordered on this subject. One of the two women nominated has three children in the workhouse; and a rule of the Board is that no paid officer is to have children relieved as paupers in the same workhouse. The other woman is 74 years old, and appears, before she entered the Union, to have been employed on labouring work; but, as the Guardians say they have no one else to appoint, the Board has desired the Inspector to go and report on the matter on the spot.

THE IRISH LAND COURT—APPEALS FROM DONEGAL.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the inconvenience likely to be caused to many Donegal tenants by the arrangements made by the Chief Commissioners to hear the appeal cases from that county in the city of Derry; whether it is the fact that more than half of the Donegal cases to be heard are from the Fuin Valley district, and from above Stranorlar, a town about 30 miles from Derry; and, whether, if this is so, he will recommend that the Commissioners should sit in Lifford, the assize town of Donegal, to hear the cases from Stranorlar Union, at least?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, my attention has not previously been drawn to any complaint on this subject; but on receipt of the Notice of this Question I made inquiry, and find that the appeal cases to be heard at Londonderry are from the Unions of Innishowen, Milford, and Londonderry, with one case from the Union of Letterkenny. The district referred to does not appear to be in those Unions, but in the Unions of Strabane and Stranorlar—the cases from which districts are listed for hearing at Lifford.

MADAGASCAR—RUMOURED APPLICATION OF THE QUEEN FOR MEDIATION AND PROTECTION AGAINST FRENCH AGGRESSION.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is a fact that the Queen of Madagascar has applied to the Governments of Germany and Great Britain for their mediation to protect Madagascar from the aggression of the French Republic; and, whether Her Majesty's Government have addressed any remonstrance to the French Government, and will send a Naval Squadron to Madagascar to defend British interests and commerce?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, the application was for the good offices of Her Majesty's Government with that of France in the negotiations which, as the House is aware, have been suspended. We have no information that any request for mediation, as against aggression, has been made to the Government of Germany. The communications between the British and French Governments will be found in the Papers already distributed. Her Majesty's ship *Dryad*, as I have already informed the House, is at Madagascar; but there is no present intention of sending other ships to join her.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he should also like to know whether the Government had received from the French Government any information as to the Treaty under which she claimed her rights?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Foreign Office have, no doubt, long been aware of whatever Treaty rights can be said to exist as between France and Madagascar.

ARMY—(AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE BRIGHTON REVIEW—VOLUNTEER ARTILLERY.

Mr. MONTAGU SCOTT asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, If it is the case that the loan of harness has been refused for the guns of Metropolitan and other Volunteer Artillery attending the Easter Monday Review at Brighton; and, as this convenience has been granted on former occasions, whether he will reconsider the request?

Mr. BRAND: Sir, a corps of Volunteer Artillery applied for a loan of harness from the Government. Such a loan being contrary to the Regulations of the Volunteer Service, it was refused; but as the enforcement of the refusal would have put this corps at such a time to considerable inconvenience, the harness has been lent to the corps as a special case.

COMMERCIAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE—BOUNTIES ON SHIPPING.

Mr. CHARLES PALMER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he will state what has transpired with reference to the representations made to the Royal Commission for the French Commercial Treaty on the subject of ship brokerage in France; and, if he will lay before Parliament the correspondence on this question?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, at the sitting of the Joint International Commission on the 30th of June, 1881, Sir Charles Dilke called attention to irregularities in connection with ship brokerage in France, and said that at the proper time a complete statement would be made on the subject. (No. 37 Commercial, 1881, p. 288). On the 22nd of September M. Tirard replied that the matter was regulated by law, and that "the reform of this organization cannot enter into the province of the negotiations." (No. 9 Commercial, 1882, p. 57). No opportunity occurred to deal further with the question in the Joint Commission. The matter has since continued to receive attention, and if my hon. Friend will move for Papers they will be given.

ARMY—BREECH-LOADING GUNS.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, If, by the day the House meets after Easter, he will have ready a Return of the breech-loading guns to 31st March 1883, showing those actually on board ship, those ready in the gun wharfs available for the Navy, and those under the direct charge of the store and manufacturing departments, in different states of progress, distinguishing the guns completed with full allotments of projectiles and ammunition; also the proposed plan for turning out the breech-loading guns during the year 1883-4, with an approximate rough calculation of the cost of the several guns, ammunition, projectiles, and stores, up to 31st March 1883, and one for the intended operations in 1883-4; in the above, the calibres and weights of the several kinds of guns, and the numbers of each to be stated in the several divisions?

Mr. BRAND, in reply, said, that he would be quite willing to give the hon. and gallant General privately all the information that was obtainable at the War Office. But the preparation of the Return would cause enormous labour, and it was not considered desirable in the interests of the Public Service to give publication to the details mentioned in the Question. Moreover, there would be an opportunity of making a general statement of the condition of the manufacture of ordnance when Vote 12 of the Army Estimates was considered in Committee.

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAY—THE VENTILATORS ON THE THAMES EMBANKMENT.

Mr. W. H. SMITH (for Lord Algernon Percy) asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, If he can now inform the House what has been the result of the Resolution regarding the Metropolitan District Railway, which was to be brought before the Metropolitan Board of Works on Friday, the 16th inst.?

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: Sir, in reply to the Question of my noble Friend, I think I cannot do better than read to the House the resolution passed by the Metropolitan Board on Friday last, which is as follows:—

> "That it be referred to the Works and General Purposes Committee to prepare and bring up a Bill to be laid before Parliament (provided that body will permit Standing Orders to be suspended for the purpose), for the repeal of the clauses in the Metropolitan District Railway Act, 1881, which enables that Company to construct openings or shafts for the purpose of ventilating their railway."

I may add that I have consulted the right hon. Baronet the Member for the University of Oxford (Sir John Mowbray) on the subject, and he has informed me that the Board's Petition for a suspension of the Standing Orders cannot now be considered before Easter, but that it will be brought before the Standing Orders Committee as soon as possible after the House meets again.

NEW ZEALAND — RELEASE OF THE CHIEFS TE WHITI AND TOHU.

Mr. BROGDEN asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Government have received any confirmation of the report that the Maori Chiefs Te Whiti and Tohu, who were taken prisoners by a force of Volunteers, under the direction of the Native Minister in New Zealand, have been now set at liberty; whether any charge has ever been brought against them, or trial held; and, whether they are now to be allowed to return to their own homes?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: I have been informed, Sir, by the Agent General of New Zealand that the two Chiefs named were taken back to Paritaka on the 9th of this month and set at liberty there. Their arrest had taken place during the absence of Sir Arthur Gordon. They were never tried, as by the West Coast Peace Preservation Act it was provided that they should not be tried; but the Governor in Council was authorized either to detain them or to release them if he thought fit. Papers detailing the circumstances will be laid on the Table.

PROTECTION OF JUVENILE MORALS—LEGISLATION.

Mr. TOMLINSON (for Mr. Ecroyd) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If Her Majesty's Government have it in view to strengthen and make more effective the powers provided by Law for preventing the corruption of young persons and their introduction to an immoral course of life?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I think I have already stated that it is the intention of the Government to introduce in the House of Lords a Bill founded on the Report of the House of Lords last Session.

TREATIES OF 1857 AND 1878—RUSSIAN BOUNDARIES.

Sir ALEXANDER GORDON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he will lay upon the Table of the House, a map to show the exact boundary line between Russia and Roumania, as that line is drawn among the Islands in the Delta of the Danube lying between Purdine and Old Kilia, and between Old Kilia and the Black Sea; and, another map (should the above map not be convenient for the purpose), to show the southern boundary of Russia between the River Pruth and the Black Sea, as that boundary was (1) fixed by the Treaty of Paris in June 1857, (2) proposed by the Treaty of San Stephano in February 1878, and (3) fixed by the Treaty of Berlin in July 1878?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: There will be no objection, Sir, to lay before Parliament a map showing the boundary between Russia and Roumania, as desired by my hon. and gallant Friend. A map showing the Southern boundary of Russia, as fixed by the Treaty of Paris, was laid before Parliament in 1857. I may as well point out that the boundary lines on the map to be presented will indicate the line understood to have been accepted as between the Russian and Roumanian Governments.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE GLENDALE CROFTERS.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, In what class of prisoners the Skye Crofters, sentenced to two months' imprisonment for breach of interdict, have been placed; and, if they are regarded as first-class misdemeanants, what opportunities for association and exercise, what indulgences in the shape of extra cell accommodation, attendance, and food, provided at the expense of their friends, may be allowed to them under the prison regulations which apply to Scotland?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): Sir, the Crofters referred to are classed as prisoners committed for contempt of Court, and are associated together in one large special apartment. Under the rules, they are not "placed in association or at exercise with ordinary criminal prisoners." They are allowed to receive supplies of food from outside, and all their meals are supplied to them by their friends. They are also supplied with a newspaper and books and Gaelic Bible. They are allowed to receive visitors.

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—THE OLD LAW COURTS.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, adverting to the difficulties in regard to the accommodation of the two Houses of Parliament, to which attention has been called, and the objections expressed in the other House to further concessions in that respect to this House, Her Majesty's Government will take care that the site and materials of the old Courts of Law are not appropriated to other purposes till it is seen whether additional accommodation may not eventually be wanted for an extension of the system of Standing Committees, and for other purposes?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, there is no intention to make any disposition of the land on the other side of Westminster Hall until it shall appear to the discretion of Parliament and of the Government that it can be advantageously disposed of.

PARLIAMENT—ORDER—PRINTS OF BILLS.

VISCOUNT EMLYN asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in consequence of the ruling of Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday last, that a Member may proceed to move the Second Reading of a Bill that has not been printed or circulated to Members, although such a course is unusual, Her Majesty's Government propose to take any steps to amend the Standing Orders, so as to prevent the continuance of such a practice?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, the opinion on which this Question is founded is a very reasonable one. There is a general and almost invariable rule that Bills shall be printed before they are read a second time. But it would not be wise, and I am quite sure I shall be borne out by the most experienced Members of this House, to make an absolute rule to that effect; because occasions do arise from time to time of great and real necessity when it is desirable to pass Bills through this House and the other House of Parliament with an expedition which does not permit the observance of this important formality. Therefore, though I agree with the spirit of the Question, I do not think a rigid rule of that kind ought to be laid down.

BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND)—THE DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE OF 1878—THE REPORT.

MR. SEXTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Crichton Committee of 1878, on investigating the administration of the Irish Board of Works, made the following recommendation:—

> "We were furnished with an epitome of the Acts of Parliament relating directly or indirectly wholly or in part to duties assigned to the Board of Works, and we reckon that there are something like 300 of such Acts in the Statute Book; a good many of these Acts are spent, or become absolutely obsolete; others are only short amending Acts. It is obvious that a multiplicity of references such as is necessitated by so large a number of Statutes, adds greatly to the trouble and difficulty of ascertaining the intentions and provisions of Parliament. We advocate most strongly that the work of consolidation should be at once taken in hand. To attempt to compress into one Act all the different measures passed from time to time by the Legislature, the administration of which has been entrusted to the Commissioners of Public Works, would probably not be feasible. We think however that at any rate the process of consolidation might be applied with great advantage to the Acts relating to the more important subjects. For instance, it would only require care and discrimination to construct one Act in each case to cover all the provisions affecting arterial drainage, land improvement, fishery piers and harbours, &c. Other miscellaneous and minor services, after being carefully classified, might be grouped together. . . . We recommend therefore that a lawyer conversant with the technicalities of drafting Bills should be specially appointed for the purpose of revising the statutory powers and duties of the Commissioners of Public Works, so that those who have occasion to consult any of the statutes relating to the Board and its duties may be enabled to refer to them with greater facility than at present;"

and, whether such recommendation has since been acted on; and, if not, whether the Government intend to act upon it?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): The hon. Member for Sligo does not appear to have noticed that a Question to the same effect was put to my hon. Friend the

Secretary to the Treasury on the 13th instant by the hon. Member for Kilkenny (Mr. P. Martin), and that he answered it at some length, stating that two Bills carrying out the recommendations of the Committee would be introduced during the present Session. He specially asked for the co-operation of Members from Ireland in passing those Bills, and he invited any suggestions from Irish Members. I can add nothing to my hon. Friend's reply.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS—GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to the delay which is taking place in the legislation promised by the Government, and the dissatisfaction which exists in the Country, in consequence of such delay, he will give an assurance that the present Session of Parliament will be continued until the measures named in the Speech from the Throne have been considered and disposed of?

Mr. ONSLOW said, he rose to a point of Order. He thought this was a very argumentative Question indeed; and he would suggest that, if the Speaker should rule it to be in Order, the hon. Gentleman should, after the word "dissatisfaction," substitute for the words in the Question the following—

> "Which in his belief is the opinion of a certain body of men, of whom he is the able head—namely, the Birmingham Caucus."

[*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: The Question of the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) certainly does appear to be of a somewhat argumentative character; but, at the same time, I am not disposed to accept the correction of the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow).

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, as far as I have observed, under cover of the words "having regard to," or else "in view of," or "considering," or some other ingenious interpolation, almost any Question can be so framed as to convey the entire views of the questioner upon certain subjects. With regard to the Question of my hon. Friend, the House is in a position of considerable difficulty with respect to its Business; but I must remind him that, although we are close upon Easter, the House has not yet sat five weeks. And I must further remind him that we have not yet reached the point at which we have taken the first step for the purpose of trying the very important experiment of working our Business through the medium of Committees of greater scope, strength, and authority than we have been used to. Until we have reached a somewhat more advanced period, and can form some judgment as to the working of that experiment, I think it would be inexpedient, and certainly at this period of the Session it would be quite unusual, to make any definite declaration with regard to the Business of the House.

PARLIAMENT—ASSISTANT CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

Mr. RAIKES asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can now state what proposal Her Majesty's Government will submit to the House for the appointment of Assistant or Supplementary Chairmen of Committees of the whole House?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, the matter is under the consideration of the Government, and we will take care that when the House meets again we will make a proposal which we hope will be thought adequate to the case.

THE PUBLIC OFFICES—EXPLOSION AT THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can inform the House, if, in his opinion, the public buildings were properly guarded by the police on the night of the explosion, and whether he has taken any steps to strengthen the police in order that the guards may be increased?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I am much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for giving me an opportunity of saying something on this point. With respect to the guard of public buildings on the night of the explosion, I cannot say that I think, practically, the supervision of the police was insufficient. There is one circumstance which is true, and that is that the policeman on the beat through Charles Street had a more extended beat that night than was usual, and the cause of it was one which I think is well worthy of the attention of the House and also of the Executive Government. It was the day of the University Boat Race, and the enormous inconvenience and mischief to this Metropolis of these spectacles is deserving of consideration. The House will be, perhaps, surprised to learn that it was necessary to withdraw from their ordinary duty in London 1,500 policemen on account of the Boat Race. Well, of course, that cannot be done without weakening other places; and for my part, as far as my influence can go, it will always be to resist the multiplication of spectacles of this kind in London for that very cause. However, at each end of Charles Street there was a policeman passing at the intervals of 10 minutes, which is, of course, as much as can be expected, and also at the very time of the explosion. I have a report from the police sergeant in charge of the district, in which he says—

> "On the 15th instant I was on duty patrolling, and I passed the end of King Street in Charles Street about 8.30, and again at 9 p.m., and was proceeding through King Street, and when opposite King Street Police Station I saw a flash immediately followed by a terrific report, and was knocked into a doorway, but sustained no injury."

Consequently, he was almost absolutely on the spot at the time, for it will be remembered that this King Street Police Station, one of the principal police stations in London, is within 50 yards of where the explosion took place. I need hardly say that orders have been given to largely strengthen the Police Force over public buildings beyond what was the case before. For that purpose, and in order to supply the deficiency, I have given directions that a very large addition shall be made to the Police Force of the Metropolis. Five hundred men will be added in the present state of things. Of course, that is a thing only to be done after the lapse of a certain time; and meanwhile I have made application to the Military Department that the use of soldiers shall be given for aiding the police in protecting public buildings till the Police Force can be adequately strengthened.

EGYPT—THE CATTLE PLAGUE.

DR. CAMERON asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true that two outbreaks of cattle plague occurred among the oxen sent from India for the use of the troops in Egypt; whether in one of these outbreaks the affected animals, instead of being destroyed and buried, were simply driven forth to die; and, whether the result was that the road to Kassassin having been thus infected, cattle for the use of the troops were subsequently obliged to be sent up by train?

MR. J. K. CROSS: As the Indian Contingent was placed under the control of the Commander-in-Chief immediately on its arrival in Egypt, the Reports of the Veterinary Department have been made to the War Office and not to the India Office.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE COUNT-OUT ON FRIDAY.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury, How it happened, considering the difficulties with regard to the progress of Public Business to which the Prime Minister had just alluded, a "House" was not kept last Friday evening?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I will, Sir, with the permission of the House, answer that Question. After the Morning Sitting on Friday I was asked by my noble Friend (Lord Richard Grosvenor) to come to the House and to bring as many Members into the House as I might happen to see. A similar request was addressed to other Members. I came down to the House at 9 o'clock, and I counted nine or ten of my Colleagues on this Bench at the time the House met. I believe my noble Friend did his utmost to form a quorum at that hour. The House was counted out by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) at the moment the Speaker took the Chair, the number of Members present being 35 or 36.

PARLIAMENT—RIGHT OF PETITION —INLAND REVENUE OFFICERS.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I wish to put a Question to you, Sir, upon a point of Privilege raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the reply which he gave to a Question put to him the other day by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). I want to know whether the right of petitioning Parliament for the redress of grievances is not acknowledged as a fundamental part of the Constitution; and whether a threat of inflicting punishment by a Department of the Government for exercising that right would not amount to a breach of Privilege? At the present moment an impression prevails among the officers of the Inland Revenue that they would be punished if they petitioned Parliament for a redress of their grievances, and the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer goes rather to confirm that impression.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member asks me whether the answer given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to a Question put by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) does not amount to a breach of Privilege.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: No, Sir that was not my Question.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am bound to say that the Question should have been put to me at the time the answer was made; and I have to observe that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his answer, referred to a Treasury Minute bearing on the matter which has been laid upon the Table of the House. When that Treasury Minute comes on for consideration then will be the time for putting a Question as to whether the Minute itself involves a breach of the Privilege of the House.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I must apologize for once more asking the Question. I am afraid that I did not explain myself quite clearly in the first instance. I did not say that the answer of the right hon. Gentleman was a breach of the Privileges of the House; but I asked you, Sir, whether the officers of the Inland Revenue and others are not entitled to petition Parliament for the redress of their grievances; and whether any censure or punishment inflicted on them for so petitioning by the Board of Inland Revenue would not be a breach of the Privileges of this House?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has put to me a hypothetical Question in regard to the Privileges of the House. When the occasion arises I shall be quite ready to answer it.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: The point of Order, Sir, is one of some importance, and is not so absolutely hypothetical as it may appear. A discussion will be raised, as soon as possible, with respect to the grievances of these Inland Revenue clerks; and, in the meantime, the clerks are prevented by the Government from approaching hon. Members in order to supply them with information in regard to their case. My hon. Friend asks whether such a prohibition is not a distinct breach of the Privileges of this House?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have no information before me that such a prohibition has been made.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I beg to give Notice that I will, on the earliest opportunity, on going into Committee of Supply, or on the Vote for the Board of Inland Revenue, call the attention of the House to the General Order of the 3rd of January issued by the Board of Inland Revenue, and will move a Resolution inviting the House to express its condemnation of the unwarrantable interference and invasion of the Privileges of this House committed by a Public Department.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked, Whether it was intended to proceed with the second reading of the Ballot Act Continuance and Amendment Bill; and also when it was proposed to move the Adjournment of the House for the Easter Holidays?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that the Ballot Bill referred to was precisely the same measure as that of last Session, when it was read the second time without a division. He hoped it might be reached that night. He proposed to move the Adjournment of the House at 2 o'clock to-morrow.

Mr. ONSLOW said, there was no opposition to the Ballot Bill simply because of the New Rules. That Bill, however, was a very important one, since it gave local authorities power to extend the hours of polling. That being the case, he would appeal to the Prime Minister not to allow the Bill to be taken after half-past 12.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, that the power referred to by the hon. Gentleman was a point for discussion in Committee, and not upon the second reading.

In answer to Mr. Dillwyn,

Mr. GLADSTONE said, it was proposed to take Supply (Civil Service Estimates) on the day of the re-assembling of the House after the Recess, and, if possible, also on the following day. Anything else would depend on the progress made to-day and to-morrow; but the first duty of the Government would be to take the decision of the House on the second reading of Bills which were to be referred to the Standing Committees.

CRIMINAL CODE (INDICTABLE OFFENCES PROCEDURE) AND COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL BILLS.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he was aware that the clause as to appeals in the Criminal Procedure Bill conflicted with the clause in the Criminal Appeal Bill; and whether, seeing that one was incompatible with the other, if one was read a second time he would withdraw the other?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, it was quite true that the Criminal Appeal Bill went further than the clause relating to criminal appeals in the Criminal Procedure Bill, and this was owing to his desire to introduce the Bill in the form in which it was left by the Royal Commissioners. Of course, if the Criminal Appeal Bill was read a second time, it would be necessary to modify the Criminal Procedure Bill in Committee.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked, Whether it was in strict accordance with the Rules of the House for the same Member to move the second reading of two Bills dealing precisely with the same subject matter?

MR. SPEAKER: It appears to me from the Questions put by the hon. Member to the Attorney General and myself that the point he wishes to raise is one that cannot be determined by the Chair, but must be determined by the House.

AFRICA (WEST COAST) (THE RIVER CONGO)—PROCEEDINGS OF PORTUGAL.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he had seen a telegram in a newspaper of Thursday last stating that the Portuguese Minister of Marine had declared in the Chamber of Deputies that—

"The statement of Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice in the House of Commons, that 'Portugal promised not to send war vessels to West Africa during the pending negotiations,' was totally incorrect;"

and what was the correct statement of the case? If that of the Portuguese Government, whether measures would be taken by Her Majesty's Government to prevent Portugal from taking a step which would be so perilous to the interests of British trade on the Congo River?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, the statement which I made on the 8th instant was perfectly accurate. Some misapprehension seems to have been caused at Lisbon through an incorrect report of it having been telegraphed in the first instance. The Portuguese Minister for Foreign Affairs has since repeated to Sir Charles Wyke the assurance that no naval expedition or ships of war will be sent to the Congo while negotiations with this country are pending. What the Minister of Marine said appears to have been that the Government had not bound themselves to abstain from sending ships to the Coast of Africa generally.

LAW AND POLICE—REPORTED ATTEMPT TO ASSASSINATE LADY FLORENCE DIXIE.

MR. J. R. YORKE: I wish to ask the Prime Minister, in the absence of the Home Secretary, Whether he is able to give the House any information as to the reported attempt to assassinate Lady Florence Dixie?

MR. GLADSTONE: I can only say, Sir, that, having consulted with my right hon. and learned Friend, I do not think that he is in a position to give any information on the subject which would be of value to the House.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL.

MR. WARTON asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether it was the intention of the Government to refer the Criminal Appeal Bill as well as the Criminal Law Procedure Bill to the Committee on Matters of Law and Procedure?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): Yes, Sir.

PARLIAMENT—RULES OF DEBATE—MOTIONS ON GOING INTO SUPPLY.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I wish, Sir, to put a Question to you with respect to the New Rules. Under those Rules hon.

Members may call attention to grievances on each group of the Estimates when they are set down for the first time on a Monday or Thursday. A Vote on Account has already been taken upon the Civil Service Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister has stated to-day that the Civil Service Estimates will be set down for the first Thursday after the Vacation. The Question which I wish to put is, Whether any hon. Member will have the right to call attention to grievances on that occasion, or whether he will be precluded on account of a Vote on Account having been taken already?

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand that it is proposed to take the Civil Service Estimates on the first Thursday after the Holidays. Any Amendment relative to the Civil Service Estimates will be admitted on that occasion.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: In view of that ruling, I beg to give Notice that I will bring forward the Question of the General Order issued by the Inland Revenue Department on the 3rd of January, on going into Committee of Supply upon the Civil Service Estimates.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I do not wish the noble Lord to be under any misapprehension with regard to the Estimates; but on the first day after the Recess it is only proposed to take the first and second class of the Civil Service Estimates, and not the Inland Revenue Vote.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH: I should like to ask you, Sir, whether the statement just made by the right hon. Gentleman modifies in any way the ruling you have just given? My impression is that whether this special Vote or the Civil Service Estimates generally are brought forward on the occasion in question, any Motion relating to the Civil Service Estimates would be legitimate. If it were otherwise, I take it that each class of the Estimates might be opposed separately, and that is certainly not the language of the New Rule.

Mr. SPEAKER: I should consider the Revenue Estimates to be a branch of the Civil Service Estimates; and, therefore, any Amendment on going into Committee of Supply relevant to the Inland Revenue Office would be in Order.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

BANKRUPTCY BILL.—[Bill 4.]

(*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Solicitor General, Mr. John Holms.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, that, in asking the House to assent to the second reading of the Bill, it was quite unnecessary for him to dwell at any length on the defects of existing legislation relating to the subject. In the Session of 1881, when he introduced a similar measure, upon the main lines of which the Bill now before the House was based, he had had the opportunity of pointing out that there was general concurrence amongst all the authorities upon the subject, both as to the nature of the defects in the existing law, and also to a very large extent as to the cause of those defects; and all that he need do then was to summarize the results of their experience of the existing law. He would say, then, that the Act of 1869 had favoured the debtors at the expense of the creditors, and had favoured that class of the community which lived by preying upon bankrupt estates at the expense of creditors and debtors alike. It had made it easy for debtors, by paying a small dividend, or no dividend at all, to escape absolutely from all their liabilities, without anything in the nature of an effective examination of the circumstances which had brought them into that position; while, at the same time, it had stimulated extravagant, and even fraudulent, administration of assets by giving opportunities to interested parties to deal with them in an entirely irresponsible and uncontrolled way. The causes for those defects were almost as much on the surface as the defects themselves. They were, in the first place, that there had been, under the present law, no sufficient provision for an impartial or independent examination into the causes of each bankruptcy, and the conduct of each bankrupt. Secondly, such investigation as had been undertaken, perfunctory and inadequate as it generally was, had been thrown upon the creditors; and, contrary to all sound policy and principle, they had been invited to throw good money after bad, and undertake a public duty at their private charge. In the third place, the provisions for the punishment of misconduct, however grievous, had been altogether inadequate; and, moreover, the application of those provisions, instead of being left with responsible authorities, had been left almost entirely to the creditors, who, in many instances, might be interested in hushing up questions which they were expected to investigate. And, lastly, the arrangements for the supervision and control of persons entrusted by the law with the administration of bankrupts' estates were so inadequate and insufficient that they could, practically, do what they liked. So far, he would have the general voice of the House with him; and before he proceeded further, he had to ask the House to keep in mind two main, and, at the same time, distinct objects of any good Bankruptcy Law. Those were, firstly, in the honest administration of bankrupt estates, with a view to the fair and speedy distribution of the assets among the creditors, whose property they were; and, in the second place, their object should be, following the idea that prevention was better than cure, to do something to improve the general tone of commercial morality, to promote honest trading, and to lessen the number of failures. In other words, Parliament had to endeavour, as far as possible, to protect the salvage, and also to diminish the number of wrecks. His next point was that, with regard to those two most important objects, there was only one way by which they could be secured, and that was by securing an independent and impartial examination into the circumstances of each case; and that was the cardinal principle of this Bill. It was the principle by which all its proposals must be tested, and by which the Bill must stand or fall. He was quite sure that such an independent examination as he had proposed was absolutely of the essence of any satisfactory reform in the Law of Bankruptcy. What happened when a bankruptcy took place which might easily cause misery to thousands of people, and bring ruin on many homes? It was treated as if it were entirely a matter of private concern, and was allowed to become a scramble between the debtor and his advisers —who were very often his confederates—on the one hand, and the creditors on the other. Meanwhile, the great public interests at stake in all these questions were entirely and absolutely ignored, as there was nobody to represent them, and the practice which was followed in the case of other calamities was, in that case, entirely absent. In the case of accidents by sea and by land—railway accidents, for instance—it was incumbent upon a Government Department to institute an inquiry. There were inquiries in the cases of accidents in mines, and of boiler explosions; and, sad as those disasters were, they did not, in the majority of cases, cause so much misery as a bad bankruptcy, which brought ruin to many families by carrying off the fruits of their labour and industry. Who was to object to inquiry? Certainly not the honest debtor. There might be many men reduced to bankruptcy by circumstances beyond their own control, by unavoidable misfortune, and without their having been guilty of any misconduct. Men in such a position ought to be the first to desire and claim full inquiry into the circumstances of their cases, in order that they might go again into the world, acquitted, by the verdict of a competent Court, of anything which would cast a stigma upon their character. No objection was likely to be taken by creditors generally, or by the commercial community as a whole. It was their desire, at all events, that bankruptcy should not be the easy and profitable mode of escape from all liabilities which it was at present; and they had come to the conclusion that, although insolvency was not necessarily a crime, yet it indicated a state of things which required explanation and inquiry. The only people who were likely to object were the creditors in the cases of particular estates. There had been cases in which creditors had desired to hush up transactions which did not do them much credit, or where they had the hope that they might, in some small degree, increase the dividends they were to receive by compounding for the misconduct, or condoning the negligence, or the rash and wilful extravagance, of which the bankrupt might have been guilty. But those were cases which, it seemed to him, did not deserve the sympathy of the House; and it was not for the benefit of creditors in such a position that it would interpose to prevent inquiry which, on other grounds, was clearly desirable. If those principles were granted, the machinery of the Bill would be found to follow as a matter of course. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) had given Notice of an Amendment to the effect that the House was not prepared to entrust the powers proposed in the Bill to any Department of the Government. Until he had heard the speech of the hon. Member, he did not like to put any interpretation upon the Amendment; but it seemed to be inconsistent with the urgent pressure put upon the Government to establish a Ministry of Commerce. It appeared to be desired, on both sides of the House, that everything should be done to give importance, authority, and influence to the Department which was charged with the control of commercial interests; and yet the House was asked, practically, to pass a Vote of Want of Confidence in this Department, and to declare that it was totally unfit to be trusted with ordinary matters of commercial administration. The hon. Member was in this dilemma—either he was in favour of impartial and independent inquiry, or he was not; if he was not, he was setting himself against what was almost the unanimous opinion of all the great authorities on the subject. It was the opinion of those who had had most experience of the administration of the Bankruptcy Law—of the Controller in Bankruptcy, who, in his admirable Reports, had called attention to the scandal of the present system. It was the opinion of the Incorporated Law Society, and, he believed, of the Institute of Accountants. It was the opinion of the Committee recently appointed by the Associated Chambers of Commerce; of the London Chamber of Commerce, and of the London merchants and bankers generally, who, in an influentially-signed Memorial presented to the late Prime Minister in 1879, said that one of the great defects of the present system was the ability of bankrupts to get a speedy discharge without being subjected to any efficient investigation of their affairs, or of the conduct and proceedings which had led to the bankruptcy. They added that the present law was rendered practically nugatory, because it threw on those who had already incurred losses the investigation of the bankrupt's affairs, and the obligation of exposing misconduct which, in the interest of public morality, should be dealt with, not as a private matter, but by a public Court and Judge. Either the hon. Member was in favour of such inquiry as was proposed, or he was not. If he was not opposed to inquiry, he would hardly find any way of carrying it out effectively and to the satisfaction of all concerned, except the way proposed in the present Bill. The conduct of such inquiry could not be left to the creditors. Nothing was more clear, as they had found by their experience of the present law, than that creditors would do hardly anything, even where their own immediate pecuniary interests were concerned. That was the constant complaint of the Controllers. Traders had told him that they were no more likely to attend to the business of administering bankrupts' estates than they were to carry their own parcels. It was not worth their while to undertake these duties on their own account; and, *à fortiori*, it was not worth their while to undertake them on the part of the public. Then the business could not be left to the Court without assistance. A Court sat to decide questions that were brought before it; but it had no initiative power of its own. It must be set in motion. It could not originate; it arbitrated and decided on the matters brought before it. Unless the initial proceeding was entrusted to a public official, the work could not be done. He ventured to say that the failure of certain provisions in the Act of 1831, and of subsequent Acts preceding the Bankruptcy Act of 1869, to secure anything like an adequate investigation into the affairs of a bankrupt was due entirely to the fact that what inquiry there was was left to the Court and the creditors. In throwing the duty upon a public official, who would be under the directions of a responsible Department, which acted in the full light of publicity, and was responsible to the public and to that House at every stage of its proceedings, the House would be acting according to analogy in the case of other inquiries like those relating to accidents at sea and on railways, and to boiler explosions. It was made incumbent on the Board of Trade to see that inquiry was held in every case of accident on railways and at sea in which evidence could be collected. In the case of accidents in mines, the responsibility was thrown upon the Home Office; and in none of these cases was the duty and responsibility of initiating the inquiry thrown upon private individuals or upon a Court of Law. The experience of those inquiries, he ventured to say, was entirely satisfactory. They had thrown floods of light on the questions raised; and, as far as he knew, no one had impugned the discretion of the Departments that had conducted them. In the Bill the official upon whom this important responsibility was to be cast was called the Official Receiver. He had had a careful examination made into the probable number of bankruptcies which might be expected under the new system. They had been obliged to assume—he hoped he had not been too sanguine—that there would be a considerable reduction in the number. He had also had calculations made showing what proportion of these bankruptcies was likely to occur in every district throughout the Kingdom, and he thought it was not probable that more than 60 of these officials would, on the whole, be required; and that included the Inspectors of districts, who would have to be appointed to control and supervise the operations within a considerable radius. It must not be supposed that all these officials would be new officials, because he believed, in very many cases, it might be found that the existing Registrar or the High Bailiffs already attached to the Bankruptcy Court would have ample time to attend to this business, and at the same time, from their peculiar experience, would make admirable officers for the purpose; and their interest in both their present positions and the new one offered security for their efficient administration of the new scheme. The new appointments would probably be few in number, and the expense of these officers was estimated at about £50,000 per annum, exclusive of some additions to the cost of the Board of Trade, and of the Audit Department under the Controller in Bankruptcy. The cost of these appointments, and of the general administration, would be met from several sources. In the first place, the fee in the case of every bankruptcy petition would be the same as now levied in cases of bankruptcy—£5 for each case, and there would also be an addition of a small percentage to the sum already charged upon the assets collected. He would not pledge himself to exact figures; but his belief was that the requirements of the case would be satisfied by some fractional addition—say a quarter per cent—at all events, so small an amount in comparison to the total costs in bankruptcy that he need not take it into account. In addition to those sources of revenue, he expected to obtain in the shape of interest on the aggregate balance that would remain in the hands of the Government if the amounts now paid to trustees were paid to the Bank of England—an aggregate balance of something like £1,000,000—from £25,000 to £30,000 more; and that, with the other sources of income to which he had referred, would amply provide for all the new expenses that he contemplated under the Bill. Now, the duties of the Official Receiver would be of a very important character. The primary duty of this Receiver would be—first, to investigate the conduct of the bankrupt, and the circumstances that had led to the bankruptcy. In the second place, he would have to conduct the examination of the debtor before the Court, and, in the third place, to report to the Court when the Court was called upon to consider the question of discharge, both as to any proposition for the settlement of the debtor's affairs which might be before the Court at the time, and also as to any misconduct on the part of the bankrupt which might have been disclosed in the course of the proceedings. He anticipated that this officer, who would in some way be a public investigator, and to a slight extent also a public prosecutor, would probably be the receptacle of anything in the nature of special information which might be possessed by any honest creditor who desired full investigation. If any suspicious circumstances should come to the knowledge of any person concerned in the administration of the estate, and if he was himself unwilling to prosecute an inquiry into them, he would only have to communicate the facts to this officer, and it would be his bounden duty to see that a full and complete investigation was made into the matter. Those duties to which he had referred were the primary duties, and those for which in particular he asked that this officer should be appointed. They were duties which the officer would be called upon to perform in the interests of the public, in the interests of commercial morality, and in the interests of the commercial community generally. Having got an officer of this kind, an officer who, by the very necessities of the case, must be well-informed—they had thought that they might be able to utilize him for the benefit of the creditors in each particular case; and, accordingly, it would be his business at the first meeting to receive from the bankrupt a statement of his affairs, to send a copy to all the creditors, to issue forms of proxy on a prescribed form for this first meeting, and, above all, what was extremely important, to issue to all the creditors a report on any proposal for composition or liquidation which might be made by the bankrupt. Now, it would be seen that the provision which he had described constituted a system which he thought they might fairly call a system of official inquiry, and which went on all fours with a similar system in the matters of accident to which he had referred. He did not think that without some such limited officialism as this any satisfactory inquiry was even possible. No investigation could be worth anything unless it was conducted by an independent and impartial officer. This officer would not only be subject to the Board of Trade, but he would also be under the control of the Court, because in every case it was proposed that the Official Receiver should be made an officer of the Court. The proposal was a new one, so far as Bankruptcy legislation was concerned; but he was convinced that any attempt to do without him, and to throw on the Court unassisted the duties which it was proposed should be discharged by this officer, would only make the Bill nugatory; and he could not be a party to propose legislation which would, he thought, turn out to be nothing less than a farce. He now came to consider the second of the two objects which he had said they must have in view in Bankruptcy legislation—the honest and economical administration of the bankrupt estates. There he had had to consider a very important question, and it was whether this limited officialism which was proposed in the Bill should have given to it a very much wider scope. It was admitted, he believed, on all hands, that there must be in the administration of estates something in the nature of official supervision of the trustees and of the persons employed; but the question he had to consider was, whether they could confine themselves to official supervision, or whether they could go as far as official administration. There were, undoubtedly, a great number of authorities who were in favour even of official administration. It had often been stated that officialism had been tried in Bankruptcy in connection with previous legislation, and that it had entirely failed. But he was sure that everyone who knew anything of the subject would agree with him that the officialism of previous Bills differed altogether from the officialism now proposed; and, therefore, the fact that it had previously failed was no argument for assuming that it would fail in this case. It would be really instructive at this stage to see what had been the history of previous legislation in reference to this part of the subject. Before 1831 creditors might be said to have had full control of the administration of bankrupt estates. On all hands the most general dissatisfaction was expressed with that state of things, which was no other than a chaos. In 1831 an Act was passed, which was known as Lord Brougham's Act, and which, for the first time, introduced a system of official administration. In the first instance, it introduced it in a very limited form, and to a very limited extent. It introduced a class of officials who were known as Official Assignees attached to the London Bankruptcy Court, and not to the Courts in country districts; and to those officials was given, practically, the control of the administration of bankrupt estates. In 1840, after this official system, which, as he had already pointed out, went very much further than this Bill, and was, in fact, different in its object, had been in existence for nine years, a Royal Commission was appointed to consider the subject of Bankruptcy; and this Commission recommended the extension of official assigneeism to the country generally. In 1842 the system was accordingly extended with general approval; indeed, there was a chorus of congratulations on the extension of the system, which was now said to be universally condemned. In 1847, 16 years after the first introduction of the system, there was a Select Committee, which reported unanimously in its favour; and they stated that all the opinions and all the evidence were in favour of the new system as a great improvement, and it was universally approved of by the mercantile world. In 1849 there was another Select Committee of both Houses, which dealt with other branches of the subject, but which, in reference to this matter of official administration, made no complaints whatever, and the Act which followed on their Report confirmed those officers in their functions. It was not until 1861, 30 years after the first institution of those Assignees, that the system was generally condemned, and an Act was passed which very much limited their duties, and practically reduced them to nonentities. In 1864 there was a celebrated Committee which reported entirely against the system, and advised that Official Assignees should be totally abolished; and in 1869, to complete the history, they were accordingly totally abolished, and the public entered once more on a system of voluntaryism, which again led to absolute chaos and gave general dissatisfaction. What he pointed out to the House as significant and as worthy of observation was this—that the only system which gave any satisfaction at all, and that only for a limited term of 20 years, was the official system. He had been led to make inquiry in order to ascertain how it was that this system, which was so popular at first, which was shortly afterwards extended, and which was confirmed and approved by repeated Committees and Commissions, should yet, in a period of 20 years, have fallen into disrepute, and, after a period of 30 years, should have been universally condemned. The reason was this. In the first place, the system was under the Courts, and not under a responsible Department; and if the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) had thought that it would be possible that the official duties connected with this Bill should be placed under the Courts, he would beg him to give consideration to the experience which was to be derived from the working of the Act of 1831. Under the Courts it was found impossible to exercise anything like a proper supervision either over the appointment of the Official Assignees or over the performance of their duties. The Courts were not a department which could possibly, with any credit to themselves, or with any satisfaction to the public, supervise a complicated administration. What happened was this—in the first instance, the Assignees, who, he must say, were always too numerous, were selected with the greatest possible care. The Judges, who were also appointed and selected with great care, took an immense interest in the new measure, and went altogether outside their ordinary duties—the ordinary scope of the functions of a Judicial Court—and they watched most carefully the operation of the new measure. But in course of time things became relaxed. The appointments were much less scrupulously looked after; indeed, he believed it was not too much to say that they were, in some cases, notoriously obtained by jobbery. The result of that naturally was great carelessness and negligence. The Assignee was allowed to do what he thought proper with the funds; he kept the money in his hands without being properly called to account, and in one or two flagrant cases there was gross peculation. And under these circumstances there arose a public scandal, which contributed, undoubtedly, to the unpopularity of the system, and led to its abandonment. But after having studied the matter very closely, and after having estimates of the results of legislation on the returns in the case of bankruptcies, and having found that the dividends were larger, on the whole, under that system than they ever were before or since, he thought it was open to question whether it would not have been advisable in 1869, instead of abolishing this system of officialism altogether, to have contrived to reform it and purify it from its abuses. It might be said, under these circumstances—"Why, then, do you not restore this official system of administration in the proposals which you have brought before the House?" Well, one strong reason that weighed with him had been that, in his view, public opinion was not ripe for such a change. There was a prejudice, not altogether founded on good reasons, against a system of officialism; and he believed the public would reject, or would not receive with favour, any proposal to go back completely to the system instituted by the Act of 1861. He was further confirmed in this opinion by the reflection that at all events it was not an obligation which was cast upon the State to assist to save the pockets of creditors in this matter. The Government were bound to secure, if they possibly could, honest dealing on the part of all persons engaged in this administration; but, having taken all the precautions they could for that purpose, he was not aware that they were called upon to go further and to benefit creditors, in some cases, perhaps, against their will. Therefore, the principle which he had adopted was that the collection and distribution of the assets of a bankrupt estate were primarily the duty of the creditors themselves; and he had accordingly limited official interference to the supervision which was necessary for the protection of a minority of creditors, and in order to secure honest dealing on the part of all the persons employed in the administration of the estate. But, so far from having gone back, whether for good or evil, to the official system of 1831, he ventured to say it would be found by anyone who would carefully examine the provisions of the Bill now before the House that under it creditors would have more complete and effective control over the management of their estates than ever they had before. What he had said would make clear to the House the main principles of the measure, and he would now summarize the three points to which he would ask the assent of the House. The first point was that there should be in every case a public inquiry into the circumstances that placed a man in a position in which he came to the law and asked to be relieved from obligations which he had voluntarily undertaken; the second proposition was that there must be a public official to conduct this inquiry; and his third was that if you want to have any hold over this public official and make him fully responsible you must place him under the direction of one of the Departments of State, which was, in its turn, responsible to public opinion and that House. He would ask the House next to consider the procedure in detail under this Bill. In the first place, he called attention to a very important change which distinguished this Bill from that which he put forward in 1881. In the Bill of 1881 there was only one proceeding—in every case, an insolvent would have to be declared bankrupt, although a power was reserved to the Court to annul the bankruptcy at a subsequent stage, if it should be of opinion that the bankruptcy had been caused by misfortune, and not by misconduct on the part of the bankrupt. But objections of great weight and importance were urged that this was rather too harsh; it applied the stigma which must of necessity attach in all cases to the title of bankrupt to persons whose only fault was their misfortune. It was urged that there were certain liabilities scattered up and down the law with reference to leases and other matters which would follow on adjudication of bankruptcy; while it was true that abroad the title of bankrupt carried with it a stigma much more serious than it did in this country. Taking all these matters into consideration, he had thought it desirable to provide a preliminary stage, which he called the making of a receiving order, which might or might not ripen into bankruptcy according to the circumstances of the case. On proof of the facts stated in a creditor's petition, or on the presentation of a petition by the debtor, the Court was to make a receiving order. The receiving order would have the effect of an adjudication in bankruptcy as far as regarded the staying of all proceedings, but, as he had said, would not necessarily eventuate in bankruptcy. The debtor was called upon immediately to submit a statement of his affairs to the Receiver, who was instructed to forward a copy to all the creditors, and to summon the first meeting of creditors. At the first meeting, which must take place within 14 days, and after seven days' notice, the creditors might at once decide to make the debtor a bankrupt, or, as an alternative, they might resolve to entertain a proposal from the debtor to offer a composition or a scheme of arrangement. If this proposal was entertained, it would be submitted to a second meeting, which, however, could not be held until after a public examination of the debtor, which was imperative in every case. And to that second meeting the Official Receiver was instructed to make a report upon the terms of the composition or scheme of arrangement which the debtor had submitted. The determination at either meeting must be by a special resolution carried by a majority in numbers, and of three-fourths in value, of the creditors present, or by proxy. The next step was that the proposition approved of by the creditors must be submitted to the Court, which stood there as the guardian of the interests of the minority of creditors who might disapprove, and of the interests of the public generally, whom it profited to have a full investigation into the circumstances. The Court, which would have before it all the facts and a special report from the Official Receiver, would be entitled to refuse the proposal altogether, either if it thought it to be in itself unreasonable, or if it held that it was not for the benefit of the general body of creditors; or, lastly, if the conduct of the debtors had been such as to justify the refusal, or the suspension of his certificate of discharge. So that the House would see that, under these circumstances, both the Court and the creditors would only be called upon to give their decision when they were put in possession of the facts of the case. If the creditors or the Court should decline the proposal for a composition or scheme of arrangement, or if the creditors should have decided that the debtor should be made a bankrupt, in either of those cases the adjudication of bankruptcy would be made. There followed upon this that the bankrupt would be disqualified within 12 months for sitting in either House of Parliament. He would be disqualified immediately from acting as a Justice of the Peace. He would also be disqualified from acting in many public and municipal offices; and he confessed it was a fair question for consideration in Committee whether, as in some foreign countries, he should not likewise lose his electoral rights. But all those disqualifications might be removed if at any subsequent period the bankruptcy should be annulled, or if he should obtain from the Court a certificate that his bankruptcy had not been caused by misconduct, but was entirely due to misfortune. After the bankruptcy was resolved upon the creditors would be called upon to appoint a trustee. The trustee must give satisfactory security, and the Board of Trade might object to the trustee whom the creditors selected; but they must only do so on the following grounds:—That the appointment had not been made in good faith; that the person selected was an unfit person to be a trustee; or that he was connected with the bankrupt and his estate in such a way as to make it difficult for him to act impartially in the matter. In all these cases of objection, there would be an appeal allowed from the Board of Trade to the Court if the trustee desired it. There were a number of provisions intended to secure the proper administration of the estate by the trustee. He was not to be permitted to employ a solicitor or other agent without the consent of the Committee of Inspection; and he was bound to declare a first dividend, if any, within four months of the first meeting, and subsequently at intervals of not more than six months. As to the remuneration, there was a change in the present Bill from what had been proposed in 1881. In 1881 he had followed the Bill of the late Attorney General, Sir John Holker, who introduced a scale of remuneration applicable to every case. He found it impossible to provide a scale which should be adequate in all cases without being excessive in some. There was not only a difference between small and large cases, but there was a difference between simple cases and those which involved complicated questions of law. He had, therefore, resolved to leave that question to the creditors, subject to two provisions—first, that part of the remuneration should be by way of commission, partly on the amount realized, and partly on the dividend paid; and, secondly, that one-fourth of the creditors, or the bankrupt himself, should have an appeal to the Board of Trade in cases where they thought the remuneration extravagant. No costs were to be allowed to a trustee for duties performed by other persons which lay ordinarily within his province. All bills of costs, of every kind, were to be taxed, and all moneys paid into the Bank of England, except in special circumstances—where the business was to be carried on, and a local banking account was necessary or convenient. The accounts of the trustees were to be sent to the Board twice a-year, and were to be audited by them. Then came a provision to which some exception had been taken; and that was that the creditors might, if they chose, appoint the Official Receiver their trustee. It would be a hard thing if the creditors were to be precluded from appointing the Official Receiver, who might enjoy their confidence, and be specially qualified to deal satisfactorily with the winding up of the estate. No doubt, in the great majority of cases, the creditors would prefer to choose a trustee whom they knew, and who, from local and other circumstances, was specially suitable for the office. But in small estates it might often be desirable to appoint the Official Receiver. A very important part of the Bill related to the discharge of the bankrupt. He might at any stage of the proceedings apply for his discharge; but the application was not to be heard till the examination of the bankrupt was concluded; and at the time of hearing the Court must have before it the report of the Receiver to which he had referred, which was to contain a statement with regard to the conduct of the debtor. The Court, having those particulars before it, might refuse or suspend the certificate of discharge, or grant it, subject to any conditions, both as to after-acquired property, and other matters which it might think right to impose; and regard was especially to be had to the following circumstances:—First, whether or not the dividend had been less than 10*s.* in the pound; secondly, if the bankrupt had kept proper books; thirdly, if he had continued to carry on trade after he knew himself to be insolvent; fourthly, if he had engaged in rash speculation or lived extravagantly; fifthly, if he had put forward frivolous defences to actions by creditors; sixthly, if he had shown undue preference to particular creditors; seventhly, or if he had, on any previous occasion, paid less than 20*s.* in the pound to his creditors. The general effect would be that the Court must, in every case of failure, be informed of and consider every circumstance calling for its notice. And if the Court should be of opinion that the debtor had been guilty of misconduct, amounting to misdemeanour, it would be enabled, as a Court of First Instance, to commit the debtor, or make an order for his prosecution. In the latter case, the Director of Public Prosecutions would be required to take up the prosecution, and to maintain it on behalf of the public, and not to leave it to the action of individuals. When the offence committed by the bankrupt was less serious the Court might refuse or suspend his discharge. With reference to this, it was necessary to consider what would be the position of an undischarged bankrupt. Under the present law, it seemed to be a matter of perfect indifference whether an insolvent obtained his discharge or not. In the Controller's Report for 1881, it was stated that out of 5,207 bankrupts, only 606 had applied for their discharge. Of those who were absolutely entitled to their discharge, owing to their having paid 10*s.* in the pound, only about one-third thought it worth their while to go through that form. That state of things was a disgrace and a scandal to our law; and the Bill would be really nugatory unless the refusal of a discharge could be made a real terror to delinquents. Accordingly, it was proposed to make it a misdemeanour for an undischarged bankrupt to obtain credit to the extent of £20 without stating what his position was; and if this provision were maintained, there would in future be every inducement to a trader to fulfil the conditions without which he could not obtain his discharge. There were a number of minor provisions which he need not notice at any length. In the first place, the proposals of the Bill of 1881, with regard to the London Bankruptcy Court, and, generally, with reference to the methods of appeal, were practically renewed in the present measure. There was a change, however, which he believed would be satisfactory, and would excite a large amount of interest in a technical matter—that was the valuation of securities in the case of bills of exchange. By the Bill of 1881, the value of all the endorsements other than that of the debtor was to be estimated. Now, only those endorsements which were antecedent to those of the debtor were to be taken into account. The principle was clear, and it was this—that all securities on the estate were to be valued; but securities external to the estate need not be so valued. Thus, if A lent money to B, and C guaranteed the debt, A was not to be called upon to put a value upon C's guarantee. But if A lent money to B, and B gave as security a mortgage of his house or manufactory, A must value this mortgage before proving his debt. All he had done with respect to Bills was to assimilate them to all other kinds of securities. He had been largely influenced on that question by a deputation which had waited upon him of London and country bankers; and he believed the alteration would be found generally satisfactory. There was another question upon which he expected there would be considerable difference of opinion, and that was the question of certain preferential claims. In some small estates the assets were swallowed up by those preferential claims, which were of four classes—First, for wages due for a certain period prior to the bankruptcy; secondly, the landlord's claim for rent; thirdly, Imperial taxes; and, fourthly, local rates. He proposed that all those preferential claims should be done away with, except the first. He would submit that all the three latter claims ought to stand on the same footing. He did not think that the State could be expected to forego the advantage it now enjoyed in favour of the landlord or the local authority. He was much gratified, although somewhat surprised, that the Treasury made no objection to his suggestion. But he could not but feel that in the case of bankruptcies, the claim of the individual creditor, to whom the bankruptcy was a very serious matter, ought to be regarded before that of the State, or a local authority. It also appeared unfair to other creditors that there should be sprung upon them, after the bankruptcy, preferential claims of which they could by no possibility have had notice. In the last place, he had adopted this proposal because it seemed to him that the preferences now granted tended to bad and negligent administration by all the three classes to whom he had referred. For these reasons, he had thought it right to raise this matter for discussion. It was not a question of principle, and the decision upon it would be in the hands of hon. Members when the Bill was in Committee. He hoped he had now made clear to the House the general scope and operation of the measure in all ordinary cases, and it only remained for him to call attention to one important provision which was entirely new. He alluded to the provision which would affect the procedure of Courts of Law with regard to small debts, and which had a very important bearing on the interesting question of the total abolition of imprisonment for debt. He had retained in the Bill the provisions of the Bill of 1881 for the summary administration of small estates having less than £300 of assets. But what he now desired to call attention to was the clause which followed, and which dealt with the case of debtors who owed less than £50. That was the class of debtors who filled our County Courts with plaints, and added very considerably to the number of the occupants of our gaols. It had always been felt to be a great hardship that while a large debtor could with ease relieve himself of all his liabilities, he or his trustees might be prosecuting a poor man for 30*s*. or 40*s*.; and the latter might be sent to prison without having any means provided for him to make a composition with his creditors, and when, after satisfying this debt, he came out of gaol, he was still liable in full to all his other creditors. That inequality of the law was the subject of much complaint, and what the Bill proposed to do was to redress this inequality in two different ways. In the first place, by the provisions to which he had already called attention, he had made it more difficult for a large debtor to escape from his liabilities; and, his discharge being made conditional with regard to after-acquired property, he would stand in exactly the same position as the workman, whose wages might be arrested for the payment of his debt, and he would be liable to go to prison if it were proved that, having money to pay, he had refused, or neglected, to pay. But the more important provision which he had made for dealing with this subject was that under which a County Court Judge might, in future, make an order for the payment by a debtor who owed less than £50, by instalments or otherwise, of all or any part of his debts. A debtor, who was brought up on a judgment summons or a County Court plaint, might state that he was indebted to other persons, might give in a schedule of his debts, and propose an arrangement for discharging them, and if the Court thought it reasonable it might at once confirm it, so that a small debtor would then be in exactly the same position as a large debtor, who had succeeded in making a composition with his creditors, or in arranging for a scheme of liquidation. Although he had not abolished in all cases imprisonment for debt, yet, if these provisions became law, it could be no longer said that any inequality existed in the law as between rich and poor. The resort to imprisonment to secure payment would be much rarer, and a large discretion would be vested in the Judges to arrange for the relief of the small debtor by a reasonable composition. He did not think there was anything else at this stage to which he need call the attention of the House. He had to thank the House for the patience with which they had listened to his statement. This was not a matter which could be considered as a very exciting one, or one which was generally interesting. It did not lend itself to flights of eloquence; but it was a question which had a deep interest for great masses of our people, and especially for the great body of industrious tradesmen, who saw, with natural indignation, that under the present system swindling was made so easy, so safe, and so profitable, that they often found their hardly-won earnings wrested from them by the fraud and culpable misconduct of others, and who felt a somewhat natural impatience that the Legislature should have done so little to remedy a grievance which had been so long and so universally felt. He claimed for this Bill, that it was, at all events, a carefully considered attempt to deal with these great evils, which, in his opinion, had done much to undermine our commercial reputation, and to discredit our commercial capacity; and he bespoke for the measure what he felt assured it would receive at the hands of the House—a fair, a full, and even a favourable consideration.

Motion made, and Question proposd, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Chamberlain.*)

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, it would be unnecessary for him, in moving the Resolution which stood in his name—namely,

> "That this House, while anxious to remedy the proved defects in the existing Law and practice in Bankruptcy, is not prepared to entrust the powers proposed in the Bill to any department of the Government,"

to discuss the details of Bankruptcy administration and practice, for which he was hardly competent. He might remark, however, that it appeared to him that the right hon. Gentleman had offered very weak arguments in support of his proposal to abolish three of the four priorities established by law in the distribution of the estate of a bankrupt. There was only one reason why the right hon. Gentleman should not have abolished the fourth priority—namely, that he was afraid to do so. ["Oh, oh!"] He must say that if the right hon. Gentleman seriously intended upon these proposals, they would undoubtedly lead hereafter to considerable discussion, and would introduce into the consideration of this measure strong Party feeling. He would not, however, dwell on the details, as he desired rather to deal with the question of principle. There were a good many points on which he and the right hon. Gentleman would undoubtedly be agreed. The right hon. Gentleman had stated the objects of his Bill to be to enable the property of the debtor to be distributed as quickly and as cheaply as possible; and, secondly, the vindication of commercial morality. He entirely agreed with both objects. But whether the present Bill would accomplish either of them could hardly, after past experience, be confidently predicted. But his objections to the Bill were shortly these—that it went a long way beyond the proved necessities of the case; and that it introduced into our Bankruptcy system the curse of officialism, and especially the officialism of the Board of Trade. Anyone who read the debates in 1869 would see that the main feature of the speeches on both sides was the condemnation of the officialism existing before that day. In 1875 a Committee was appointed to inquire into the evils affecting Bankruptcy legislation, and that Committee in its Report said—

> "The special policy of the Act of 1869 was to give creditors the right to administer its provisions with the least possible official assistance."

The principle of it undoubtedly was the abolition of officialism as it then existed. He quite admitted that the officialism now proposed was of a slightly different character; but the question was, what had happened since 1869 to induce the House so largely to modify its principles of legislation and to go back to a system which was then condemned? The Committee of 1875 was one of great authority, and it had suggested that no proper investigation now took place with the state of a bankrupt's affairs, and also that something should be substituted for Sections 125 and 126 of the Act of 1869. Accordingly a Bill was proposed in the time of the late Government which was intended to effect that purpose. There was nothing in the Bill with regard to going back to the old system; but the difficulties were met by remedies of a simple and moderate character. The Bill was much discussed in both Houses of Parliament, and in the House of Lords, Lord Hatherley said that—

> "The principle on which all Bankruptcy Laws ought to be framed was to leave everybody to manage their own affairs, taking every precaution against abuse."

That was the opinion of the House of Lords. What was the opinion of the commercial bodies in the country? Nothing had struck him more than the Bill introduced by the hon. Members for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), the City of Bristol (Mr. Samuel Morley), and the City of Liverpool (Mr. Whitley), than the fact that all the proposals in it seemed to be put forward mainly for the extension of the powers of creditors. But they had also to consider this fact. They had the Petition which was presented to Lord Beaconsfield by the commercial men of the City of London, to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred. That Petition drew attention to these evils in the existing system—

> "First, it affords new and vicious facilities to insolvent persons to escape from the reasonable control and supervision of their creditors by private arrangements wholly beyond the jurisdiction of any public Court or Judge. Second, that the present law is rendered particularly nugatory by leaving to those who have already incurred losses the investigation of the bankrupt's affairs, and has laid upon them the obligation of exposing the misconduct of bankrupts, which in the plain interests of public morality and commercial policy should be dealt with not as a private matter, but by a public Court or Judge."

The way to meet these, they said, was by extending the powers of the Courts of Law. The right hon. Gentleman had asked whether he was prepared to say that these powers could be properly exercised by Courts of Law without assistance? He did not think that he was called upon to answer that; but what he did say was, that so far as they had any experience it was abundantly proved that the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman were open to the gravest objections. And there was another consideration, and that was whether those powers of Courts of Law could not be improved by extending the powers of the Public Prosecutor. The reason why these insolvent persons escaped so often was because there was no effective system of public prosecution. The right hon. Gentleman had said that one of the evils of the present system was the small amount distributable among the creditors. But he began by making new charges on the bankrupts' estates, and by establishing a host of officials. He did not understand what the right hon. Gentleman meant by saying that the question involved the appointment of a Minister of Commerce; and he ventured to think that if a Minister of Commerce were to interfere in commercial affairs to the same extent as it was now proposed that the Board of Trade should interfere in Bankruptcy, the country was not prepared for any such appointment. He confessed that he was of the same opinion as Mr. Mill, when he urged that—

> "The tendency on the part of public authorities to stretch their interference ought to be watched with unremitting jealously."

And he was satisfied that that consideration became of more importance when they came to examine the provisions of the present Bill. What was the number of cases with which the Board of Trade would, in all probability, have to deal? The Return for 1881 showed that the number of bankruptcies was 1,005; of liquidations, 5,216; and of composition, 3,506; so that, on the whole, there were something less than 10,000 cases a-year. To meet that number of cases what were the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman? He thought the House had hardly gathered the enormous variety of the functions to be conferred on the Board of Trade. He would endeavour to give them a summary. The Board was required to appoint 60 Official Receivers, and to remove them; to direct what reports they should make as to the bankrupt; what part they should take, either with or without the assistance of counsel, in the public examination of every bankrupt; what part they should take in the distribution; and what expenses they might incur. Then, as to trustees. The trustees, it would be remembered, were to be generally appointed by the creditors, and might often be very unfit persons. The Board of Trade was at any time to investigate the conduct of any trustee in the minutest detail, taking evidence on oath and holding local investigations, if necessary; to direct his proceedings as to paying money into the estate's account, or as to retaining money in his hands; to audit his accounts; to call him to account for mistakes; to require him to give security; to decide on his remuneration, and to remove him; to consider his final report; to hear any objection any person might make against it, and to decide as to the release of any trustee, and all that they might have to do in the case of every one of the 10,000 debtors. The Board of Trade was also to appoint all the Official Receivers, controllers, solicitors, clerks, and officers; to examine the yearly statement of every bankruptcy in the country; to keep a bankruptcy estate account, and authorize any payment out of it; to prepare books, summarizing the returns of all local Courts for the information of the public; to consult with the Lord Chancellor and the Court upon rules of business, and other endless details; and to report yearly to Parliament upon all their proceedings; and, lastly, every Official Receiver in the country was to act under the direction of the Board of Trade, and the Government thus became distinctly responsible for the due performance by him of the duties of investigating the conduct of every debtor, taking part in his public examination and prosecution, and of reporting on him to the Court, of acting as interim receiver, special manager of the estate, and interim trustee; of summoning all meetings of the creditors, presiding at the first meeting, issuing forms of proxy, advertising, and of reporting to the creditors on proposals for liquidation. That was a summary which was very imperfect, because he had only attempted to enumerate those duties and powers which had caught his eye; but they appeared to show a very considerable desire on the part of the Board of Trade to interfere. But the right hon. Gentleman said he was not at all satisfied with that amount of interference, and that it was only because public opinion was not ripe on the question that he did not claim much larger powers for the Board of Trade. Now, he did not know what feeling those proposals might excite in the House; but they suggested to him two or three questions of a very grave and serious character. In the first place, did the House approve of that enormous amount of patronage being given to any Government Department? It seemed to him to be the first step in the Americanization of our Civil Service; and it would require the strongest possible argument to justify it. Then those proposals must necessarily introduce into Bankruptcy administration very great confusion. He could quite understand those officials acting under the direction of the Board of Trade; it was easy also to understand their being under the special order of the Court; but it was difficult to understand that they should act under both; and anybody who looked at the Bill would find that those officials were to act under both authorities, and that they must necessarily be in considerable doubt whom they were to obey. By Clause 61, relating to the appointment of Official Receivers of debtors' estates, those officers were to act under the general authority and direction of the Board of Trade; but that they were to be officers of the Court to which they would be respectively attached. That was one instance of confusion. Then there was the case of the trustees. Throughout the Bill they were to be placed directly under the Board of Trade; they were to obey it in almost all their duties; yet by another provision of the Bill — Section 81 — in spite of that, the trustee had the power, acting as he was under the authority of the Board of Trade, of applying to the Court for directions in relation to any particular matter arising under the bankruptcy. But he came to the main objection which he entertained to that proposal—namely, that it made a State Department responsible for every detail in the administration of every bankrupt estate in the Kingdom. Every precedent in this country was entirely against such a principle; and although, as the right hon. Gentleman said, the present proposal was somewhat different from any that had preceded it, it only differed from them in being much worse, because the Department which was to interfere had a political head. He could not better state his own opinion on that proposal than in the words of Lord Sherbrooke, who said—

> "It is a very bold and startling innovation to mix up a political office like the Board of Trade with the duties of a Court of Law, so as to make the conduct of purely judicial proceedings an element in the stormy arena of politics."

The right hon. Gentleman had thought to justify his proposal on the analogy of the case of accidents. It was hardly necessary to point out the essential difference between the two things. The interference in those cases was only accepted by the House on the ground that danger to human life was involved; and the utmost extent to which interference had gone was giving a Government Department the power of inspection and inquiry. The right hon. Gentleman would not venture to compare the powers which the Board of Trade now possessed in regard to casualties to ships with the powers he desired to give it in respect to bankruptcies. The Board of Trade had a discretionary power of saying in the case of the loss of a ship whether an inquiry should be held. That was an important power, and one which was exercised with great prudence; but here they were to have an inquiry into every bankruptcy, and there was no necessity for the Department exercising a discretion in the matter. But his great objection to the proposal was that the duties were wholly unsuited to the Board of Trade, and the Board of Trade was wholly unsuited to the duties. They were going to add to the duties of a thoroughly overburdened Department; they had given enormously increased powers to the Board of Trade from time to time, and, on the whole, the public verdict would be that with certain exceptions it had administered those powers with prudence and a good deal of care; but that Department had always been most careful in resisting responsibilies where it could say they ought to be fairly left to individuals. It must be shown that they could be safely taken from individuals, and intrusted to the Board of Trade, before they came to the conclusion that, because the Board was likely to administer bankrupt estates better than the creditors, therefore they would transfer the work to it. Under the provisions of the Bill, the Board of Trade would have obviously to deal over and over again with purely legal questions. The 83rd section, for example, provided that the Board of Trade should take cognizance of the conduct of trustees; and in the event of any trustee not faithfully performing his duties, and duly observing all the requirements imposed on him by statute, rules, or otherwise, with respect to the performance of his duties, the Board should inquire into the matter, and take such action thereon as might be deemed expedient. Could anybody doubt that that was taking on themselves functions that had been hitherto solely intrusted to a Court of Justice, and that it was now proposed to give them to a Department which had had no experience of such duties, and the present constitution of which made it singularly disqualified for discharging them? They were about to make the President of the Board of Trade responsible for the administration of every bankrupt estate in the country, and for all the proceedings from beginning to end, except those that were purely legal; and how could they possibly do that without being certain that that House would intervene at every stage? They would have constant Questions addressed in the House to the President of the Board of Trade as to particular bankrupts and to particular trustees, and why they did not do this or do that; and they would have to go much further than the simple exercise of purely administrative functions by the Board of Trade, because the administration of the various authorities under the Act would become so inextricably mixed up that it would be impossible, if the House was to intervene, to separate questions relating to judicial proceedings from those relating to other matters. Another objection to the Bill was that they could not possibly stop there. If they were going to protect individuals against the consequences of lending money to each other, on what logical grounds could they refuse to protect them from the consequences of lending money to Companies and other bodies? The question of public Companies and Assurance Companies would be viewed in a different spirit from that which had hitherto prevailed, and they would also have to deal with foreign loans. And when interference in those matters was pressed on the House, as he felt certain it would be, they would not have a logical answer to offer if they once accepted this measure. In short, the result of the Bill would simply be to make the President of the Board of Trade the great detective in all the commercial proceedings of the country. They were going to give him power entirely alien to his proper duty—powers which the Presidents of the Board of Trade in the abstract were not qualified to discharge, which would be mischievous in themselves, and which he was afraid must fail. And if they failed, they would not only bring discredit on the legislation of the House, but their failure would have far-reaching evil effects, because they would have taught men to rely for protection in their commercial dealings, not on their own prudence, but on the watchfulness of a paternal Government. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving his Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, while anxious to remedy the proved defects in the existing Law and practice in Bankruptcy, is not prepared to entrust the powers proposed in the Bill to any department of the Government,"—(*Mr. Stanhope*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND said, he was sorry he could not agree with the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, who, fortunately for himself, did not appear to be practically acquainted with the working of the Bankruptcy Laws. As a member of one of the oldest banking establishments in the Metropolis, and partner in a country bank, he unfortunately had had frequent cases of bankruptcy under his notice; and he had not the slightest hesitation in saying that the principle of the Bill now before the House would be of great advantage to the commercial classes. Last Session he had himself introduced a Bankruptcy Bill, and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, in supporting the second reading, said he did so because that Bill had adopted his principle, and such imitation was the sincerest flattery. He quite admitted he had adopted the Government principle because he approved it, and also because he considered the Government could not oppose their own principle in any Bill; but its details were so different as practically to make it another Bill altogether. But if he flattered the right hon. Gentleman last year, he had this year returned the flattery, for in the Bill he had introduced he had adopted no less than 16 clauses of the Bill he (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) had introduced, and modified 12 others; but to him it was a matter of indifference who was the first to initiate reform in the Bankruptcy Laws, as long as the country obtained the benefit of it. Since the Act of 1869 was passed there had been no less than 105,000 bankruptcies, liquidations, and trust deeds, involving a sum of £245,000,000, and the interests of 5,000,000 of their fellow-countrymen—that was a population almost as large as that of Ireland. He hoped, under these circumstances, this would not be made a Party question; but that all would do their best to pass a Bill which would be of so much benefit to the community. The present Brankruptcy Law was a gigantic failure, and successive Ministries had deplored its uselessness; but of all Acts that had been passed relating to Bankruptcy, the Act of 1869 was the worst, and it was a public scandal that a nation like England should have been willing for 12 or 13 years to have submitted to a law which in any other country would not have been allowed to exist for a single year. He admitted that previous to that measure the action of the Courts was dilatory and the costs excessive, and, therefore, the system of private arrangement was resorted to before it was known how it would serve as a screen for fraudulent debtors, and be made the means of dissipating the property of the creditors. Solicitors and accountants were, as a class, a high-principled body of men; but, like every other class, it had its black sheep—men who could only be described as wreckers. So well had these men learnt their work that it was stated in the Memorial presented by the bankers and merchants to the Prime Minister in 1880, which had already been twice alluded to—

"That whereas bankruptcies proper had descended from 1,351 in 1869 to 1,156 in 1879, yet liquidations and compositions had risen from 3,651 to 11,976, with total liabilities as to the latter class alone of the enormous sum of £25,379,472;"

and, what was even more important, that 93 per cent of all insolvent estates were administered so as to escape those provisions of the Act which referred to the examination of the debtor or of the trustee's accounts, charges, and conduct. The annual Report of Mr. Mansfield Parkyns, the Controller in Bankruptcy, was a recurring indictment against the Act of 1869, and showed how the dishonest debtor got out of his liabilities and the honest creditor was cheated. He should himself prefer, with Lord Sherbrooke, there being no Bankruptcy Law at all; but, in the present state of things, that could not be hoped for. The law, however, should be altered so as to diminish and not to increase the means of escaping from liabilities, and should not be used merely as a means of whitewashing a debtor. At present a debtor unwilling, but not unable, to pay his debts had no difficulty in calling a meeting of his creditors, at a time and place most inconvenient to attend them, and by means of his friends and by proxies, some friendly and some fraudulent, elect a friendly trustee, have a liquidation agreed to, and, stifling all investigation, could obtain his discharge without paying a single penny to his creditors. Although every bankrupt was not necessarily dishonest, yet very few came into bankruptcy without going through a course of demoralization; and having found the result profitable they would be tempted to recur to it again and again. A case came under his notice only two or three days ago in which a man, having become insolvent, had called his creditors together. He had commenced a business with a borrowed capital of under £300, and carried it on under three separate names, not one of which was his own, and by means of fictitious bills. He had even gone so far as to give a bill of sale on his furniture to one of his clerks. He had in his pocket a friendly petition in bankruptcy; and a few minutes after the meeting was over the petition was filed and everything was done to smother up the whole affair. It was perfectly illusory to suppose that creditors, with very few exceptions, would prosecute fraudulent bankrupts. Men did not like to throw good money after bad; and if a debtor had only sufficient cunning to distribute his risks in such a manner that it was no man's interest to follow him he would escape altogether. Creditors expected little and got less. It was not the interest of the trustees to raise any questions; as was shown by the fact that at the present moment there were thousands of estates in liquidation under the Act of 1869 where an account had never been rendered, and all the creditors knew was that the estates had gone into the hands of trustees and never came out again. Our present system of credit made it easy for one man to speculate with the money of another; and the fact that it was not his own money he was speculating with did not make a man more careful of the risks he ran. It must be borne in mind that the annual loss to the nation by insolvencies and bankruptcies was not less, probably it was even more, than £15,000,000, and that loss was borne in reality by the general public. He agreed with the President of the Board of Trade as to the great danger of social demoralization created by the acts of these fraudulent traders; and he regretted to say that this kind of dishonesty was greatly on the increase, and would continue to increase unless something were done to check it. Proceedings in bankruptcy were generally a campaign against knavery, and to prevent the spread of fraudulent bankruptcies a good law should see that fraudulent bankrupts were severely and speedily punished. The Comptroller General stated that the tendency of easy liquidation was to encourage the growing opinion amongst a certain class that it was unnecessary and even foolish to pay debts in full at all, and, unless checked, the feeling would spread that was enunciated lately by one of the learned gentlemen of the Law, that no man properly conscious of his duty to his family would ever think of paying 20*s*. in the pound. A debtor should be made to feel that he was upon his trial, and that the onus lay upon him to prove clearly his inability to pay. Bankruptcy should be made as disagreeable as possible; it should be made a disgrace, instead of being, as it now was, a means of whitewashing a man and enabling him to recommence a career of bankruptcy and fraud. It was with great satisfaction that the commercial public saw the question taken up by the great commercial Department of the Board of Trade, and a measure introduced by its President; because they felt that the Board of Trade had the means of obtaining information as to the real defects of the present system, and could, if it liked, deal with the matter in a comprehensive and impartial manner. The great fault of previous amendments, or attempted amendments, of the Bankruptcy Law was that they had been introduced by lawyers, who from their training were not qualified to judge of or to know the wants and necessities of the commercial community, and who were not sufficiently conversant with the working of the details of the measures they wished to initiate or reform. The Bankruptcy Bills introduced by Attorney Generals never had a chance of success, because they were crowded out by other business, in which the Law Officers took more interest; but now that the subject had been taken up by the Board of Trade, there was some hope of its being carried through. The transfer of the subject from a legal Department to an administrative one should be valuable as insuring a greater continuity of attention, and being open to the control of this House, instead of confined to legal functionaries who were practically beyond its influence. He sincerely trusted that the Bill would be passed, although there were one or two points in it with which he could not agree. The President of the Board of Trade stated that he hoped to have in hand £1,000,000 belonging to creditors; that he intended to keep it in the Bank of England and pay the expenses of the administration of the Act out of that money. The object of that was to prevent fees being increased. But if, as the President of the Board of Trade stated, the Bill was to facilitate the speedy distribution of assets of creditors, it was not right that the property of the creditors should be kept in that way. It should be honestly put that the fees must be increased; they should not pretend to pay the expenses from the fees of suitors, when they really paid them from the property of the creditors. The next point as to which he disagreed with the right hon. Gentleman was the question of rent. He thought this was the thin edge of the wedge to destroy the right of Distress all over the country. At any rate, the question should be brought forward in a comprehensive manner, and dealt with as a whole, and not treated by this negative sort of legislation, which, nevertheless, was very effective. The argument of the President of the Board of Trade might be applicable to the back rent, but not to the rent of the current half-year. Although he should oppose in Committee a great many of the details of the Bill, still he could not help thinking it was a most valuable measure on the whole.

Mr. W. H. WILLS said, that, notwithstanding the speech of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope), he could not but regard the Bill before the House for second reading as a sound and well-considered endeavour to remedy a great evil, which, to the mercantile community, had become well nigh intolerable. A reform in the Bankruptcy Law had been very much wanted, and had been too long delayed; but the importance to the country of a really good Bankruptcy Law was so great that it was worth while waiting for the satisfactory Bill now under consideration. In the year 1878 the loss to the commercial community by debtors in bankruptcy amounted to £25,000,000 sterling; and even in a country with so large a trade as the United Kingdom, that was a very serious diminution of profits. This question, as had been remarked by the hon. Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) was not a Party question at all. Both sides of the House were largely interested in putting it on a footing satisfactory and sound; and he hoped, therefore, that the Bill of the President of the Board of Trade would receive careful and impartial consideration. When the present Bankruptcy Act was passed, in 1869, it was hoped that it would remove abuses, and many looked forward to it with this expectancy; but they found that it was costly in operation and cumbersome in its working, and the only thing, as they had learned from experience, was to keep out of Bankruptcy Courts, because the assets were swallowed up under the present law in a proportion far beyond what would be the case if the law were a good one. Over 75 per cent of the bankruptcies in the country realized less than 5*s.* in the pound; and therefore it was obvious that the assets should be dealt with as economically as possible. Under the existing law a system of liquidation by private arrangement had sprung up, and had proved disadvantageous to trade. There had been collusion between the insolvent and his friends, fictitious claims had been set up, and creditors had been robbed in the most flagrant manner. What creditors really desired was that there should be a prompt division of the salvage, and that that partition should be coupled with a certain cheapness. If a man could not pay 20*s.* in the pound, what he could pay should be divided among his creditors as fairly as possible. Where a man had been guilty of recklessness and fraud, it was necessary in the interests of business that he should be punished severely. Creditors had not the time to look after such cases; and when a man in a large way of business had made a bad debt, he found it better to look for new business than to throw good money after bad in the hope of realizing a dividend. The first Bankruptcy Law he recollected was that in force in 1864. It was founded, no doubt, upon officialism. There was a searching investigation under that law, and a bankrupt had to pass three examinations before he was entitled to his discharge. After that measure had been in operation for some time it was not so well administered as at a former period, and general dissatisfaction arose. Then they had the Law of 1868. The affairs of the insolvent were left mainly to the creditors themselves, and the power of the official assignees was largely diminished. The Bankruptcy Act of 1869 was a combination of officialism on the one hand, and private and voluntary effort on the part of the creditors. The process had not proved cheaper than when legal advisers were required. The public had now fallen into the hands of accountants, who, it had been found from experience, took as much of the assets as the lawyers formerly did. The Bill of the President of the Board of Trade reverted to a kind of officialism; but it was in connection with his own Department, and he (Mr. Wills) thought this proposal would be more satisfactory than the officialism of the High Court of Justice, because there would be a readiness of access to the Board of Trade, which would shorten the proceedings in bankruptcy, and which could not be expected in connection with the High Court. If he had the choice between officialism on the one hand and creditors' management on the other, he should be inclined to adopt officialism, because then there would be an opportunity of punishing fraud; whereas, if creditors' management were adopted, the bankrupt would always get off and receive no punishment. He had often thought that the trading community would be better off without any Bankruptcy Law at all. He should himself prefer a Bill which dealt only with the distribution of assets, except in cases of gross fraud on the part of the debtor. There were clauses in the present Bill with regard to the debtor's discharge which were complicated and would be difficult to work. If creditors desired to let a man free they should have power to bring about his release. Clauses 25, 26, and 27 of the Bill provided that the debtor should be discharged unless he was proved to have done certain things. He thought that the onus of proof for discharge should be thrown upon the debtor, and that it should not be left for him to get off if he could not show that he had properly done certain things. From the joint action of the Board of Trade and the Local Courts he expected there would be difficulties; but nothing but experience would show what friction there would be between the two authorities. He was strongly in favour of the public examination of the debtor, which would prevent a great deal of fraud, because it would enable the creditor to put any question he liked to the debtor. There was a provision which stipulated that all money should be paid into the Bank of England. That might be found difficult and inconvenient in some cases; but in the country the money would be paid into the local banks, and he believed that those banks would be largely used for the purpose. He thought that the principle of the Bill, though it might not be perfect, was based on fairness to all, and as the President of the Board of Trade, who had introduced the measure, was a man of large experience of the present law and the way it affected business, he was sure to win the confidence of commercial men. Whatever blots or drawbacks there might be in the Bill could be removed in Committee, and to that the right hon. Gentleman who had introduced the Bill would not raise any objection. He did not suppose the present Bill, or any future Bill, would ever save the time and expense which business men would lose in attempting to recover their share of assets; but if it succeeded in punishing fraud, wherever discovered, it would accomplish much. If the Bill did succeed, the President of the Board of Trade would be entitled to the thanks of all classes of the community; and even if it should prove unsuccessful, he would at least deserve credit for having made an earnest attempt to remedy a state of things of which all were thoroughly ashamed.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that he could not join in the chorus of commendation which had come from every part of the House with regard to this Bill. This Bill was a signal instance of the utter groundlessness of the charge as to the evil effects produced by alleged Obstruction in Parliament. This Bill was brought in by a right hon. Gentleman who, two years ago, introduced a totally different measure, and who, before that, had his name on the back of a Bill also totally different. That showed that the delay which had taken place had proved advantageous to the community, for it had given the right hon. Gentleman an opportunity of maturing his views. If that process of enlightenment had not gone on, and the measure introduced two years ago had passed, the right hon. Gentleman would probably have felt himself bound now to bring in an amending Bill to remedy the defects of his former measure. Seeing how much depended on exact phraseology, it appeared to him that the right hon. Gentleman had needlessly departed from the well-known and well-understood phraseology which was borrowed from the Bill of 1869. He thought also, on examination, it would be found that the Bill bore evidence of hasty work. Rules of Court, ridiculously and inexcusably inaccurate, were quoted in support of matters to which they did not refer, and it was impossible to verify the references. Some of the clauses also were incompatible with one another, as in the case of Clauses 9 and 10. Similar defects were also to be found in Clauses 16 and 20.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now engaged in discussing the second reading of the Bill. The hon. Member is entitled to refer to any clause in order to support his argument; but he is not entitled to go through the Bill clause by clause.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he had merely wished to base an argument on the fact that the hasty drafting of the Bill was of such a nature that it would only be reasonable to have a further postponement of the consideration of the Bill. He had placed on the Paper a Notice of his intention to move that the Bill be read a second time on that day six months; and he wished to support that Motion by showing that a delay of six months, or even more, might be of considerable advantage in affording time for the redrafting and reconstruction of the Bill. In order to do so, he had been anxious to show that the Bill, from beginning to end, presented such marks of haste and inconsiderateness that the argument in favour of a postponement was irresistible. But after the ruling of the Chair he would not dwell further upon that branch of the argument. In introducing the Bill, the right hon. Gentleman had professed his anxiety to save honest men from the stigma of bankruptcy, and yet he wished to do away with liquidation by arrangement, and was unfriendly to arrangements generally. In the Report of the Controller in Bankruptcy for 1881, which the right hon. Gentleman had quoted, he found statistics showing comparatively the amount of assets distributed in a number of bankruptcy cases, and in a like number of composition cases; and the figures showed that in 29 per cent of the cases dealt with by the former process, and in 28 per cent by the latter, the dividends were less than 1*s.* in the pound. With regard to liquidation by arrangement, there was a rule providing that the Court, if it held the creditors' interests to be promoted by proceedings in bankruptcy proper, might order such proceedings to be taken; but the right hon. Gentleman had carefully abstained from telling the House in what percentage of cases this had been done. He presumed, therefore, that, in the majority of cases, liquidation was not much worse for the interests of the creditor than bankruptcy. An important change would be introduced by the clause that handed over to Government officials the distribution of the assets. The country had already had some experience of this system in the tedious case of the Banda and Kirwee Booty, and in the distribution of other prize money by Government Departments, and he ventured to say that the Board of Trade would not be found to do its work more speedily or more efficiently than the Admiralty and the War Office. An income was to be derived from fees, which were to cover the expenses of this new system; but he could not suppose that an adequate fund would thus be obtained, and he felt tolerably sure, on the other hand, that a very serious annual charge would by this means be placed upon the Exchequer.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN said, he did not agree with his hon. Friend the Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor) in his general criticisms of the Bill. He thought the President of the Board of Trade had lucidly and ably explained the principles and procedure of the measure, and that the House recognized that. He also thought the Bill itself was to be commended. He would not follow his hon. Friend opposite in his detailed criticism; but, in his judgment, the Bill was a model that might be with advantage followed. It was both an amending and a consolidating measure. Many Bills were introduced into that House which were legislative puzzles. They could only be understood by experts, and even experts had to have at their elbow a Law Library before they unravelled their meaning. They contained endless references to other Acts, or clauses in Acts. This was both confusing and inconvenient. Now, the Bill before them comprised, in a comparatively short compass, all the law respecting civil procedure in Bankruptcy. When a man got possession of it he could learn all the restraints, powers, and protections that Bankruptcy Law provided. But, whatever opinions might prevail about the President of the Board of Trade's speech, or about the Bill itself, they were all agreed that the law as it stood needed reformation. On that point there was no difference amongst them. The law as it now existed was bankruptcy made easy. It was a gentlemanly way by which a man, who so wished it, could get rid of his liabilities. There were two chief abuses in the existing law. The first was the facility with which a fraudulent and reckless trader could laugh at his creditors. By going through a ludicrously easy set of forms, he could defy the man who had trusted him, rid himself of his responsibility, and start afresh, as if nothing had taken place. The second abuse was the readiness with which trustees could get possession of a bankrupt's estate and keep it. [*A laugh.*] Yes; keep it for a length of time—sometimes altogether—but always keep it until a very large proportion of it had been dissipated in unnecessary expenses. The Bill before the House aimed at remedying these two grave scandals. The principle that lay at the base of the proposal was that the community, as well as the creditors, were interested in a debtor's affairs—that was, they were all interested in seeing that reckless speculation and fraudulent trading were stopped. In future, if the Bill passed, debtors would be subjected to searching examinations, not by fragmentary inquiries from an incohesive body of creditors, but by trained officials, who would ascertain whether the bankrupt had been trading beyond his capital, gambling, or living above his means. If he had been engaged in any of these practices, his discharge would be withheld, and his powers of trading afterwards would be largely curtailed, if not, in some instances, prevented. The trustees would not be allowed to retain in their possession vast sums of money, nor would they be allowed to charge the estate with all manner of expenses. These examinations would be conducted, and this control would be got, by trained officials acting under the direction and supervision of the Board of Trade. Whether this machinery would succeed in accomplishing the end which the promoters of the Bill had in view experience alone would show; but the intention of the measure was to bring about this result. The Bill itself did not largely alter the procedure of the present Act; but it lent it operative force. The law would be, with sundry alterations, the same in future as it was at present; but the Act would be enforced, not by creditors — sometimes in collusion with the debtors — but by experts. They might call them receivers, or inspectors, or detectives, or inquisitors — it was matterless what name they gave them—but those officials would really be charged with the supervision of the commercial honesty of the country. It was a debatable question whether the advantage that would be conferred by making the Bankruptcy Laws operative would not be counterbalanced by the disadvantages that might be caused by the extension of the injurious system of Government officialism. That point was legitimately and fairly raised by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope). He (Mr. Cowen) confessed he had great sympathy with the proposal. He viewed with great apprehension the ever-widening net-work of officialism which was being thrown over the doings of private life. It was little use uttering barren protests against the evident bent of public opinion; but he had said often, and he said again, that he distrusted this incessant and rapidly-spreading practice of State interference. The President of the Board of Trade, he thought, was too sanguine as to the results of his measure. He very much doubted whether it would effect all the benefit he looked for. There was nothing more remarkable in the long history of Bankruptcy legislation than the small changes that had been produced by the endless Bills that had been prepared on the subject. If they compared the present state of affairs with the position 40 years ago, they would be struck with how little practical improvement had been made in this very difficult branch of legislation. It was not 20 years since the late Lord Westbury —in his characteristically cynical manner—came down to the House and submitted a Bankruptcy Bill. He described the evils existing then much as they described them now. He said the Bill he introduced was the combined production of the highest legal skill and the ripest commercial experience; and that if Parliament passed it, it would put an end, once and for ever, to the recklessness and rascality that disgraced British trade. The Bill did pass, and, in a period of time not longer than it took to pass, it was found, in practice, to be a complete failure. With that, and with other equally conspicuous disappointments, it was not wise for them to indulge in too hopeful expectations as to the result of the present measure. The reason for the failure was not in the Acts nor in their administration, but it was to be found in human nature. The truth was that when a man in business made a bad debt, he got angry, and said hard things of the debtor. He might attend the first meeting of creditors, and swear in spirit, if not in words, at the loss he had sustained; but in a few days, certainly in a few weeks, his ill-temper simmered down, and he submitted to the inevitable. Before a few months were over, he had nearly forgotten what had taken place, and did not wish to be reminded of it, as it was only a source of irritation and annoyance. This was the case, had been the case, and would be the case, however clever the Bankruptcy Bills were that they might pass. He contended that there were only two ways of effectually dealing with the subject. The first and best way was to abolish the Bankruptcy Laws altogether. If a man was foolish enough, weak enough, or careless enough to make a bad debt, let him suffer. If he broke the physical laws, he suffered in his body; if he broke the commercial laws, let him suffer in his pocket. If they would only put on one side the vast monetary loss by bankruptcy—adding to it the loss of time and temper—and then put on the other side the small results which accrued through all the power the Bankruptcy Laws supplied, they would find the balance was very heavily against the law. But England was a country of compromises; and although English merchants and tradesmen knew this, they could not screw their courage up to take so bold a step. They would go on tinkering, in the hope that they would ease matters. Possibly they might; but they would never cure them. Trade might be reduced by such a change as he advocated; but reckless speculation and unsound commerce would be abolished, and what was left would be healthy and profitable. Another mode of dealing with the Bankruptcy Laws was to follow the example set them in France. That oft-decried body, the French Convention, passed a Resolution with respect to debts that this and other countries might copy with advantage. It declared that any man who contracted a debt should never be freed from his liability to pay until it was paid. That declaration was made the basis of French commercial law, and what was the result? That French trade, as a whole, was sounder than any trade in Europe, and the French Bankruptcy Law was more effective than that of any other nation. But he supposed neither the House nor the country was prepared to take these drastic and democratic steps. The Bill before them had many provisions that might be useful. But the essence of the scheme lay in the establishment of a body of supervisors; and, as he said before, he viewed such a plan with great misgivings. They had far too much supervision and inspection. It was being carried into every department of political, social, civil, commercial, and even private life. It was contrary altogether to his conceptions of Liberal government. The former theory of English Liberals—and the one which he was old-fashioned enough to believe in—was that the less State meddling they had, the better for the community. Their effort should be to encourage individuality and independence, even if it went to the extent of eccentricity. That used to be the theory of the Party which sat on that side of the House; but it had fallen in with an entirely different policy now, and it was the special supporter of officialism and centralization. Such procedure could only end in emasculating and enervating the population. It took all its elasticity and flexibility from it. They might not see the effects immediately; but they would be felt afterwards. The President of the Board of Trade had cited the case of State interference in factories, mines, and ships. That was quite true. But interference in this case was justifiable. The State was warranted in interfering when any section of society was too weak to protect itself. Then the Executive ought to come to its relief. Women, children, and young persons required this assistance. Sailors, too, who laboured under exceptional conditions, required exceptional legislation. But these rules did not apply in this case. What the Government were going to do now was to protect grown men from the consequences of their own folly and carelessness. He repeated his distrust and objection to this system of legislation; but, at the same time, he recognized that the law required altering, and that the present attempt to alter it was an honest and conscientious one. While he sympathized with the spirit of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire, he could not go the length of voting against the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. LEWIS, after speaking of the confidence with which former measures had been brought forward, and the disappointment produced by their operation, said, that the Acts of 1849 and 1869 ranged between the two poles of excessive officialism and excessive creditor's power. The Act of 1869 was essentially a creditor's measure. It gave the commercial community all they asked for in the way of power to creditors to deal with the estates of debtors; and now it was said to have been a signal failure. This was owing to the indifference of the trading community. At first a creditor might be full of determination to realize all he could for himself and others; but he soon said he must carry the debt to profit and loss, and make up for it in some other way. Now the commercial community said they wanted some official Government assistance which would turn bad debts into good ones. From the creditor's point of view, the first clause of a Bankruptcy Bill should be that every debtor should pay 20*s*. in the pound; and the second, if he failed to do so, that the public should pay it for him. It was they themselves, however, who were chiefly to blame; for it should be understood that the chief cause of bankruptcy was the over-trading of the community. The travellers, the agents of the creditors, pressed upon a man more goods than he was able to dispose of, and hence his insolvency. In his opinion, the Act of 1849 was the best that had ever been passed on the subject; and had Lord Westbury taken it as the foundation for his own measure, he would have produced the best result of which the subject was capable. Lord Westbury attributed the failure of his attempt to the refusal of Parliament to give him a Chief Judge. The Act of 1869 contained provision for a Chief Judge; but he sat in Lincoln's Inn, and all the work was done by the Registrars; and one of the worst features of the present measure was that it did not assume to fix any Judge of the High Court with the responsibility of administering it. He thoroughly sympathized with the hopeful spirit which marked the speech of the President of the Board of Trade that night; but he could not help remembering that, in all probability, there was no Member of the House whose commercial career had been so short and so successful as that of the right hon. Gentleman, or who had had so little experience of bad debts. If the Bill passed in its present form, there would arise before the next six months elapsed an indignant howl from the trading classes, and they would declare that King Log with his weight was not less formidable than King Stork with his bill. It was somewhat amusing to note the weight given by the President of the Board of Trade to the public examination of the debtor. He had seen a good deal of such public examination, and he would venture to say that a more perfunctory, more purposeless, more uninstructive ordeal, when conducted by a public official, could not be devised. What was wanted was the spur of personal interest on the part of the creditor examining, or the spur of professional prestige on the part of the man examining for the trustee. He objected, too, to the clause which would enable a creditor to make a man a bankrupt before it was known whether the creditors desired him to be a bankrupt or not. He would take the instance of a gentleman's son who had been extravagant, but from whom his father wished to avert the stigma of bankruptcy. Under this Bill he would not have any opportunity of doing so, inasmuch as the young man would be gazetted a bankrupt before he could have the opportunity of saving the family credit. That certainly would not be for the benefit of the young man's creditors. The right hon. Gentleman had indeed attempted to grapple with the difficulty of securing an efficient trustee by making him removable at the discretion of the Board; but by so doing he introduced fresh complications. Each particular case would be liable to be brought before Parliament, and the result could not fail to be embarrassing. He had observed in the Bill a provision that the debtor should be granted his discharge only on payment of 10*s.* in the pound. That was an old friend; and the only effect of it had been found to be to tempt traders, when their business was going to the bad, to purchase freely and make fat stocks, in order to obtain the necessary dividend. Indeed, he might say, generally, that every provision outside those which enabled the creditors to deal with their own property as they pleased only added to the expense of administering the estate and raised hopes which proved delusive. He would like to draw the attention of the House to Clause 16, the clause dealing with composition, and he would ask the House whether such a description of the material to form part of a judicial document ever found its way into an Act of Parliament? He must say that he thought that the Composition Clause very hard on an honest debtor. What did the House think of this—

> "Provided that if at any subsequent time facts are brought to the knowledge of the Court which satisfy it that its opinion as to the cause of the bankruptcy is erroneous,"

then it may annul the composition? He hoped that while the House would be active and desirous to protect honest creditors against dishonest debtors, it would also protect honest debtors against the mistakes of the Court. So, again, with reference to the limitation to 5*s.* in the pound. He believed that all those hard-and-fast rules were absolutely beside the question and indiscreet. Creditors, as a rule, were perfectly well able to understand the value of an estate; and it seemed to him that the provisions were unduly hard on the honest debtors, and therefore likely to work badly. He thought those who were supporters of women's rights had better look at that Bill. Women were to trade under the advantages of that munificent Bill, passed in the small hours last Session, and he thought they would very probably be seen figuring in the Bankruptcy Court; but not only with reference to them, but in reference to all persons likely to be affected by the Bill, he could not withhold his protest against what he considered the severe and reckless provision of Clause 27. That clause was to the effect that where an undischarged bankrupt obtained goods of the value of £20 on credit without stating that he was an undischarged bankrupt, he should be guilty of a misdemeanour. In this practical community, where it was well known that there were thousands of men walking about as undischarged bankrupts, such a suggestion was monstrous. There were offences so heavily punished as to become obnoxious to one's moral sense, which made one feel punishment should ordinarily follow speedily on the guilty; but such efforts as those to patch up a Bill were evidence of its weakness, and seemed to him only to excite indignation. One other subject he wished to refer to was that of the Official Receivers, of whom they were told 60 would be sufficient. If so, there would be no efficient public examinations. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain) was in this dilemma —if these Official Receivers were to be of the smallest value, there must be a large number of them, otherwise all the work would be done by deputy. They were going to have an ineffective official system, which, for the sake of economy, was so narrow in its number and effect, that the work must necessarily be done not only by deputy, but by deputy's deputy. It was proposed to make the Registrars of the County Courts Official Receivers. Now, there were a vast number of cases where the Official Receiver would be placed in possession of, perhaps, a large mill, employing some hundreds of hands, or of a bank with 80 or 90 *employés.* How was he to control and manage the whole business?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said he did not wish to interrupt the hon. Gentleman; but the creditors might apply to the Official Receiver to appoint an official manager, and no doubt in such a case they would apply.

Mr. LEWIS said, he was obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for the suggestion; but the Official Receiver was not likely always to submit to the creditors. He was of opinion that 60 of these officials were not, in the least degree, adequate. He wished to say something of the old official system, and the right hon. Gentleman would, perhaps, pardon him if he said he did not think he quite understood the position of the old official assignees. They were expressly prohibited by Act of Parliament from interfering with the creditor's assignee in realizing the estate. They had to receive the money, and the creditor's assignee had to manage the conduct of the bankruptcy. The right hon. Gentleman had said that there had been jobbery in the appointment of the official assignees under the old system; but was he aware that the appointments were made by the Lord Chancellor? Did he wish the House to understand that previous Lord Chancellors had been guilty of jobbery in regard to those appointments? If so, he made a very serious attack, and ought to say to whom it referred. There were, no doubt, two or three cases of defalcation on the part of certain persons, whose names, however, he would not mention. One case occurred in a man's declining years, and no doubt the case was a very distressful one. He was a man who had had the respect of the commercial classes in the City of London; and during the last experience of the Acts of 1849 and 1861 the unfortunate effect of such cases was to give the finishing blow to that semi-official system that had been in vogue for many years. He believed the Bill paltered with the question with which it professed to deal. The Act of 1869 had undoubtedly failed, it was said, and the ignominous result was that the trading community came there and asked to be delivered from their own idol. It should not be forgotten, when they heard the complaints of the trading community, that they had the whole lollipop they asked for given to them in 1869; that everything the commercial child asked for was given without stint by the Government; and now the trading community came forward and said it did not suit their purpose. He contended that the semi-official system suggested would prove an obstruction in the management of business, and that the Board of Trade was already too much overburdened with business to take into its hands the duty which this Bill would impose upon it. The Bill would be infinitely improved, as cpmpared with that suggested system, if it were turned entirely into an official management Bill, placing everything in the hands of some Official Representative of the community, who should have the entire matter in his hands. The Bill, if passed as it stood, would only lead to further disorder and dissatisfaction, and in 12 months it would be generally condemned. This was the first Bill that was to be sent to a Grand Committee. It was a highly technical measure, and he wanted to know what probability there was that it would be fully and satisfactorily considered by that Committee? The public would not be satisfied unless there was a full and complete discussion of all the salient features of the measure; and, under the circumstances, he believed they would have to discuss it over again when it came back to the House, because of the great complexity, the difficulty, and the marvellous importance of all its provisions.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, he would not follow the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) in all the points he had raised; but he would remind him that the public had the chief right to be considered in this matter, for there was no small amount of dissatisfaction in the present day at the scandalous administration of the Bankruptcy Law. Some hon. Members, in addressing the House, talked about the foreign competition with which our home manufacturers had to contend; but in the present day the home manufacturer and the honest trader had to contend with a greater competition. They had to face the competition of dishonesty. The man who paid his 20*s.* in the pound was exposed to the competition of the man who did not intend to pay 5*s.* He firmly believed that one of the causes of the depression in trade at the present time, was the losses created by the unfair competition of dishonest traders. They found, from the Returns of the official Comptroller in Bankruptcy, that in 1878 the losses from bad debts in this country amounted to something like £25,000,000 sterling, and at the lowest computation for the past year it must have been £20,000,000. He thought it was high time that some satisfactory effort should be made to grapple with this unsatisfactory state of things, no matter what difficulties the Legislature might have to contend with. An hon. Member (Mr. A. O'Connor) had said that he would not join in the general chorus of congratulation. Well, he (Mr. Fowler) should do so; he thought that this was a *bonâ fide* and a statesmanlike attempt to deal with the question, although saying that would not deter him from criticizing what he deemed to be its weak points. The trading community and the country generally would also recognize it to be such, notwithstanding the unfair and inaccurate criticisms of the hon. Member for Londonderry. One of the great evils they had to grapple with in dealing with this question was to prevent dishonest men really making a business of bankruptcy —making themselves bankrupt over and over again for dishonest purposes—and unless they sought, in a strong and determined way, to put a stop to this practice they would only perpetuate the evils they were trying to destroy. The hon. Member (Mr. Lewis), with great adroitness had endeavoured to convey to the House an impression of the Act which he (Mr. Fowler) certainly did not think was to be found in the four corners of it. He had dwelt with great force and power on the hardship and great injustice that would accrue from a debtor getting a receiving order, and the terrible consequences that would result from the failure of Government contractors, for example; but his hon. Friend seemed to have forgotten the circumstances under which this receiving order was to be made. Under existing circumstances, he would be actually adjudicated bankrupt; but now there must be an act of bankruptcy proved, and a Petition presented before that was done. The hon. Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne (Mr. J. Cowen) pointed out what was likely to be the result in the end. That was the abolition of all bankruptcy. He could quite understand a Bankruptcy Law which prevented a man from being treated as a felon, consigned to capital punishment or perpetual imprisonment; but he was at a loss to understand why if a man had contracted with his creditors to pay 20*s*. in the pound, he should be allowed to tender them, say, 7*s*. 6*d*., or may be 2*s*. 6*d*., without their leave. There were one or two points of detail to which he would invite the attention of the Board of Trade. The difference, to begin with, between this Bill and the Bill of 1881 was, in his opinion, a difference not for the better. He found no fault with the proposition as to composition; but the scheme of arrangement would be the old scheme of liquidation over again, and liquidation had been the curse of the present Bankruptcy Law. He wished the President of the Board of Trade would reconsider that point, and either let a man make a composition with his creditors or become a bankrupt, without admitting any intermediate course. The proposal that a creditor could only make a debtor bankrupt by a judgment of a Court of Law was, he thought, open to objection, on the ground that there were so many means of setting up fictitious defences, so that this provision would be a serious impediment in the way of making a man a bankrupt when he ought to be declared one. With reference to the receiving order, everything in the Act would depend on the class of men who were made Official Receivers. The Official Receiver must be engaged in no other trade or business. If they appointed either a lawyer or an accountant, they invested him with certain judicial powers; and if this officer was to be a representative of a Government Department, he should be like the Inspectors of the Board of Trade or Home Office, totally separate and distinct from all other business. The Government should be his only masters; he should serve them exclusively, and they should find him a proper and sufficient salary. He was aware that his right hon. Friend thought that County Court Registrars and bailiffs should in a majority of cases be appointed. He only wished the President of the Board of Trade would turn his attention to the interesting question of the remuneration paid to Registrars of County Courts. Did he know what was done in the town he himself represented (Birmingham), where the position of the Registrar was more lucrative than that of the

Judge? That was a state of things which ought not to continue. With reference to the permissive appointment of a Committee of Inspection, Lord Cairns and Sir John Holker required that the Committee must be appointed; but in this Bill it was only "may be appointed." He (Mr. Fowler) thought that a Committee of Inspection should be appointed in every case, if there was to be satisfactory supervision of the estate over the trustee. He submitted that no man should be in a position to apply for his discharge until after his first dividend had been paid. There was another omission in this Bill, and that was with regard to civil disabilities. Under the existing law, if a man compounded with his creditors, or went into liquidation, he had incurred the same disabilities as if he became a bankrupt. Any person who had compounded with his creditors was disqualified from sitting in a Municipal Corporation. He regarded it as a great blot in the Bill that there was power given to the Lord Chancellor to appoint a special Judge. All attempts in the direction of special jurisdictions had failed, and he thought bankruptcy jurisdiction should be merged in the High Court. One of the main questions involved in this Bill was that of the abolition of the law of undue preference. His right hon. Friend's speech and argument went exclusively to rates and to taxes; but what he (Mr. Fowler) contended was that, if it were intended to abolish the Law of Distress, it should be done in a plain manner, and not by a side-wind. This Bill was evidently a first step towards the abolition of the Law of Distress. Subject to these few remarks, he could not help expressing his great admiration of the manner in which the Bill had been prepared; for he believed it capable of being made to constitute, in greater measure than any similar Bill submitted to Parliament for many years, a wise and permanent settlement of the Bankruptcy Law.

MR. GREGORY said, that, in the first place, he took it that they were not there to discuss the general question of bankruptcy or no bankruptcy. What they had to deal with was the Bankruptcy Law as it at present stood; and the question was, whether they were to make any improvements or alterations in it or not? Taking the Bill as a whole, it did appear to him that it was a very considerable improvement and advance on the present law. Speaking personally, he could not help feeling that the Bill of 1869 was, in the abstract principle, correct; but there was no doubt that, owing partly to negligence and indisposition on the part of the creditors for whose benefit it was intended, and of those called upon to administer it, and partly to defects in the Act itself, it had in practice not worked in a manner satisfactory to the public, or adequate to meet the claims of justice. The present Bill avoided the disadvantages of the old Bill to a considerable extent. With regard to the question of composition, he thought the provisions of the new Bill, so far as they went, were very satisfactory; but they required some little addition, which, with the permission of the House, he would venture to suggest. This was a very important part of the Bill; because, no doubt, a composition would nearly always be attempted by a debtor in the first instance; and the question, therefore, was whether what he held out to his creditors was fair and reasonable? It should be seen that the creditors had a fair and reasonable opportunity of considering whatever offer was placed before them. What he would venture to suggest was that a creditor should have the power of dissenting, in writing, from any proposition put forward by the debtor, and that he should not be called upon to attend personally at a meeting of the creditors. What he wanted, of course, was to make these propositions by debtors difficult of acceptance; and, in order to do that, the creditors ought to be given a full opportunity of ascertaining and determining the position of the debtor and of his estate. As to the question of the control over bankrupts, the main question was, whether it should be given to the Board of Trade, or to the ordinary Courts of Law. Now, it appeared to him that the system of control by the creditors, as well as that by the Court, had both been tried, but had practically failed, and that few required the introduction of some other authority For this reason he was for giving some powers of investigation and administration to the Board of Trade and officers appointed by it; but he would like to see some qualification imposed by the Bill upon the Official Receivers, who might be appointed under the Act. With respect to composition, he thought that if it was not accepted within a certain time it ought to fall through, as a matter of course, and bankruptcy ensue. The proposed abolition of preferential charges was a question of very considerable importance. He did not desire to enter upon the question generally now; but he trusted that it was a matter that would not be overlooked in Committee. He must say that he quite agreed with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) that if distress for rent was to be abolished it should be done in a direct way, and not by a side-wind, such as this appeared to be. He did not wish to enter into a discussion of the reasons for or against the abolition of the Law of Distress, although he flattered himself that the reasons in favour of the maintenance of the law were predominant. He thought the Bill was capable of some amendment in reference to leases held by bankrupts, so as to provide for the interests of parties holding under the bankrupt on the one side, or for a complete surrender to the lessor on the other, freed from all intermediate tenancies. The Bill in its provisions with respect to the estates of deceased debtors was also objectionable. There was no necessity for throwing these estates into bankruptcy. They had an admirable system in operation, by which the estates of deceased persons were administered in Chancery. Whether they died solvent or insolvent, the administration was conducted on the same principles, for the advantage of the persons interested in the property. The provisions of the Bill might lead to considerable embarrassment, for it frequently happened that an administrator of the estate of a deceased person was not able to ascertain for some length of time whether the debts could be paid in full or not, and was obliged to get the Court of Chancery to relieve him from the pressure of creditors until the estate could be realized. An estate might be solvent in the long run, which would have been unable to pay off the debts at first. It would be very hard to throw such an estate into bankruptcy, nor was there any object to be gained by it. The debtor required no discharge, and he certainly could not be examined in bankruptcy. He trusted that, in Committee on the Bill, that portion of it would be rejected. He cordially approved of the provision with reference to judicial administration through the medium of the High Court of Justice, by which this administration might be assigned by the Lord Chancellor to any Judge of that Court. He would have preferred power being given to a creditor to take a case before any Judge, without an assignment at all; but he presumed that it was felt that it was necessary to continue the present Registrars in Bankruptcy, and that you could hardly alter their status; but if from any cause they ceased to act, or were utilized in some other way, he would suggest that they should be preceded by those admirable officers who, in the Chancery Division, assisted the Judge. He meant the Chief Clerks, a body in whom the Legal Profession had every confidence. This would bring the whole jurisdiction, both in Bankruptcy and Chancery, into harmony and juxtaposition. Seeing that he had been appointed to the Grand Committee, which would deal with this Bill, he would enter into no further criticism of its details at present, but would place on the Paper such Amendments as he thought advisable for the consideration of the Committee.

Mr. Serjeant SIMON: Sir, I cannot join in the strictures which the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) has passed on this Bill; and though there is one part of it from which I strongly dissent, and though I may add that I have not much hope of any Bankruptcy Legislation whatever, I do recognize in the Bill an earnest and able attempt to grapple with a very difficult and complicated subject. An hon. Member opposite, in an earlier part of the evening, spoke of the despair of the commercial community with respect to Bankruptcy Law—a despair which made them ready to accept this, or any other Bill, so long as they had a chance of escaping from the present state of the law. I hope my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade will not think that I am in any way disparaging him when I say that this Bill seems to me to fulfil the condition expressed by the hon. Gentleman, and that it may be described as a desperate attempt to deal with a desperate case. My right hon. Friend, in the course of his able and lucid speech, referred to the many alterations that have taken place in our Bankruptcy Legislation since

1831. The House will be surprised to hear that from the time of the first Bankruptcy Act in this country, in the Reign of Henry VIII., we have had Bankruptcy Legislation of one sort or another, on an average, every 10 years; and that for the last 40 years we have had Bankruptcy Legislation — to say nothing of the numerous Bills introduced and dropped, or which have failed to pass—on an average of between five and six years. We have oscillated from the extreme penal legislation of the olden time, when a bankrupt was treated as a criminal, and was liable to have one of his ears cut off; we have oscillated from that system to the extreme leniency which prevailed in 1831, when the whole management of a bankrupt's estate was in the hands of his creditors. Lord Eldon described it as a system of abuse, as one in which "there was no mercy to the creditor;" as a system that existed only for the benefit of assignees and lawyers. Sir, I am afraid I must digress from the subject for a short time to refer to the opinion of the great commercial community on the other side of the Atlantic, which may be supposed to know something of the matter. There is a Report of the Judges of the Supreme Court of the Legislature of the State of New York. They said that—

> "Judging from their former experience, and from observation in the course of their judicial duties, they were of opinion that the Insolvency Laws were the source of a great deal of fraud and perjury. They apprehended that the evil was 'incurable,' and arose principally from the 'infirmity inherent in every such system.' A permanent Insolvent Act, made expressly for the relief of the debtor, and held up daily to his view and temptation, had a powerful tendency to render him heedless in the creation of debt, and careless as to payment. It induced him to place his hopes of relief rather in contrivances for his discharge than in increased and severe exertions to perform his duty."

I believe that that inherent difficulty is the cause of the failure of every attempt which the Legislature has made to enact a Bankruptcy Law which should protect creditors and punish dishonest debtors. I know not, in the whole history of Bankruptcy Legislation, a single instance of a Bankruptcy Law which has fulfilled either one or the other of those requirements. I know of no creditor who has benefited by legislation; I know only of dishonest or unscrupulous debtors who have escaped from their liabilities. There is one feature in the Bill to which I will call attention—it is the power given to the debtor himself to petition the Court. Now, on the face of it, it seems to be a reasonable thing that when a man is unable to pay 20*s.* in the pound he should go to his creditors and say so; and if they refuse to release him, that he should apply to the Court. But theory says one thing, and practical experience teaches another. Lord Hatherley, in 1877, in "another place," showed the result of the right of petition by the debtor under the Act of 1861. It appeared that for the year ending October, 1869, out of 10,000 adjudications, 7,530 were adjudicated on the bankrupt's own petition. The results as regards creditors in the same year were that 1,695 paid dividends, and 7,346 paid no dividend. The House, therefore, will see that, however theoretically right this power proposed to be given to the insolvent debtor might appear to be, in practice it is anything but favourable to the interests of the creditors, or to commercial morality. But I confess I have no hope whatever from Bankruptcy Legislation. I expressed this opinion in 1879, when Lord Cairns' Bill came down to this House, and I am glad to find that I am corroborated in that view by so high an authority as my hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler); and though public opinion is not yet ripe for it, I believe with him that we are approaching the time when public opinion will repudiate this system of special legislation, and will call upon Parliament to repeal it. I believe that commercial morality and the interests of creditors would stand much higher if creditors were left to their Common Law rights. You would then find that creditors would be more careful how they gave credit. They would not be inclined then to do what the competition of trade induces many to do now—to push trade by giving undue credit; and that, when a debtor failed to pay his debt within a reasonable time, the creditor would have recourse to his legal remedy. The debtor, knowing that he would be discharged from his debt only by payment, would be more careful how he contracted debt. At the present time, what is the practice? You have a law for the relief of the debtor, not for the benefit of the creditor. The whole theory of our Bankruptcy Legislation rests on the supposition of the possible or probable inability of the debtor to meet his engagements; you have thus, then, a law to enable him to get rid of his liability. That is the whole theory of our Bankruptcy Legislation; that is the theory on which it rests; and I say that the sooner you get rid of it the better. Let the relations of debtor and creditor stand upon the Common Law, which is the right of a creditor to recover his debt, and the obligation of the debtor to pay it. Now, having made these general remarks, let me say this—that if this Bill should fail it will not be for want of ability on the part of the right hon. Gentleman in grappling with the subject. It is a difficult and a complicated subject; and though I differ from him in some of his remarks, and as to one part of the Bill to which I shall presently advert, I say all credit is due to him for the way in which he has dealt with it. A good deal has been said about the appointment of Official Receivers. I look on that as one of the best features of this Bill. It is a necessary feature. You cannot leave the control of a bankrupt's estate wholly in the hands of the creditors. This has been proved by the failure of the present Bankruptcy Law, which gave all the power to the creditors. Creditors, it has been proved, will not look after their interests in bankruptcy, and my right hon. Friend has taken on himself the unpromising task of trying to take care of them. I think the attempt will fail; but it is a chivalrous endeavour on his part. You have had officialism and non-officialism. My right hon. Friend said the officialism of the Act of 1849 was the cause of its failure. To some extent that is true. The Act of 1849 was a cumbrous Act. It mixed up penal enactments with administrative functions. But, Sir, even under that system of extreme officialism, my right hon. Friend admits that there were larger dividends paid than had ever been paid before. You have had a non-official system since 1869, and what has been the result? We all know what a wretched failure it has been. The hon. Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) said that all previous Bankruptcy Legislation had failed because it had been introduced by lawyers. I do not know if he was in the House of Commons in 1869, when the present law was introduced. If he was not, I will refer him to *Hansard,* and I can tell him this—that, if ever there was an Act free from the interference of lawyers, the present Act was that Act. It was the offspring of the Associated Chambers of Commerce; it was the creation of commercial men; not a lawyer had a voice or a hand in it. I cannot forget that when it was introduced there was one chorus of praise from all the commercial Gentlemen in the House. My hon. Friend the Member for Bristol (Mr. S. Morley), in particular, was loud in his praise, because we had got rid of the trammels of officialism, and the dominion of the lawyers, and had taken commercial wisdom and experience as our guide. And yet, two years afterwards, this very Act was denounced as the greatest failure of any attempt which had been made at Bankruptcy Legislation. Now, perhaps, I may be supposed to speak with the partiality of my Profession, when I say that I dissent from the proposal to introduce into Bankruptcy administration a political Department of the State. I object to it on practical, as well as theoretical grounds. I think that we ought not to introduce a political Department of the State into matters of private and individual concern. My right hon. Friend says there is an analogy between this case and accidents at sea, in mines, and on railways, and so on. I fail to recognize the analogy. I know there was great misgiving as to the propriety of that legislation; but it is one thing to inquire into an accident in which human life is involved, and it is another thing to ask that a political Department of the State shall undertake the supervision of at least 10,000 cases affecting simply private and individual interests. We are to have 60 Official Receivers. Does my right hon. Friend think that 60 Official Receivers will be able to discharge all the duties that will be thrown upon them by this Bill? We have it shown by the Controller's Returns that there are, on an average, at least 10,000 insolvencies in each year, and, no doubt, that will continue. There have never been less, sometimes more. Are you to have an official inquiry into every one of these cases, conducted by a responsible officer, amenable to the Board of Trade, with the Head of that Department amenable to this House? My right hon. Friend commends his proposal on the ground that the Board of Trade is amenable to the public, and to this House. What does that mean? Are we to understand that, in every case of the 10,000 bankruptcies or insolvencies which annually occur, with at least 100,000 creditors, whose interests are to be taken care of, every creditor who has a grievance is to instruct his Member to put a question here to the President of the Board of Trade, to know why certain things have been done, or others left undone? We had 58 Questions this afternoon. What are we to expect under this system of Board of Trade administration, if every creditor is to have a right to come here, through his Member, and interrogate my right hon. Friend, or his Successor, on the administration of a bankrupt's estate? But the statement of the right hon. Gentleman as to the Board of Trade being amenable to the public and to this House means that, or nothing. If it does not mean that, I want to know what redress the creditor will have for any neglect of duty, or any misfeasance, or neglect of any official acting under the Board of Trade? Well, my right hon. Friend will soon, we hope, occupy the position which the House and the country desire to be instituted, of a Minister of Commerce and Agriculture. He will have all these duties added to his already very considerable functions, and yet he would have Bankruptcy administration as well. I object to it also on the ground that there would be a divided responsibility. If you are to have a thing well managed, a duty well performed, place it in one hand; do not divide it between two persons, one of them responsible in one place, the other responsible in another, or not responsible at all. You will find this to be the case in many clauses to which reference has been made—the appointment of a trustee, for instance. The trustee's conduct is to be under the supervision of the Board of Trade, through the Official Receiver. The Board of Trade, or the Official Receiver, is to consider what the conduct of the bankrupt has been, and whether he has complied with the law or not. He has *quasi*-judicial functions to perform, and no one to control him, or to say that he has acted rightly or wrongly. Then there is a clause, saying that the Receiver is to be appointed, subject to the refusal of the Board of Trade, and if the Board refuse to appoint him, the creditor can appeal to the Court. Here is thus the jarring of two authorities one with another, the Court and the President of the Board of Trade. I think that such a system cannot work well. In saying what I have felt it my duty to say on these parts of the Bill, I recognize what I may call the chivalrous endeavour of my right hon. Friend to overcome a great difficulty, and to efface a crying evil. Now, many people are taken with a name, and I rather fear that the sound of "The Board of Trade" has tickled the ears of commercial men. There is a commercial ring about it; and, as bankruptcy concerns commerce, it is taken for granted that the administration of bankrupt estates by the Board of Trade must be the right thing. But the commercial world may find that this system, however fine it may sound to the ear, will not fulfil their expectations. I have said that I approve of the appointment of a Receiver. I think that, as the non-official system has so completely broken down, you must have some kind of officialism to look after the interests of the creditors, who, experience has shown, will not do so themselves. In fact, what may be called the gist of the Bill is to effect this object by appointing persons to look after the interest of the creditors. But when you look at the functions which the Official Receiver has to discharge, functions requiring vast ability, some legal knowledge, and great experience of business, you will see that you cannot appoint inferior men; you must have men of position, persons who will inspire confidence, and you will not find such persons, as a rule, among those with whom it is intended to lodge this great trust. I think that if the Official Receivers had to discharge their functions under the supervision of the Court, and not under the supervision of the Board of Trade, it would have been better; it would have introduced just the amount of officialism necessary, and no more. But I think this improvement is very much curtailed and modified by placing the Official Receivers under the Board of Trade. There are other matters of detail in the Bill to which I shall not advert, as they have been mentioned already by others who have spoken. I shall not oppose the second reading. I look upon it as a desperate attempt to meet a desperate case. I will, on that ground, give it such support as I can. I have expressed my dissent from the new feature which it introduces into Bankruptcy Legislation; but, so far from opposing the Bill, I will say—"Give it a trial, even under this new system," although I am by no means sanguine of its success.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE expressed regret that only one conspicuous Member of the English Bar—the Solicitor General—appeared on the Grand Committee to which this Bill was to be referred. He wished to say a word in enforcement of the protests made in the Amendment of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) against the officialism that was connected with this Bill. There was no doubt that the measure was a reversal of their system of Bankruptcy Law and of the principle that was adopted in 1869, and pressed strongly by the commercial classes; and he hoped that there would now be a resolute stand made against the association of Bankruptcy Law with a political institution and a political Department. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain) had told them that there were two objects to be aimed at in a Bankruptcy Law; the one being the honest administration and speedy distribution of bankrupt estate, and the other the improvement of the tone of commercial morality. He (Mr. Clarke) did not recognize it as one of the duties of legislation to improve the tone of commercial morality. If commercial morality had been so low that its negligence and carelessness had defeated the operation of the present system, he did not see why they should pass a different Act of Parliament for the purpose of improving that tone. The immediate and legitimate object of the Bankruptcy Law was to distribute fairly among the creditors, and as economically and speedily as possible, the assets of men who had failed, and that anything beyond that seemed to be unnecessary for the purpose of the law. It was not punishment but a privilege that they gave to a man under the Law of Bankruptcy; it allowed a man who could not pay his debts to clear himself by surrendering his property. With regard to this Bill, he confessed he did not believe it would achieve the principal object—namely, the speedy distribution of assets. There was never anything speedy about a public office. If the creditors set about a proper administration of the bankrupt's estate they would succeed much better. Creditors were well represented in that House; the insolvent debtor had a limited representation there; but there was reckless trading just as much on the part of the creditor as on the part of the debtor. Creditors often forced their goods on the debtor, and made him the instrument of their speculation. It was really to enable reckless creditors to be protected by a public body that the whole hierarchy of officials was to be called into existence. It was said that 60 Official Receivers would be sufficient. In his opinion, that was a ridiculously inadequate number, considering that among other duties they would have to examine and report upon each bankruptcy, to examine debtors, and to report whether those debtors ought to be punished or not. A moment's reflection would show that such duties would take up a great deal of time. Moreover, the Receivers would, in a large number of cases, have to act as trustees. He did not, therefore, share the favourable views which had been expressed of this Bill. A great many trustees had been defaulters, careless, and inefficient in the discharge of their duties; but there were very many trustees in the City of London who were far better qualified to realize a bankrupt's estate honestly for the benefit of the creditors than any Government officer; and what they wanted, he was persuaded, was not to set up a system which would supersede them by another and costly public organization, but to put some pressure upon them to make them competently discharge their duties. This large Bill, this large system was unnecessary. There were three great defects in the administration of the Bankruptcy Laws—first, the Composition Clauses, which had been the means of the greatest number of frauds; secondly, the trustees had not sufficient control exercised upon them; and, thirdly, the mischievous system of general proxies. As to the first defect, this Bill, he was sorry to say, brought back upon them the mischief complained of. With respect to trustees, all that was wanted was to pass a law that every trustee should file half-yearly accounts, deposit his moneys in some recognized bank, and distribute them when they came to one-twentieth of the amount of the debts. No general proxies ought to be allowed, and no proxy used except for the purpose specified upon its face. There was no occasion for heroic legislation in regard to this matter. This Bill was a stupendous job, creating an enormous amount of patronage to be exercised by a Government Department, and in no way assisting the object which hon. Members had at heart.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) had referred, in his able speech, to a Bill which he (Sir John Lubbock) had introduced on behalf of the Institute of Bankers. That Bill, however, only dealt with certain points, upon which he believed there was practically very little difference of opinion; and although he thought it would be a great improvement in the law, and introduce amendments upon which there was practical unanimity of opinion, it did not profess to deal with the whole subject of Bankruptcy. So far, indeed, as the realization of assets was concerned, he believed it would meet the requirements of the case. It did not, however, touch the conduct of the bankrupt himself. On the other hand, the Government Bill dealt fully with the question. The Law of Bankruptcy fell into two extremely distinct parts—that which related to the bankrupt, and that which dealt with the assets. The conduct of the bankrupt was a matter which concerned, not the creditors only, but the whole mercantile community. It was quite right to make bankruptcy as difficult as possible, and in the general interest to fence it round with the strictest rules. No doubt, though many an honest trader had been ruined by causes beyond his own control, on the other hand, in most cases, insolvency was due to reckless extravagance, to speculation, or was a fraudulent mode of robbing creditors. The portion of the Bill which dealt with the bankrupt himself seemed to be an improvement on the present law. But when they came to the second part of the measure—that which dealt with the realization of the assets—he could not help hoping that in regard to that portion of the Bill his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade would listen to the remarks which had been made in the course of the debate from both sides of the House? In point of fact, the great tendency of the Bill was to revert to officialism. If they examined the Bill they would see in it a great deal about the powers of the Board of Trade, the powers of the Court, of the trustees, and of the Official Receivers, but very little indeed about the powers of the creditors. Here, he thought, the Bill went entirely in a wrong direction; and he was sorry that his right hon. Friend had paid so little attention to the representations made to him when a corresponding measure was before the House last year. Why should the Board of Trade assume a right to manage a part of a man's property because it had formed part of a bankrupt's estate? The reason which his right hon. Friend gave last year for this extraordinary proposal was that the creditors did not look after their own interests, and the same reason had been repeated over and over again that night by various speakers. It was said that the creditors would not attend to their own interests and look after a bankrupt's assets. But he ventured to maintain that they had never really given the creditor the opportunity of doing so. First of all, they had the rule of the Official Assignee, under which the creditor was powerless; while, under the existing system, the trustee was almost equally omnipotent. The right hon. Gentleman told them that the Official Assignee was introduced in 1842 with a general chorus of approval, but that, after having been tried for 20 years, they were glad to get rid of him. He was afraid they would have history repeating itself before another 20 years were over, and that they would be very glad to get rid of the system the present Bill proposed to introduce. The hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. E. Clarke) said that the creditors would never be taught to look after their own affairs. But they never had had power to do so. The creditor had no power of calling for a list of his fellow-creditors; and, therefore, he was unable to know who he had to act with. He had no power to insist on a division of the assets, and no power to call for accounts. It was perfectly true that if they were dissatisfied with the trustees they might get rid of them by an extraordinary resolution; but that resolution must be passed at a meeting, and the meeting could not be called except by the trustee. Therefore, the creditors found that it was of no use to do anything, because they were absolutely powerless in the matter. They might look at the books; but that came to very little. Moreover, even if one creditor made out the accounts for himself, it would be very difficult for him to convince his brother creditors. What, then, could he do? In fact, under the existing system, creditors were powerless. He would ask the House—Was not the realization of the assets of a bankrupt something similar to the realization of the assets of a Joint Stock Company? Yet what a contrast the powers possessed by the shareholders of a Joint Stock Company presented from those of a creditor in bankruptcy. Shareholders had a right to have a list of all the shareholders in the Company; they could insist upon periodical accounts; if they were dissatisfied they could call a meeting, and could insist upon the Directors giving an explanation of all that was done; if they were still dissatisfied they could get rid of the Board of Directors altogether and appoint another; and it was a constant practice to change Directors who were considered inefficient, and whose policy was disapproved of. The creditors in bankruptcy had none of those powers; and so long as they were withheld from them he maintained that they could not tell what the creditors would do if they had the opportunity. Let them take this Bill and see what it did. In the first place, when a man became bankrupt the Court appointed an Official Receiver; the Official Receiver called a meeting; this Official Receiver had to take the chair at such meeting, the creditors not being allowed to appoint their own Chairman. The Bill determined the number of the Committee of Inspection; it did not allow the creditors to determine the number of their own Committee, or to select their banker; they had no right to copies of accounts or lists of fellow-creditors; and if they were allowed to appoint a trustee, when they had done so the Board of Trade, under Clause 78, was enabled to remove him and to appoint an Official Receiver in his place, and if the creditors disapproved of this they were kindly allowed to appeal to the High Court. He did not complain that, in the first instance, the Board of Trade should have the power of removing the trustee in bankruptcy under the provisions of the Bill; but he did think that after the matter had been brought before the creditors, if they wished to re-appoint the trustee, and thought that he would be more likely to act in their interests than the Official Receiver, it was too bad not to allow them to do so. Then, again, he must say that he viewed with grave apprehension the proposal to hand over all funds above £50 to the Government. The Bill made an elaborate provision for enabling this to be done; but he did not see any corresponding arrangement for getting the money out of the hands of the Board of Trade and distributing it to the creditors. He was very much afraid that if the money once got into the hands of the Government, the unfortunate creditors would find it a very difficult matter to get a dividend. His right hon. Friend said the Government expected to get something like £30,000 a-year from this money in the shape of interest. But surely the interest of the money belonged to the creditors, and not to Her Majesty's Government. One of two things must happen—either the money would remain in the hands of the Government, and there was no reason why the dividends should be withheld, or it was intended for distribution; and in that case why, in the name of wonder, should funds be transmitted from Penzance or Newcastle up to London in order that it should be immediately sent back again? Was the Board of Trade merely to receive and repay; or was it to exercise any discretion? If it were merely to hold the funds and get interest on the money, that interest clearly ought to belong to the creditors; if it was to exercise any discretion, then there was a new and needless barrier between the unfortunate creditor and his dividend. If the Government wanted money it would be much better to take what they wanted in the shape of fees, rather than get it in the shape of interest. It would be to the advantage of the Board of Trade to hold it in order, as long as possible, to obtain interest. No doubt it was an important thing to have a dividend; but it was equally important to have it as quickly as possible. It was very undesirable that the Government should have an interest in delay. There was nothing sacred or mysterious in the assets of a bankrupt, and the creditors were entitled to the fullest information concerning them, and the amplest powers of dealing with their own property. It was proverbially difficult to get money out of the Court of Chancery; and he feared it would not be easy to extract it from the Board of Trade, who would be receiving interest on it themselves and paying none. In pressing this point upon the Government he was by no means representing the opinions of bankers only. At a large meeting of the Association of Trade Protection Societies of the United Kingdom, held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, two years ago, to discuss the Bill then brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, which in this respect was the same as the present, a resolution was unanimously passed protesting against this clause, and declaring that the trustee should be allowed to keep the account at any bank which the creditor might select. His right hon. Friend recognized in the same clause that, in many cases, it might be necessary to keep an account at a local bank; but that was not to be done unless the Board of Trade, on the application of the trustee, were satisfied that it was necessary. He was very much afraid, however, that while the trustee was making the application, and the Board of Trade were making up their mind whether it was really necessary, in a great many cases the business would be ruined, and a heavy loss be involved on the creditors. Then the Board of Trade was to audit the accounts. He could not see why the Board of Trade should audit these accounts more than the accounts of every Joint Stock Company in the United Kingdom. It was no slight undertaking; and if they accepted the responsibility it would necessarily require a very large and increasing staff of officials, and he could not help thinking that his right hon. Friend very considerably under-estimated both the number and the expense. They knew that a great increase in the army of Government officials was already a great evil and danger to the country, and he thought the Bill very unnecessarily proposed to add to the number. Several hon. Members, who had spoken more or less in support of the Bill, seemed to be of opinion that it would not be long before there would be no Bankruptcy Law at all, and then this staff of officials would become unnecessary; but, whether they were to have a Bankruptcy Law or not, there must be some mode of realizing the assets of a bankrupt. Other hon. Members objected to these clauses of the Bill altogether; and, personally, he objected to it, because it was a piece of centralization, because it would create a new and unnecessary host of officials—Official Receivers, Official Auditors, Official Accountants, Official Registrars—many of whom the Government would inevitably have to pension off, before many years were over; and, secondly, he objected to it because it did not seem to him to take that which was the true method of dealing with the matter—namely, by giving the creditors power, and enabling them to look after their own interests. It appeared to him that these were important points in which the Bill would require amendment. Hon. Members seemed to be under a misapprehension in regard to the provisions of the Bill of 1869. Though they had established a system of trustees, they had never yet tried a system of enabling the creditors to manage their own affairs. There were other points of the Bill to which he should have been glad to allude; but, while thanking the House for the patience with which they had listened to him, he felt that he ought not to occupy their time further. He would only say, in conclusion, that while he had ventured to criticize some portions of the Bill, he hoped it would not be inferred that he was attacking it as a whole. He had thought that it would be useless to waste the time of the House by referring to those clauses of the measure with which he agreed. He had, therefore, only ventured to criticize those with which he differed, and he hoped that he had not produced an erroneous impression. He believed that the Bill, on the whole, contained a great deal that was good; and although he sympathized, to a considerable extent, with much of the spirit of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Stanhope), still he could not vote for it, because he believed there was much that was good in the Bill, and he hoped to see the measure modified in those parts that were objectionable. He trusted that when the Bill got into Committee his right hon. Friend would consider these points, and endeavour to meet those who desired a modification. If the right hon. Gentleman would consent to do so, he believed the measure might be so framed as to place the Law of Bankruptcy on a satisfactory footing. He did not share in the despair of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dewsbury (Mr. Serjeant Simon); but he believed that a good Bankruptcy Bill, satisfactory to the commercial community, might be passed; and if his right hon. Friend succeeded in accomplishing that object he would, undoubtedly, earn the gratitude of all those engaged in commerce.

Sir HARDINGE GIFFARD said, that, in order to ascertain whether the present mode of meeting the difficulty was the right one, it was necessary to consider what had been the causes of the failure of the existing system, that failure being an undoubted fact admitted by all. Certainly, there was this ground for legislation—no one denied that the present state of the Bankruptcy Law was unsatisfactory. There could be no doubt that it encouraged fraud; that under it creditors did not get their own; that the very things which ought to be encouraged by the law—namely, prudence, thrift, and accuracy of trading—were all discouraged by the present state of the Bankruptcy Law. Under these circumstances, he thought the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had a right to ask for the assistance of the whole House in doing all that in it lay to aid him in what was conceded to be a very difficult task. He wished to say, on his own behalf, that he recognized, all throughout, in what the right hon. Gentleman had said a real desire to remedy what was undoubtedly a great grievance—a grievance on the part of the Government as well as of the commercial community. But he could not help saying also that that which was the key-note of the present Bill was also its worst feature—namely, that the administration of a defaulting debtor's affairs was to be committed to a Department of the Government. In point of fact, the entire administration of the debtor's affairs was to be so committed. No one, as yet, had adequately stated the extreme difficulty it was necessary to contemplate. What was to be the number of what were called "Official Receivers," and what was to be the expenditure on them? In order to take an adequate view of that question, it must be remembered what the previous legislation had been. To go no further back than the Act of 1849—by that Act the obligation was placed on the bankrupt of exhibiting to the creditors and to the Court what had been the course of his trading. He was bound to give a complete statement of his affairs; and if, in his last examination, as it was then called, he failed to disclose all his property, real and personal, he was held to be guilty of a felony, for which he was liable to be transported for life. That was one of the objects for which the Act of 1849 was passed. It would be observed, in the case of that Act, that under a severe penalty the obligation was placed on the bankrupt. The creditors were not required to search out what the bankrupt had been doing; but the bankrupt was obliged to state, under a penalty of transportation for life, what had been the truth in regard to the whole course of his trading. The Acts of 1861 and 1869 reversed the whole of this extremely penal enactment; and from being a system which involved the trader in penalties of this very severe character, they swept away the very felony created by the former Bankruptcy Law, and made everything a misdemeanour, imposing a comparatively mild punishment. Then also, in 1869, came what was substantially the abolition of imprisonment for debt. Then, could it be wondered at that when the penalty which had fortified the due performance of the debtor's duties were taken away—unless something was substituted in its place—those who were dishonest availed themselves of the state of the law, and thought it rather a discreditable thing to pay 20*s*. in the pound, and contended, as though it were a joke, that a man who had a wife and family ought not to pay 20*s*. in the pound? Now, what was the alteration in that state of things—which was, undoubtedly, a scandal in the law as it existed at present—what was the alteration the right hon. Gentleman proposed in this respect? He found there were no less than four different systems of nomenclature introduced, as if different things were specified by merely altering the names. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to create a body of Official Receivers under the Board of Trade; and he should like to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the manner in which the proposal was to be carried out. What was the first duty cast upon the Official Receiver? It was not the duty of the Court; it was not what would be the function of the creditors; and it was not an obligation cast upon the bankrupt himself; but, forsooth, the first duty of the Official Receiver was to investigate the conduct of the debtor. What was to be the means of investigating the conduct of the debtor in connection with his trade? How was it to be done? The debtor, at the time of the investigation, would be under no such obligation as was created by the Act of 1849. It was true that he might be called upon to give an account of what he had been doing, and that was to be fortified by the fact that he would be committing contempt of Court if he did not give a true account; but what was such an investigation, without any obligation upon the bankrupt, fortified by penal consequences, likely to lead to? The right hon. Gentleman somewhat mis-stated the effect of the section when he spoke of a public examination of the debtor. He spoke as if it were to be the act of the Official Receiver; but that was not quite correct. The Official Receiver was only to take such part in the public examination of the debtor as the Board of Trade might direct; and he wanted to know what examination was to be held by the Board of Trade? What were they to do? How were they to acquaint themselves with the circumstances of the debtor, and his course of trading, so as to enable them to give directions to this Investigator or Receiver, or, as one of his friends described him, this great detective, in order to show him what part he was to take in the public examination of the debtor? Then, again, he was to give such assistance in the prosecution of a fraudulent debtor as the Board of Trade might direct. Was it not obvious, when they came to look at this collection of duties cast on the Receiver, that if there was to be anything like a real examination, and such an investigation of the bankrupt's affairs as was necessary under the former state of the law, the number of Official Investigating Receivers was totally inadequate for the purpose? If there was to be anything like a thorough investigation of the bankrupt's affairs the number of 60 Receivers, not mentioned in the Bill, but suggested by the right hon. Gentleman, was utterly and hopelessly inadequate. In what way were all the 10,000 bankruptcies per year to be investigated? How many times were the Receivers to go through the bankrupt's books, in order to discover whether he had been engaged in reckless trading, and incurring debts without adequate means of payment? These were proper and desirable matters to investigate, and ought to be investigated; and they were matters which, when the bankrupt was under an obligation to make a full and complete disclosure to the Court, and was liable to be transported for life if he failed to make such disclosure in his last examination, enabled the Court to understand the nature of his trading. But all that was now to be done away with by the original act of the Receiver of the Board of Trade. It was quite obvious that neither 60 nor 600 Official Receivers would be adequate to perform the functions required. It was suggested that the creditors might, if they thought proper, be allowed to employ persons to act for them, or even solicitors to aid and assist them, in investigating the affairs of the debtor. He thought the complaint was that it was necessary to supplement the creditor's duty by Government interference; and, if so, that was not done now by this Bill; and the only reason for the Bill was the supposed reluctance of the creditors to interfere in such matters, or consent, to use a common phrase, to throw good money after bad. Therefore, they would do this now; and why it should be supposed, under the provisions of this Bill, they would be more disposed to do it hereafter than they had hitherto been seemed to him to be absurd. Another cause which led to the failure of the Bankruptcy Act of 1869 was the abolition of the only fortifying power then existing to ensure a complete investigation, by subjecting the creditors to penal consequences if they did not. But the only cause which accounted adequately for that absolute failure was the system of composition and arrangement which the right hon. Gentleman preserved. Why was that? He could not concur with the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) that no one would have the same opportunity of interfering as the creditors, because the real creditors found themselves outvoted and outnumbered by sham creditors. They were met with this difficulty. Conspiracies were entered into and brought to bear against them for the purpose of defeating an honest endeavour to get the bankrupt's affairs satisfactorily investigated or acquiesced in. As it was a course which necessarily involved sacrifices, expense, trouble, and annoyance, it was obvious what the conduct of the creditor would generally be. Men would shrink from making additional sacrifices, and they would allow the bankrupt, his confederates, and his fraudulent friends, to do what they would rather than interfere further. But then what security had they now? What provisions were there in the present Bill to get rid of this difficulty? He confessed that he failed to find any. Even the offence, or that which ought to be an offence, and which, in a roundabout way, might be made an offence in law, was not glanced at in the Bill. Why should it not be made an offence, severely punishable, for a man to pretend to be a creditor, or a greater creditor than he was, and voting in that capacity in regard to any composition or arrangement? In a roundabout way he did not deny that it might be made an offence now; but why should there not be some specific penal legislation against that which, undoubtedly, had been the commonest offence since 1869. That was what was practically done. The creditors were met by persons, some of whom made a trade of it, who offered to appear as sham creditors, and to aid and assist them in withdrawing from the real and *bonâ fide* creditors a greater proportion of the assets which ought to be distributed among them. In truth and in substance this was the cardinal blot which ruined all the good in the Act of 1869, and it was preserved in the present Bill. Nor did he find that even in the investigation of the Board of Trade the Receiver was to be called upon to examine what was the real state of the assets, and there were no means of testing whether alleged creditors were really so or not. The matter was simply left to a proof or an affidavit of debt; and when dishonest debtors entered into a combination with sham creditors, as they did now, in order to prevent a real and *bonâ fide* creditor from knowing the facts, what, under the powers of this Bill, were to be the functions of the Official Receiver to find out the fraud that had been committed? Under these circumstances, it seemed to him that the Bill of the Government went in an entirely wrong direction. Instead of giving to a Department—if it was to be a Department—the power of investigation and punishment, either as a Court, or as an auxiliary to a Court, they proposed to throw the power into an overcrowded Government Office; and the only way in which they could make that overcrowded Government Office do its work was by delegating to somebody else the work which, in point of form, they remitted to it. He had said that the right hon. Gentleman was entitled to all the assistance the House could give him in rendering the measure as perfect as possible; and he was only pointing these things out, not for the purpose of making a general criticism on the Bill, but for the purpose of suggesting to the right hon. Gentleman, and to the Committee to which the Bill was to be referred, that it was of the utmost importance, in the administration of any bankruptcy procedure, that they should provide, not for cases in which everybody intended to do what was right, and to give up all that ought to be given up for general distribution among the creditors, but against fraud. If everybody did what was right it would not be necessary to have any Bankruptcy Act at all. What they had to provide against was intentional fraud; against those who, availing themselves of the state into which a bankrupt's affairs had got, desired to divert into their own pockets, by various schemes and expedients, many of which were known now, and more of which would grow out of a measure like this, money that ought to go into the pockets of the creditors. He failed to see, in the present Bill, any provision calculated to prevent that absorption of the creditors' money which had, undoubtedly, been going on to a degree which had created a scandal. He wished to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to another matter which had been referred to in regard to the smaller bankruptcies. He had always been of opinion that the present state of things in regard to the power of committal was very undesirable. He presumed that the power of committal was to remain, although nothing was said about it in the Bill. It was highly objectionable and improper, he thought, that there should be a good many people in gaol who had never been convicted of any crime. His right hon. Friend the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross) and himself had earnestly desired to get rid of so undesirable a state of things. Personally, he thought that nobody should be in prison unless he had committed a crime. That was one of the great difficulties of the administration of the County Courts. It was said that unless they gave the County Court Judges the power of commitment, where a man had the means of payment and would not pay, the effect would be to destroy the value of the County Courts altogether. Now, he thought the true view of the question was this—that if the County Court Judges, sitting judicially, came to the conclusion that a man had the means of payment and would not pay, then that was a crime; and instead of commitment for contempt, which simply meant the confinement of the offender, leaving him at full liberty to pass his time in reading the newspaper, or in otherwise amusing himself, as if he had been sent to prison for the benefit of his health, he should be treated as a criminal and punished as a criminal. If it could not be established that such persons were criminals, then they ought not to be punished at all. The right hon. Gentleman had made an effort in this direction; but he (Sir Hardinge Giffard) did not quite see that he had altered the conditions of the law, because the Bill, if passed as it now stood, would leave the law in the same state as that in which it was now found. If the debtor made default in the payment of any instalment of the debt he was required to pay in pursuance of an order of the Court, he was to be deemed, unless the contrary were proved, to have had the means of payment. The words of Section 6 of Clause 114 were—

> "If the debtor makes default in payment of any instalment payable in pursuance of any order under this section, he shall, unless the contrary is proved, be deemed to have had since the date of that order the means to pay the sum in respect of which he has made default, and to have refused or neglected to pay the same."

That was exactly the state of the law which sent him to prison now. The Bill of the right hon. Gentleman gave the power of summary jurisdiction in the case of small bankruptcies; but that was the case now. The County Court Judges had power now to make an order for the payment of a debt by instalments, and all the Bill did was to add the term "bankruptcy" to the small instalments ordered by the County Court Judges to be paid. That was the state of the law now; and he should like to hear from his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General in what respect it differed from the condition of the law which at present the County Court Judges had to administer? It certainly seemed to him (Sir Hardinge Giffard) to be precisely the same thing. If the County Court Judges found now that, as a matter of fact, a man had had the means of payment since the date of the order, and had been contumacious, they could commit him to prison with the consequences which had already been pointed out. What followed here?

> "If a debtor makes default in payment of any instalment payable in pursuance of any order under this section, he shall, unless the contrary is proved"—

that was, unless he was able to prove that he had not had the means of payment at or since the time the order was made—

> "be deemed to have had, since the date of the order, the means to pay the sum in respect of which he has made default, and to have refused or neglected to pay the same."

And then, although nothing was said about it, he presumed the debtor was to be committed to prison in default. He should be glad to hear if that was meant or not? If it was meant, he should like to hear if it was to be a distinct offence or not? Certainly, there was no provision for dealing with it; and it seemed to him that while an honest and fair attempt was made to get rid of many of the difficulties surrounding bankruptcy administration, yet there was some confusion of thought prevailing throughout the Bill by which it was sought to do at one and the same time two totally different things—first of all, to improve commercial morality by dealing with the conduct of the debtor; and, secondly, by dealing with the administration of the effects and assets of the bankrupt. If the conduct of the debtor was discovered to have been such as to render him fit for a criminal prosecution, why not invest the Public Prosecutor with power to prosecute him? On the other hand, the mere administration of the effects and assets of the bankrupt debtor might, he thought, be left entirely to the creditors. Why should the Board of Trade absorb both of these functions? It might well be, as the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) said, that the creditors should be trusted to divide property and look after their own interests in the division of what might be found after the bankrupt's assets had been investigated. It might well be that there was another person to be considered—namely, the public. If a person was proved to have been fraudulent in his conduct, let him be prosecuted for it; but why the Board of Trade should absorb both of these functions—why the Board of Trade should insist on acting for the creditor on the one hand, and as Public Prosecutor on the other—he failed to see. Would it not be much better to divide functions so essentially different? Let them leave the Act as it was in other respects; but it was most undesirable, in such a question, to give the enormous patronage which the Bill would undoubtedly give to a Government Department in respect of the appointment of these officers, and to take away from the Public Prosecutor the vindication of the law wherever a fraud was committed. The creditors might be fairly trusted to look after their own interests, and to find out the best way in which the assets of the bankrupt could be realized. He had only one word more to say, and it had reference to a somewhat minute matter—namely, the proof of debts. But although a minute point, in respect of what might be called the general machinery of the Bill, it was not minute in its consequences. As he understood the Bill, they might have a meeting of creditors, consisting, perhaps, of two creditors only, who were to be in a position to accept proof of debts, for the purpose of an arrangement for composition prior to bankruptcy. He thought this was a provision which would afford easy access to bankruptcy, and enable a fraudulent trader to concoct any number of schemes to the prejudice of the creditors. He observed, in the provisions contained in the Schedule at the end of the Act, that the only limit as to the number of creditors competent to form a meeting was, that it was—

> "Not to be competent to act for any purpose except the election of a chairman, the proving of debts, and the adjournment of the meeting, unless there are present, or represented thereat, at least three creditors, or all the creditors, if their number does not exceed three."

Consequently, two creditors would constitute a meeting for accepting proof of debts. The word "meeting" under this provision involved, he presumed, that there must be two. The only proviso was that there must be three in all other cases. He was not quite certain that he was right; but he presumed that a meeting for proof of debts must necessarily consist of two; but such a meeting would not be competent to act for any purpose except the election of chairman, proof of debts, or the adjournment of a meeting. The power thus given to every creditor who should have proved his debts seemed to him a very serious matter indeed, seeing that proof of debts was to have so vital and serious an operation in reference to the power conferred on the creditors in regard to the rest of the Act. Although, as he said, the point was a minute one in the machinery of the Bill, it might become a very serious matter unless the provision were very substantially altered. He had only thought it right to make these observations with reference to some of the details of the Bill, because he recognized the Bill itself as a real and honest attempt to meet a great and crying evil. He had said nothing upon the provisions of the measure, in which he concurred; but he had thought it right to say what he had said, because, not being on the Committee to which the Bill was to be referred, he thought it necessary to point out the defects of the measure, and to guard against a recurrence of that optimism which had been so disappointed in the case of the Act of 1869, and which would be again disappointed by the present Bill if its shortcomings were not remedied. That which looked very well in theory often presented a very different appearance when the hard rules of practice and experience came to be applied to it. The machinery of the Bill was intended to aid and assist the creditor, and care must be taken that it should not be used to aid and assist those who desired to defeat and defraud him.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir Farrer Herschell) said, that his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade was to be congratulated upon the reception and general support which had been accorded to the Bill. There had been criticism, no doubt, and objections very forcibly raised against certain portions of the measure; but he thought he was right in saying that such opposition as it had met with had centred chiefly in the details rather than the principle of the measure. The principal objection had been to the officialism which was supposed to be introduced by the Bill. He thought, however, he should be able to show that, although as to the mode in which that officialism was to be introduced, there had been some controversy—namely, who was to appoint the officials, and, to some slight extent, even as to what their functions were to be when appointed—yet, in the main, there seemed to be a general agreement that some system of officialism must be introduced if they were to make the system any better than it was at present. He could not help thinking that there had been a good deal of exaggeration as to the extent of officialism introduced by the Bill. It was said that the Bill took the administration of the bankrupt's estate out of the hands of the creditors, and put it into the hands of Government officials. Now, there was no such provision to be found within the four corners of the Bill at all. The creditors were left, he might almost say unfettered in the administration of the bankrupt's estate. They appointed their own trustee; their own trustee collected the assets; their own trustee distributed the dividends; and substantially the whole administration of the assets collected and distributed was in the hands of the trustee appointed by the creditors. It was said—"Why not leave the matter entirely to the creditors?" His right hon. Friend said, in answer, that if they were to deal effectively with the conduct of the bankrupt—and almost every hon. Member who had spoken in the debate agreed that they must do so—they could not leave that matter in the hands of the creditors, because the public interests would be felt to be no concern of theirs; and, instead of taking steps to protect the public interests, they would concern themselves only with the administration of the assets of the bankrupt. There was also another thing. They proposed by the Bill to enable a certain number of creditors to force a minority of their fellow-creditors against their will. Hitherto there had been in this respect grave abuses, because there was no one in a sufficient position to safeguard the interests of the minority. That had been the great defect of the existing law, because there had always been a number of creditors—many of them creditors to a comparatively small amount—who could not give the time, or take the trouble necessary for the investigation of the affairs of the debtor. And what was the result? A certain number of creditors, influenced by this motive or that, influenced even, though real creditors, by some side motive, did not consider what was the best thing to be done for the general body of the creditors, but were induced, by one motive or another, to consent to a scheme, often against the indignant protest of a minority who had no opportunity of upsetting their decision. It was proposed in future to prevent such an abuse by dealing with these matters by an official whose duty it would be to see that the minority were not bound by the majority, without full knowledge of all the circumstances of the case, and those circumstances, if necessary, being brought fairly before the Court. His hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) said he approved of those clauses of the Bill which dealt with the conduct of the bankrupt. But he (the Solicitor General) contended that those clauses would become a dead letter, unless they had officials appointed under a measure such as this, whose business and duty would be to secure that there was a proper examination into the conduct of the bankrupt. Therefore, unless they were content to leave the matter absolutely in the hands of the creditors, and to take no care about the conduct of the bankrupt, some system of officialism they must have, not merely as guardians of the creditors, but whose duty it would be, independent of the creditors, to examine into the conduct of the bankrupt, and see, where that conduct had been fraudulent, that it was brought properly before the Court to adjudicate in the matter. But then came the question, how were these officials to be appointed? His hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dewsbury (Mr. Serjeant Simon), while strongly protesting against what he called Board of Trade officialism, was quite as strong in his encomiums of the system of officials as the Government themselves. The hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen) declaimed against the increase of officialism; but, at the same time, the hon. Gentleman said he did not see how it could be avoided, if they were to have a Bankruptcy Law, and to require any examination into the conduct of the bankrupt. It was impossible to do that without having a certain amount of officialism. Every Government Service was an officialism. The police were officials, and it was a kind of officialism they would be very glad to do without, if it were not impossible. So, in this case, if they were to have an examination, they could not do without a certain amount of officialism. Then the question was, who were to appoint the officials? Objection was taken to their appointment by the Board of Trade, because it was said that that would be leaving it to a political Department of the Government. Now, he did not understand what was meant by that. Was the Post Office a political Department? The Postmaster General was a Member of the Government, who came in and went out with the Government of the day; but could the argument that it was a political Department apply in the case of the Post Office? He could not agree that the Board of Trade was a political Department. It had nothing whatever to do with politics; it was the one Department from which, of all others, politics were excluded. There had been a great cry raised for the appointment of a Minister of Agriculture. Would the same objection be taken to placing administrative powers in the hands of that officer—namely, on the ground that the Department was political? If such a Minister were appointed, he supposed it would be thought desirable that he should have something to do; and it would be absurd to protest against administrative powers being placed in his hands, on the ground that his Department was an Office of State, because it would be altogether outside what were called political Departments. Another objection to the Government proposal was that there would always be questions asked in the House as to the administration of bankrupts' estates. He should be sorry to do anything in the way of legislation which would lead to more questions being asked unnecessarily in that House; and he could not help thinking that a somewhat exaggerated view had been taken of this matter. But if hon. Members believed that questions of the kind indicated would be constantly asked in the House, might not the same objection have been taken to the Office of the Postmaster General? On the some principle it might have been urged that every day there would be inquiries in the House as to missing letters, letters not delivered at the right time, and telegrams that had gone wrong. But they found that the common sense of the House did not admit of questions of detail being put, nor did he think they would be admitted in the case of the Board of Trade in the matter of bankruptcy. No doubt questions of principle would be asked, and it was well that they should be. If there was to be this supervision by the Board of Trade, and if it was shown that Amendments might be introduced which would make the Act work better, the House would have more chance of getting those improvements effected through the Board of Trade than they would have under any other system. What was the alternative? Would it be better that the Official Receiver should be appointed by the County Court Judge? He believed that those who had experience of these matters would say that this system was not likely to work well. If they desired the examination and supervision which he himself believed to be requisite, he did not think it would be best secured by a system of divided responsibility. He thought it objectionable that the matter should rest in the hands of a number of persons, of different views and without any kind of control, who would, in consequence, develop contradictory or opposite systems throughout the country. But if the House came to the conculsion that it must have officers appointed, then he said there was more safety in the appointments being left to such a Department as the Board of Trade, and the machinery would work better, than if it was left to the County Court Judge to appoint his own Official Receiver. Again, it had been said that the adoption of the proposed plan would cause an increase of patronage. He could not, however, understand anyone who had experience of patronage desiring an increase of it. He once heard a gentleman say—"If I had a number of sinecures to give away, and if I could give them to my relations without any questions being asked, patronage would be delightful." But in regard to these appointments, the Department could not fail to be embarrassed, to a great extent, by the applications that it would have to decide upon; and to suppose that any Minister would propose a scheme of this kind for the love of patronage, when he did not believe it to be the best possible scheme, seemed to him a complete hallucination. He would now deal, very briefly, with two or three specific points to which attention had been called. It had been stated by the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory), and echoed by the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), that the proposal to have in the Bank of England £1,000,000 sterling, or a sum approaching that, was wrong in principle, because it was said that if that amount was in hand it ought to be divided amongst the creditors. But, again, what was the alternative? If it were not in the hands of the Government it would be in the hands of other bankers, and the creditors would get no interest on the money at all. Dividends could not be divided every week, although it was the intention that, under the proposed system, dividends should be declared much more rapidly than hitherto. There would be, in the meantime, an accumulation of very small accounts, which would bear interest of which the creditors would get some benefit; whereas now there were much larger sums than £1,000,000 in the hands of trustees from which the creditors derived no benefit whatever. Therefore, if there must be an accumulation of small accounts, which would produce no benefit to the creditors under the present system, it was obvious that they should be utilized for the benefit of the creditors, and he did not think the result would be to deprive the creditors of anything whatsoever. They would, on the other hand, be paid their dividends rapidly under the provisions of the Bill, and something would be made of this money for the benefit of the estates in Bankruptcy, which would not be made by any other arrangement. Another objection was urged by the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London, when he said that the Board of Trade would undertake the administration of the defaulting debtor's affairs. Now, he altogether disputed that statement. The administration of the debtor's affairs was not left to the Department at all; it was left in the hands of the creditors, who could appoint a trustee; and all the Department did was to exercise afterwards supervision with reference to the conduct of the debtor, and it was only in that way that the Official Receiver intervened. If it were shown that the trustee was unfit, owing to certain misconduct, the Board of Trade would remove him, and the creditors could appoint another trustee in his place. It was, thefore, a mistake to suppose that it was the intention of the Bill to take the estate and the appointment of the trustee out of the hands of the creditors. Again, it was said that the Bill would lead to the establishment of an enormous staff of officials. He did not share that opinion; because, in a great number of bankruptcies, the Official Receiver's work would be very light indeed. No doubt, at times it would be far more labourious; but, as a rule, he thought the Official Receiver, without much personal observation, would get to know a great deal, especially if something were wrong. It was a great deal to have someone to whom a discontented creditor could give information; and the existence of a person in the position of Receiver, who had his ear open to the complaints of creditors, would, he ventured to think, be of great importance in the investigation of the bankrupt's estate and conduct. For these reasons he did not think the number of officials required would be very large. In confirmation of this view he appealed to the fact that in Liverpool a comparatively small number of trustees administered a very large number of estates; the business was in that city confined to a few persons, who were found perfectly competent to do the whole of the work. If, then, the administration of so many estates could be performed by a limited number of persons in such a place as Liverpool, he thought hon. Members need not apprehend that a very extensive band of officials would be required. One official would be found sufficient to perform the duties connected with a great number of ordinary bankruptcies, although, of course, there might arise occasional exceptions to that rule. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for Launceston asked for information as to the mode of dealing with debtors for small amounts. No doubt, the Bill did not propose to make any alteration in the existing law so far as these were concerned, which permitted a Judge to commit a person to prison for not paying when ordered and able to do so. At present, however, a small debtor could not make any arrangement with his creditors; and the County Court Judge, in making an order, looked at what he could pay with reference to one particular debt alone, whatever his other liabilities might be. But this Bill proposed that a man who owed only a small sum of money, made up of a large number of amounts, should be able to make that arrangement with his creditors which would clear him of all his liabilities, which the man who owed a large amount could now make. His hon. Friend would, therefore, see that this would have the effect indirectly of relieving the small creditor from the consequences of the disability he now experienced. Some other points had been referred to; but as they related to questions of detail, he did not think it desirable to enter upon them at this stage. After listening to the discussion which had taken place, he ventured to say that, on the whole, it had been favourable to the Bill. He believed he had shown, with regard to the question of the appointment of Official Receivers, some good reasons for believing that the system proposed by the Government was likely to be more satisfactory than any other that had been suggested.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he hoped his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) would not press his Amendment to a division, because in that case he should feel it his duty to vote against it. He believed the Bill had, on the whole, the approval of the commercial community; and although he was not sanguine as to the success of the measure, he should heartily support the second reading. The hon. and learned Member for Dewsbury (Mr. Serjeant Simon) had remarked that a Bankruptcy Bill was brought forward every six years. He (Mr. R. N. Fowler) recollected the Bills introduced by Sir Richard Bethel, afterwards Lord Chancellor, and by Sir Robert Collier, and there was now just such a cry for improvement in the Bankruptcy Law as there was when Lord Westbury's Bill was brought in. He should support the Bill, on the ground that while it could do no harm, it might do some good; but, as he had already said, he was not sanguine of its results. The President of the Board of Trade, much as he differed from him politically, was a man of great ability, and a very admirable head of the Department; and if he were to remain in that position some good would probably result from the measure. But the right hon. Gentleman, like other Ministers, was liable to change of position, and probably he would some day become a Secretary of State. It appeared to him that the cry for improvement in the Law of Bankruptcy gave Parliament credit for greater powers in the matter than it possessed; because the evils complained of were not so much defects in the law as defects inherent in, and inseparable from, the position on which bankruptcy rested. For instance, a man failed; his estate, properly administered, would yield 3*s.* in the pound. Well, under the present system, and perhaps under the system which was now proposed, this 3*s.* in the pound would be reduced to 2*s.* 6*d.* As a rule, a creditor did not take much trouble in these matters. He said—"I have lost so much money; it is a bad debt, and it is not a very material matter whether, by good management, I can make the £600 I have lost into £500." The sooner he wiped it off and had done with it the better. He was not disposed to take much trouble to reduce his loss. And that seemed to him to be the reason why all previous Acts of Parliament had failed. The trading public, having made losses, did not want to take much trouble and sacrifice much time in the attempt to reduce their proportions; and he had no doubt that under this Bill, if it became an Act, there would be just as much complaint of the Bankruptcy Law as there was under the present system. At the same time, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had given very great attention to the subject, and had brought in what was admitted on all hands to be a very able Bill; and he thought the best thing the House could do would be to read it a second time and send it to the Grand Committee. Under the circumstances, he should give a very cordial assent to the measure.

Mr. W. FOWLER said, he wished to support the view of his Relative in regard to this Bill. The chief fear he had was that the Board of Trade would become completely blocked. The number of applications made would be so enormous, and the mass of details so great, that it would be extremely difficult to carry through the work successfully. He was afraid the delay would be almost greater in the Board of Trade than in the offices of the accountants In Committee this question would require very grave consideration; but he also wished to say that he was not sanguine of the success of any bankruptcy scheme whatsoever. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, he thought, was a good deal too sanguine about the good effects of the Bill. People did not go into business in order to fail. They went into business to make money; but presently got into difficulties, and then defrauded and tried to cheat their creditors. In this country, where so much money was invested in business, and where so much money was made, no Act of Parliament would prevent people from speculating and venturing, and no Act of Parliament would prevent some of them from being foolish and imprudent, and failing in their undertakings. The only question was, how they were to wind up the affairs of such people when they had failed? He must say he had often wondered why it was so enormously difficult to invent a decent way of dividing men's assets. They could not depend on the creditor. They had tried him over and over again. The hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) held that they had not given him a fair trial, and that might be so; but, so far as their experience went, they could not depend upon the creditor. An hon. Member behind him had said the first time he met him was when he (Mr. W. Fowler) was engaged in looking after a large estate which owed about £500,000—an estate from which he ultimately got 3*d.* in the pound. He took a great deal of pains in connection with the winding up of this estate; but he got no thanks for it. He did the best he could, and the thanklessness of the task grieved and disgusted him. This sort of thing happened on several occasions—he took a great deal of pains, but never got any good whatever from what he did, only as a rule some abuse; and, in the end, he made up his mind that he would have nothing whatever to do with the winding up of estates. He resolved that, for the future, he would take just what was given him; and he was sure that his feeling was the common feeling of creditors. He did not believe in trusting to the creditors; and he agreed with the right hon. Gentlemen who had brought in the Bill, that no reliance should be placed upon the activity of the people personally interested, for these persons were interested in the progress of living businesses, and could not devote much of their time to looking after dead ones. Lord Overstone had told him that he had been asked whether he would not be of great use in bankruptcy matters; and he had replied—"Of no use whatever; whenever I have a bad debt I write it off in my books, and will not see anyone about it at all." And that sort of thing was going on in regard to estates all over the country. It was necessary, therefore, to bring in the official element to look after what the creditors themselves were indisposed to look after. But when they came to the question of what the machinery was to be, they certainly found themselves encumbered with difficulties. They had tried all sorts of plans, but did not seem to have arrived yet at any satisfactory solution of the problem. He wished to express again grave doubts as to whether the Board of Trade was not overweighted with business, and whether, if they handed over all this work to that Department, they would not have a cry of despair coming from the country as to the entire failure of the Bankruptcy Law. He remembered, years ago, having a conversation with the Prime Minister, in the course of which the right hon. Gentleman said he had a horror of law reforms, because they almost all meant some new officials and some new pensions. That was very much the fear he (Mr. Fowler) had in this proposal. They were entering into a wide sphere of official appointments, and they were all very doubtful as to what the result might be. He could not help thinking that they would have to appoint a great many more men than they had any idea of; and though they might succeed in getting a good deal of money from the estates of unfortunate debtors, he feared the results they would attain as a whole would not be so good as they hoped.

MR. GRANTHAM said, he, like the hon. Member for Cambridge, was anxious to retain the official part of the Bill;

and he was inclined to agree entirely with that hon. Member as to the advantage of extending the principle of officialism in this matter. Whether they went back 10, 40, or 100 years, they found the same state of things—bankruptcy was never properly conducted when the creditors were intrusted with its management. The reason had been given by the hon. Member who had just spoken. Commercial men did not find it worth their while to look after dead concerns, especially when they got more kicks than halfpence for their trouble, and found themselves associated only with those whose object was to plunder the estate, and not to get the most they could for the creditor. They did not, as a rule, make the debt due to them any the less by turning their attention to the winding up of a bankrupt's estate. They lost the time which might be devoted to the making of fresh profits and fresh transactions by looking after that which, at the best, would only bring them in but little. Under the circumstances, he did not think it would be possible to frame any Bill to induce creditors to devote their time and attention to business which did not yield them profit, for they knew they could make more money by giving up that which was gone, and looking more to the future. He did not in any way, however, approve of the system introduced for the first time by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade—to place the Law of Bankruptcy under the control of the President of the Board of Trade. It was well to develop the principle of officialism in this matter; but it was not well to hand over the administration of the affairs of bankruptcy to a Government Department. He could not agree with the right hon. Gentleman in this matter; nor could he agree with him that the old system had failed, because the Court—that was to say, a Court of Law—could not look after the business in the same way that a responsible Department could. Though it might be difficult to say in whose hands the patronage of the appointments should be placed, he did not think they should be in the control of a Government Department. They had had some experience of the inconvenience of this sort of thing in connection with the Railway Commission. It was thought they would have a better chance of getting disputes affecting Railway Rates and Fares decided satisfactorily by a special tribunal; but, without being invidious, he was, he believed, justified in saying that that tribunal had not in any way given satisfaction either to the public or to the Railway Companies. There had been attempts made to altogether destroy the influence of the Railway Commissioners; and there was certainly not sufficient reason for them to attempt to form another Department, which would be more objectionable than the Railway Commission. Where an enormous amount of patronage was placed in the hands of a Department controlling any tribunal so important as that of Bankruptcy, the tribunal operations of that Department would soon become tinged with the suspicion that they were guided by political expediency. Again, many of the clauses of the Bill would lead to grave complication, owing to what might be called the dual control established under them—by the fact of having, on the one hand, the Board of Trade to consult, and, on the other, the Courts or the Judicial authorities of the country. Although he regarded, therefore, the official part of the Bill as a great improvement on the existing law, yet that part of it dealing with the control he considered extremely dangerous.

Mr. CROPPER said, he would not detain the Committee at that late hour; but as he was not a Member of the Committee to which this Bill was to be sent, he desired to say a word or two on the subject before the House. He agreed with what had fallen from the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler); and though he was somewhat hopeless about any Bankruptcy Bill, knowing how business men regarded bankruptcy proceedings, yet it must be confessed that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman had warmed the House towards his measure. He (Mr. Cropper) trusted that the various clauses, when they had gone through Committee, would come down to the House improved, and in some way slightly altered. So much had been said about officialism, and the complicated machinery to be created in the various clauses of the Bill, that he would confine himself to one matter about which very little had been said, and which he hoped would have full consideration in Committee. The 36th clause, which dealt with preference claims, might, in the main, be just; but it would have to be carefully considered in Committee. Three claims had preference at present—the claim of the rate collector, the claim of the tax-gatherer, and the claim of the landlord. All who had house property knew that landlords pressed more lightly upon a debtor, because they had a preference charge; but if the rate collector, the tax-gatherer, and landlord had to secure themselves beforehand, the small householder would suffer more than the creditor would benefit by the sudden change made in the law. If the landlords of the vast house property of our growing boroughs and towns, and especially of the Metropolis, had no preference claim, they would have to come on their tenants for the rent beforehand, and the tenants would be hardly pressed to satisfy the landlords, who now waited for their money as no other creditors could do. The landlord, under this Bill, would have to stand his chance with the tradesman, the grocer, and the provider of machinery; and if he were not quick in obtaining his rent beforehand, he would very often receive nothing. What would be the result of this? Why, there would be very much less inducement to build houses. He trusted this clause would receive careful attention at the hands of the Committee upstairs; because he felt that unless great alteration was effected in it, it would cause great suffering to tenants of houses in the Metropolis, besides the injury it would do to landlords and owners of property throughout the country.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, he hoped, in view of the general feeling on both sides of the House—this matter having been fully, though he would not say exhaustively, discussed—and in view of the general circumstances they found themselves in, it would be thought desirable to send this Bill to the Standing Committee before the Easter Holidays. There might be difficulties in the way of securing that end if they adjourned the matter until to-morrow, for there were other subjects, of which Notice had been given, to be discussed. If anything were to occur now to prevent the second reading, and delay indefinitely the further progress of the measure, there would be great disappointment. He hoped the hon. Member (Mr. Tomlinson) would be disposed to make his remarks now, and would not persist in asking the House to postpone the consideration of the Bill.

MR. RAIKES asked the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade what course he intended to take in the event of the Bill being read a second time that night? There was no disposition on the Opposition side of the House to unduly protract the debate; but there was, no doubt, an important question following the second reading of the Bill which, perhaps, it might not be desirable to entertain at so late an hour as the present (1 o'clock). Although the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the measure had given no Notice, he was supposed to entertain the idea of sending the Bill to one of the Standing Committees after it had been read a second time. In the absence of any actual Notice, he did not know whether he was quite in Order in attributing to the right hon. Gentleman any such intention; but, if it was intended to refer the Bill to a Standing Committee, perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would be good enough to say, before the debate was adjourned, whether he proposed to go forward with such a Motion that night, in the event of the Bill being read a second time, or whether he would put a Notice of such a Motion on the Paper for another occasion? It was well that the House should be informed on the point, because it might possibly have a great effect upon the action of many hon. Members.

MR. GLADSTONE said, if the second reading were carried, a Motion would be made that the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee appointed to consider Bills on Trade. He had in the clearest manner, on many occasions during the present Session, given a list of the Bills it was proposed to send to the Standing Committees; and only that day, in reply to a Question, he had enumerated the Bankruptcy Bill as one of four Bills which the Government proposed to refer to the new Committees. It was a surprise to him that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Raikes) should seem to cast any doubt on the matter, for on many occasions the intentions of the Government had been distinctly announced. If they were to make any progress with Business, he earnestly hoped the House would dispose of the matter that night.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, the Government had always said this was a Bill which would be referred to one of the Standing Committees, and for that reason the present would not be an inopportune time to ask the Speaker's ruling as to whether, in matters of this kind, the Government should not give Notice on the Paper of their intention to refer any particular Bill to a Standing Committee? He asked the question in regard to this particular Bill, because it was the first Bill in which the question arose, and he merely asked the question so that the House might have a guide to their action in future. This was such a Bill that there could be no doubt as to the desirability of referring it to a Standing Committee. If the Speaker ruled that Notice should be given, he would suggest to the Prime Minister that the Motion should be put down to-morrow. He quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that the Bill ought to be referred to the Committee before the Easter Holidays; but there would be no difficulty in doing that, even if the Motion were taken to-morrow.

Mr. SPEAKER: As the House is aware, when a Bill has been read a second time, the hon. Member in charge of it is entitled to inform the House when he proposes to take the Committee on the Bill, or whether he proposes to refer a Bill to a Select Committee. The proceeding now in contemplation of referring a Bill to a Standing Committee is analogous to referring a Bill to a Select Committee. No Notice is required to refer a Bill to a Select Committee; and therefore I conceive no Notice is necessary to refer a Bill to a Standing Committee.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that, on the Motion for adjournment, he only wished to say that no one opposite could say there had been the slightest desire to discuss the Bill in anything but a fair spirit. There were certain Members who had not yet spoken, and whose opinions on matters of this kind were very valuable. He would instance the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley) and the hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. Jackson), whom the House might probably be disposed to hear if the night were not so far advanced. That the views of such hon. Members should be known, it might be well to adjourn the debate till to-morrow.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 45; Noes 89: Majority 44.—(Div. List, No. 38.)

Mr. STAVELEY HILL said, that in moving that the House do now adjourn, he did so for the purpose of asking a question of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. A great many hon. Members thought it was very necessary they should have an opportunity of discussing the Motion concerning Standing Committees which stood in the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), and it was quite impossible that Motion could be fully discussed now. It was very right the House should understand what the Rules were which were to guide the Standing Committees in the transaction of Public Business. If the Bill were read a second time that night, would the Motion to refer it to a Standing Committee stand over till to-morrow?

Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. and learned Member move?

Mr. STAVELEY HILL said, he moved that the House do now adjourn.

[The Motion, not being seconded, could not be put.]

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. WHITLEY said, he was at a great disadvantage in having to address the House at that hour (1.15); but the Bill was one of such great importance, and affected so materially the great constituency he had the honour to represent (Liverpool), that he hoped the House would bear with him while he made a few observations. Whatever might be the opinions of hon. Gentlemen with regard to the Bill, they all felt indebted to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade for the clear manner in which he had introduced it. The more he studied the Bill, the more he was convinced that the appointment of Official Receivers by the Board of Trade would be found a very dangerous precedent indeed. The longer he was in the House the more he was persuaded that the Board of Trade had more work on its hands than it could possibly accomplish, and that the less they mixed officialism with trade and commerce, the better it would be for trade and commerce. It had been alleged, during the debate, by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, and by other hon Members, that the present Bankruptcy Law did not work well. He (Mr. Whitley) had great experience, years gone by, in connection with the working of the Act of 1869. He was free to admit there were many great defects in that Act; but, at the same time, he believed those defects could be cured by an amendment of that Act, rather than in the crucial manner proposed by the present Bill. If greater powers were vested in the creditors of removing trustees; if the obnoxious system of proxies were abolished; if greater powers were given to the Court, as in the Bill introduced by the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), he was satisfied that many of the objections to the present Bankruptcy Law would disappear. They were told that the only way of remedying the existing evils was by appointing Official Receivers. He could not help feeling that the House ought to very jealously watch any proposal in favour of a Department of State being intrusted with the management of private affairs or private enterprizes. The more the right of persons to manage their own affairs was interfered with, the more gradually was the country being brought into a condition which all would deplore—namely, a condition in which every branch of trade was managed by a Department of the State. It had been said, and very truly said, that the appointment of so many Receivers by one Party in the State was very objectionable; and it had also been pointed out that the Post Office was managed by the State. That Department was, no doubt, well managed by the present Postmaster General; but a few nights ago it had been conclusively shown that the Post Office was not managed so well as it would be under private enterprize. Here it was proposed to take from those who were interested in estates the management of those estates; and also to vest in the Public Prosecutor the power of prosecution even against the creditors. What creditors feared was, that by combination on the part of the solicitor and accountant and a few interested creditors, the estates might not be thoroughly investigated. It was very important that there should be some control; but he did not see why that control could not be exercised by the Judges in the Court of Bankruptcy, and by greater power in the hands of the creditors to appeal to the Court in reference to any malfeasance. Such a course, he felt persuaded, would recommend itself far more to the mercantile community of this country than this Bill would. The more this Bill was threshed out, the more would it be found to be detrimental to the best and the truest interests of the mercantile community. He had always felt that the great object should be to free the control of mercantile interests, as far as possible, from Departmental interference. Again and again had the evil effects of such interference been seen; and he could not imagine anything more detrimental, in the long run, to the interest of creditors than to have affairs in bankruptcy supervised by Receivers appointed by the Board of Trade. The Solicitor General had appealed to him as to the way in which estates were managed in Liverpool, and he mentioned that the majority of the estates fell to three or four accountants. Those accountants, generally speaking, were men of high character, who discharged their duties with satisfaction to creditors; but cases could be found in which a few men combined to shelter defaulting debtors. In those cases he thought the creditors ought to have power to appeal to the County Court Judge to appoint new trustees. That might be met, he thought, in the way suggested by the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes); and he did not see why the Act of 1869, with improvements such as he had suggested, might not be adopted. He was persuaded, if that course was followed, it would meet far more with the approval of mercantile men than the changes proposed by the President of the Board of Trade, against which every hon. Member of mercantile and legal experience had spoken. He hoped that the Bill would be well considered by the Committee, for he was satisfied that the more it was examined and investigated the more certainly would it be found to be untenable and unworkable.

MR. WARTON said, there were three reasons why he claimed the indulgence of the House.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE rose to Order, and stated that the hon. and learned Member had seconded the Amendment, and, therefore, was not competent to speak.

Mr. WARTON said, he had not seconded the Amendment, but had acted as a Teller.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had always understood that a Member who was called as a Teller was taken as a Seconder.

Mr. SPEAKER: When the Motion for the adjournment of the debate was made, I did not call for the Seconder. The hon. and learned Member for Bridport offered himself as a Teller, but did not second the Motion. I do not think, under those circumstances, that the hon. and learned Member is out of Order.

Mr. WARTON said, there were three reasons why he claimed the right to speak. The first reason was his ordinary right as Member for Bridport; the second was that the fact of these Bills being sent to the Grand Committees gave every Member an additional right to speak, because their opportunities were being cut away from them, and when Bills came back from these Committees, the Government would, no doubt, try to prevent discussion; and the third reason was that when he was canvassing his constituents he pledged himself to oppose any Bankruptcy Bill whatever. Having given that pledge, he was now present to fulfil it. His experience as a lawyer satisfied him that all Bankruptcy Bills were ineffective, and, therefore, ridiculous; and gradually a sense of that was dawning upon the House. The hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen) had expressed the same thing, although he said he should vote for the Bill. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) and the hon. and learned Member for Dewsbury (Mr. Serjeant Simon) spoke in the same way; and the more a man reflected upon the Bill the sooner they would come to the conclusion that all Bankruptcy Bills were doomed to failure. They had only to go back to 1861 and 1869, to see that whatever principle was tried, and whichever way the pendulum was swung, the result was the same. Practical men kept away from the Bankruptcy Court, and the money was swallowed by attorneys and accountants. That was his objection to Bills in general; but he objected to this Bill in particular, because it introduced the system of officialism in its worst form. Nothing could be more ridiculous than the calculation of the President of the Board of Trade.

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, he had obtained his object by eliciting opinions from the House, and he, therefore, would not put the House to the trouble of dividing.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Bill read a second time.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I think that, after what has been said by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, it will probably be most convenient to the House that I should not now, as I originally proposed, move that this Bill be referred to the Standing Committee. I will only give Notice that I will make that Motion to-morrow. I do so in the full expectation that right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite will assist me.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I am very glad to hear the announcement of the right hon Gentleman. I think he has taken a very wise and prudent course, and he may take it that the debate will be finished to-morrow.

Mr. RAIKES said, he should be most happy, as far as he could, to assist the Government in coming to a decision of the question to-morrow.

Further Proceedings after the Second Reading *deferred* till *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

BALLOT ACT CONTINUANCE AND AMENDMENT BILL.—[Bill 5.]

(*Sir Charles W. Dilke, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Attorney General.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I propose to ask the House to read this Bill a second time to-night. It was read a second time last year, after a long debate and without a division. There was a very general concurrence in the House then, and in previous years, in favour of the principle of the Bill; but there was the greatest difference of opinion with regard to several of its provisions. The hours of polling provisions have been subjected to criticism, and are likely to be considerably pulled about. As to that I have no doubt; but what I wish to submit to the House is that there is no difference of opinion—unless on the part of one or two hon. Members opposite—with regard to the principle of the Bill. That principle is that the Ballot Act, which has now worked satisfactorily in this country for a considerable time, should be made permanent, instead of being renewed from year to year. That principle is the principle accepted by both sides of the House. It was so stated last year, and this is precisely the same Bill as was then before the House. That being the case, I think I may ask the House to read the Bill a second time to-night, of course, with the understanding that there shall be the fullest discussion in Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

Motion made, and Question proposed' "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Arthur O' Connor.*)

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he wished to enter a protest against the Motion made from the Treasury Bench for the second reading of the Bill, and, at the same time, especially to remark upon the entire loss of memory on the part of the President of the Local Goverment Board, when he stated to the House that a full discussion of the Bill had been taken last year. The facts were these. The Bill stood for second reading on a certain Monday night last Session, when, owing to the deplorable events which had occurred in Dublin—the assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke—the House was suddenly adjourned, and the Orders of the Day were passed on to the following Tuesday. On that day there happened a collapse of private Members' Motions in consequence of Mr. Speaker having ruled that the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) could not be moved by him. To the surprise of the House the debate on the Bill came on; and it appeared by the record of the proceedings in *Hansard*, that so far from there having been a full discussion, the discussion was extremely short, and the speeches of hon. Members who objected to the Bill were only in the form of protests—namely, those of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote)—not one Member having addressed himself to the merits of the Bill, because, as was stated at the time, it had been brought on unexpectedly. On the occasion in question the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board said that hon. Members had no right to object to the discussion on the Bill, seeing that it was only 9 o'clock in the evening. But it was now a quarter to 2 in the morning; and if that circumstance was not sufficient to cause the House to reject the proposal of the President of the Local Government Board, he would appeal to hon. Gentleman below the Gangway. He did not know whether hon. Gentlemen in that part of the House had any regard for the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain); but if they had he claimed their votes on this occasion, inasmuch as when the protests against the Bill which he had referred to were made, that right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I have some difficulty in understanding the position taken up by the right hon. Baronet the Leader of the Opposition. It certainly is not the intention of the Government to deprecate the fullest discussion of both the principle and the clauses of the Bill."—(3 *Hansard*, [269] 367.)

Now, he asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was prepared or not to stand by that declaration? Unless he did so, he would have repudiated the solemn engagement made by the Government last year. He was quite unable to understand the course that was being taken with regard to Business in the House. He had sat there for a number of years, and he remembered that in former days the rights of independent Members were not allowed to be frittered away in this manner. To use an expression which had lately come from an official Member on the opposite side of the House, there seemed to be a malicious conspiracy to get rid of the rights of independent Members. He contended that the President of the Board of Trade had no right, in a manner of speaking, to throw himself overboard on the present occasion; but, in that event, he hoped the free spirit of the House would be able to carry the Motion against the Government proposal.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman had given him leave, as he expressed it, "to throw himself overboard"—a feat of intellectual gymnastics he was entirely unacquainted with. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, however, intending no doubt to be offensive, had only succeeded in making himself ridiculous. On the occasion referred to, he (Mr. Chamberlain) stated that, as far as the Government were concerned, they desired a full discussion of the principle as well as the details of the Bill. What the Government desired then they desired now. He was prepared to admit that it was an unusual thing for the Government to press a Motion of this kind upon the House at so late an hour, unless they could show that some exceptional circumstances justified that course. But there were exceptional circumstances in this case. It was not a new Bill; its principles had been before the House on previous occasions; and, as his right hon. Friend (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had stated, it had on a former occasion passed the second reading, while, with the exception of one or two Gentlemen opposite, he believed it was generally agreed to in principle. He asked hon. Members to consider whether, unless they were opposed to the principle of the Bill, they were justified in postponing the second reading. He did not think that position was taken by any considerable number of hon. or right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and, therefore, he asked that this stage of the Bill might be allowed to be taken.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he hoped the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor) would persist in his Motion for adjournment. When the Bill was introduced he had asked the President of the Local Government Board whether an opportunity would be afforded for discussion on the Motion for the second reading, and to this the right hon. Gentleman replied that the Bill having been already discussed last year, he thought the necessity for such a further discussion did not exist. But he (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) found that the Bill having been introduced last year without explanation by the President of the Local Government Board, happened to be on the Notice Paper for second reading on a certain Tuesday, two days after the terrible occurrence in the Phœnix Park, Dublin. It was not anticipated, a quarter of an hour before it came on, that it would be proceeded with. The right hon. Gentleman, however, moved the second reading without a word of explanation—no discussion was taken except upon the question whether it was proper, or even decent, to proceed with the second reading under the circumstances of that time. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) having withdrawn his Motion for adjournment, the original Motion was agreed to, on the understanding that no real debate had taken place, and that discussion should follow on the Motion for Mr. Speaker leaving the Chair. In these circumstances, he thought it unreasonable that the Government should ask the House to pass the second reading of the Bill on the plea that it had been discussed and accepted last year. There was a great deal to be said before the House could properly accept the principle of the Bill, especially with regard to the effect of the ballot upon constituencies, and the remarkable proposal that it should be left to each place to decide for itself within what hours the polling should take place. He would only detain the House for the purpose of saying that he intended to vote for the adjournment, in the hope that the Government would not proceed with their Motion.

Mr. WARTON said, he thought the Government would do well to abandon those measures not included in the number which the Prime Minister stated he wished to have referred to the Grand Committees.

Mr. SIDNEY HERBERT appealed to the Government not to press the Motion for the second reading of the Bill. There was no opportunity of properly discussing the Bill at that hour (2 o'clock), and the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow), who had given Notice of opposition, was now absent. Nevertheless, the Government persisted in their endeavour to force the Bill on the House. They had just succeeded in getting the Bankruptcy Bill read a second time, not without opposition on the part of hon. Members on that side, many of whom wished to speak on the question; and now they wanted to take the second reading of this Bill, in spite of the protests of hon. Members. He thought the course now pursued by the Government was indefensible, and trusted the Motion would be withdrawn.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that several Members would have remained and pressed their right to speak upon the Bankruptcy Bill, had they known that it was intended to carry the Government Business further on that occasion. It was only after some pressure on his part that they had not pressed their right to speak. It was monstrous to ask the House to discuss the Bill then. The discussion of a Bill should be taken before it was read a second time, and at least three or four hours should have been given in the present instance. It was the first time in his recollection that a Bill had been pressed forward in this manner, and he hoped the Government would consent to withdraw the Motion for the second reading.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 41; Noes 76: Majority 35.—(Div. List, No. 39.)

Original Question again proposed.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: I hope, after that division, the right hon. Gentleman will allow the debate to be adjourned.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: It is no use persevering at this hour, and on a matter of this kind, with our opposition to the course proposed; but I must express surprise at what fell from one right hon. Gentleman on the Front Bench opposite, to the effect that the Ballot Question is still open. That was not the view generally taken by right hon. Gentlemen opposite last Session.

Debate *adjourned* till *Thursday* 29th March.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (CLOSING OF PUBLIC-HOUSES) BILL.

(*Mr. Carbutt, Mr. Arthur Pease, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Burt, Mr. O'Connor Power.*)

[BILL 102.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. CARBUTT said, seeing the lateness of the hour, he did not mean to make a speech on this subject, but merely wished to say that it had been two years before the House; therefore, everyone was well acquainted with it. He was glad to find that so many hon. Members were coming round in favour of the Bill. He even saw that the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), who had had a block against the Bill for two years, had taken that block off. He had much pleasure in moving the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Carbutt.*)

MR. CALLAN said, he thought the reasons adduced by the hon. Member who had moved the second reading were reasons why they should postpone the further consideration of the Bill until after Easter. For his own part, he (Mr. Callan) had never heard of the Bill before that day. It was of a most extraordinary character. He had had rather a large experience — ["Hear, hear!"]—of elections in Ireland, and was familiar with the manner in which they were conducted. He had had the pleasure of defeating a number of the Colleagues of hon. Gentlemen who cried "Hear, hear!" and of defeating the instigators of this Bill, even as regarded his own election. What was the real provision of the Bill? It was that public-houses should be closed in every parish where there was a polling place on the day of an election. The parishes in Ireland, and, he believed, also in England, were of very large extent—sometimes quite seven miles in length. Because, forsooth, there might be 200 or 300 electors voting in a district at one end of such a parish, all the public-houses were to be closed during the entire day. When people went to vote, they generally travelled some distance. If persons were going into a parish on business or any service, they were to have facilities for obtaining refreshment; but if they were going to vote, though they might wish to treat a friend or to treat others, they were to be denied or debarred the privilege of obtaining anything to drink. Moreover, the law already in force—which, he believed, would be made even more strict by the Government Bill—penalized any corrupt treating at elections. If treating was not corrupt, why should an attempt be made to put a stop to it? He saw that a conference was now taking place between the promoters of the Bill and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General. Surely, if this restriction was to be placed on the opening of public-houses during the day of election, it was a provision that should be introduced on the responsibility of the Government, and not on that of a private Member, more especially as Notice had been given of a Government Bill dealing with Parliamentary Elections. He thought it would facilitate the Business of the House, which hon. Members pretended to be so much in favour of, if the hon. Member were to withdraw his Bill and introduce it in the form of an Amendment to the measure of the Attorney General. At any rate, it would be well for them to discuss the Bill sometime in the course of an evening, and not at 10 minutes past 2 o'clock in the morning. He therefore begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

MR. LEAMY rose to second the Motion.

MR. WARTON said, he would second it. As to the statement of the hon. Member (Mr. Carbutt), it was not quite accurate to say that he (Mr. Warton) had taken off his block from the Bill. By some mistake he had omitted to see that the block was on the Paper—he must take extra care in future. He still looked upon this, as he had always looked upon it, as a piece of Puritanical legislation, and therefore he opposed it.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Callan.*)

The House *divided*:—Ayes 17; Noes 55: Majority 38.—(Div. List, No. 40.)

Original Question again proposed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he wished to say a word as to the position of the Government in regard to this Bill. The subject dealt with was a very important one. No doubt, many advantages would arise from closing public-houses on election days; but if a provision of this kind was to be adopted, the proper place for it would be in the Corrupt Practices Bill. The Government had not introduced such a clause into their measure; but he was right in saying that the Government were quite willing to be guided in the matter by the feeling of the House. The division they had just taken might be looked upon as showing, to some extent, the feeling of the House; but if the House would allow the Question as to the second reading to be put, it would show more clearly what that feeling was. For himself, he would not give an opinion, aye or no, on the Bill, but he hoped the House would.

MR. SIDNEY HERBERT said, the division they had taken was no indication of the feeling of the House. Many of them only voted in favour of the adjournment on the ground that the hour was too late to pass the second reading of a measure of such importance. He did not know exactly what course the hon. Member in charge of the Bill meant to take—whether he meant to drop it, for the purpose of introducing a clause into the Corrupt Practices Bill, or whether he meant to go to a division. He (Mr. Sidney Herbert) could not say what he should do, not knowing what course the hon. Member proposed to take.

MR. CARBUTT: I shall go to a division.

MR. SIDNEY HERBERT said, then he opposed the Bill, and he did so because he objected, in the first place, to what was called grandmotherly legislation. He did not deny that closing public-houses on election days would stop a great deal of drunkenness, and that it, perhaps, in many cases, might be of great advantage; but they should not lose sight of the fact that in large boroughs voters, who had to come long distances to vote and then to return to their places of business, would be put to great inconvenience if they were debarred from obtaining refreshment in their hotels. His own constituency was a purely agricultural one, covering something like 56 square miles of country. An agricultural labourer would possibly have to walk, on the day of election, eight or nine miles to register his vote. If the public-houses were closed he would have no opportunity of getting any refreshment whatever. He was not anxious that men should get beer or other intoxicating liquor particularly; indeed, he should be almost inclined to support the Bill, if it could be shown that there were sufficient coffee-houses in which strangers coming into the town could get refreshment. But in how many places were there sufficient coffee-houses? In his own town there had been one coffee-house started; but he feared it would only exist by charitable contributions. If he found coffee-houses flourished in Liverpool and Birmingham, and other places, and were capable of affording refreshment to voters coming into the town, he should be inclined to support the measure. He found that in many cases coffee-houses had been closed on Sundays, because the promoters felt that if they opened their establishments on the Sunday, they would supply the publicans with a good argument against them; they would enable the publicans to say—"You are carrying on an agitation against us in order to put money in your own pockets." He trusted that if the hon. Gentleman the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfred Lawson) had any influence with coffee-house people, he would cause them to open their establishments on the Sundays, and endeavour to attract people from the public-houses. He was glad of having the opportunity of protesting, under the circumstances, against places of refreshment being closed on polling days, and of protesting also against coffee-houses being shut up on the Sunday.

MR. WHITLEY said, that if this Bill were passed at 2 o'clock in the morning, great consternation would be created in the city he represented. However he loved the cause of Temperance, he could not but look with great suspicion upon a Bill which would close public-houses in Liverpool on election days. London was excepted from the provisions of the Bill; but why should that be? It would be a shameful thing that people who arrived in Liverpool from America, and other parts of the world, on an election day should be only able to get bread and water. He trusted that the second reading of a Bill of this importance would not be pressed at that time of the night. He agreed with the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, that clauses such as this Bill contained were very proper ones to introduce in a Corrupt Practices Bill; but he was convinced that to pass a Bill closing public-houses simply because an election was proceeding, would be detrimental to the truest interests of the country. Holding this opinion, he begged to move that the House do now adjourn.

MR. TOMLINSON seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question put, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

The House *divided:* — Ayes 19; Noes 43: Majority 24.—(Div. List, No. 41.)

Original Question again proposed.

COLONEL ALEXANDER said, that, without expressing any opinion as to the merits of the Bill, he should move that the debate be now adjourned. It was too bad to expect the House to proceed with a Bill of this character at half-past 2 o'clock in the morning.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Colonel Alexander,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

BANKRUPTCY (No. 2) BILL.—[BILL 82.]

(*Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Baring, Mr. Davey, Mr. Samuel Morley, Mr. Whitley.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, he introduced this Bill on behalf of the Institute of Bankers. It was confined to certain points, as to which he believed there was, practically, no difference of opinion amongst those engaged in commerce. It was brought in by the hon. Member for Essex (Mr. Baring), than whom there could be no better exponent of the wishes of merchants, and by the hon. Member for Bristol (Mr. S. Morley); while, from a legal point of view, the names on the back of the Bill of the hon. and learned Member for Christchurch (Mr. Horace Davey) and of the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley), would be thought to be a sufficient guarantee of the desirability of the Bill. He was anxious to get to the stage of Committee, and could then wait the progress of the Government measure, which dealt with the whole subject. He begged to move that the Bill be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir John Lubbock.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

MOTIONS.

MAINTENANCE OF CHILDREN BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hopwood, Bill to provide a remedy by Law for Married Women against their Husbands neglecting or refusing to Maintain and Educate their Children, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Hopwood, Mr. Thomasson, and Mr. Summers.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 124.]

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) (NO. 3) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Dawson, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Registration of Voters at Parliamentary Elections, and the enrolment of Burgesses in Municipal Boroughs in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Dawson, Mr. Leamy, and Mr. Kenny.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 125.]

House adjourned at a quarter before Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 20*th March*, 1883.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Third Reading*—Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) (17), and *passed*.

Royal Assent—Consolidated Fund (No. 1) [46 *Vict*. c. 2]; Consolidated Fund, &c. (Permanent Charges Redemption) Act (1873) Amendment [46 *Vict*. c. 1].

SALE OF LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (IRELAND) BILL.

(*The Lord Carlingford.*)

(NO. 17.) THIRD READING.

Order of the Day for the Third Reading Read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3^a."—(*The Lord Carlingford.*)

Lord DENMAN said, that he had taken great interest in this question. He found that no compensation was given to publicans under the Forbes-Mackenzie Act for Scotland; but, in England, a six days' licence had been granted—one tenant of his having got one. He had offered to another tenant an abatement of one-seventh of his rent, if he would try the plan; but, if he should not lose by it, to continue his present rent. He had, at one time, two licensed houses in the village he inhabited, but had closed one and lowered the rent of the house. No doubt, licensed houses paid a higher rent than private houses, and he believed that Irish landlords, who had been so much blamed, would voluntarily give up a portion of rent if the tenant would lose by Sunday closing; and the Legislature might, as to six days' licences, do as much for Ireland as it had done for England.

The Earl of MILLTOWN said, that, as a Representative Peer and a Resident Magistrate in Ireland, he desired to make a final protest against that sweeping measure passing their Lordships' House without any alteration whatever being made in the *bonâ fide* Traveller Clause. It would be extremely hard on respectable publicans in large towns, that their customers should be forced to migrate, once every seven days, to a distance of three miles or more outside the Metropolis, in order to obtain drink; and it would be equally hard on the inhabitants of the suburbs, to be inundated with persons of the class who would leave the towns for that purpose. He spoke, from practical experience, as a magistrate who had had to administer this law ever since it had passed; whereas the noble Lord (Lord Carlingford), who refused to accede to the Amendment he (the Earl of Milltown) moved in Committee, only spoke from hearsay or second-hand information. The matter was not quite so plain as the noble Lord made it out to be. How was it the Committee, which sat in that House on the subject of Intemperance in 1878, reported that the subject was not at all clear, and that disputes regarding it continually arose not only in Ireland, but in this country? He deeply regretted that Her Majesty's Government had not seen their way to accept his humble Amendment, or to have produced a better one of their own; and he could only hope that, during the voyage of this Bill through "another place," and in the full discussion which would there certainly ensue upon it, some means would be found of effectually settling this question.

Motion *agreed to*; Bill read 3^a accordingly, and *passed*, and sent to the Commons.

ENDOWED SCHOOLS (IRELAND).

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF **BELMORE** asked the Lord President of the Council, If Her Majesty's Government have decided to deal this Session with the question of endowed schools in Ireland, whether those under the Commissioners of Education or otherwise?

LORD **CARLINGFORD** (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL), in reply, said, he wished that he could give a simple answer to his noble Friend by saying that the Irish Government had decided to deal with this question during the present Session; but he was unable to go so far as that. However, he was able to say that the matter was before the Irish Government, and was in their hands at this moment; and although the Chief Secretary for Ireland, having several other subjects of legislation to prepare for the consideration of Parliament during the present Session, was not now in a position to pledge himself to deal with the important question of endowed schools, yet he was very anxious to deal with it, and was not without hope of being able to do so before the close of the present Session.

THE MINISTRY—THE LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND.

QUESTION.

THE MARQUESS OF **SALISBURY**: Seeing the noble Lord the President of the Council (Lord Carlingford) in his place in that capacity for the first time, I should like to ask the Government whether the Viceroy of Ireland still remains a Member of the Cabinet?

EARL **GRANVILLE**: Yes; he does.

House adjourned at half past Four o'clock, to Tuesday the 3rd of April next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 20th March, 1883.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—PRIVATE BILLS (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Metropolitan Street Improvements Act, 1877 (Amendment) *; Metropolitan Street Improvements *; Pewsey, Salisbury, and Southampton Railway *.

PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Brokers' (City of London) * [127].

Second Reading—Land Drainage Provisional Order * [114]; Sea and Coast Fisheries Fund (Ireland) [116].

Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures—Bankruptcy [4].

Committee—Bankruptcy (No. 2) [82]—R.P.

Committee—Report—Consolidated Fund (No. 2) *.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 129 and 39 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Thursday the 29th instant.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL AND BECHUANALAND.

MR. **CROPPER** asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he can assure the House that our recent allies the Chiefs Montsioa and Mankoroane are now able to obtain ammunition freely from the Cape Colony for defence against the Boers; whether he will proceed with the scheme for "making adequate provision for the interests of any Chiefs who have just claims upon us" without awaiting the obvious result of the Transvaal debate; and, whether he will be prepared to say after Easter, where he proposes to settle those Chiefs; what their provision will be, and what space he will allot to them; and, if their followers will be allowed to accompany them?

MR. **EVELYN ASHLEY**: I am not able to give my hon. Friend the assurance for which he asks; but we are inquiring further by telegraph as to how the matter stands. The view taken up to this time by the Cape Government is, that where Native Chiefs are in conflict among themselves, whether with or without foreign allies, there is a state of war, and, observing a position of neutrality, the Cape Government allow no ammunition to be conveyed over the borders to the combatants; but that where peace is re-established between the Natives, and the only conflict is with marauders coming from outside, the regulation ought not to be one-sided, and the embargo may be removed. As to the second part of the Question, Her Majesty's Government do not think that their inquiry into the practicability of the proposed provisions should be suspended to await the result of the debate. I am unable to give a pledge that the details asked for in the concluding part can be stated immediately after Easter, as they require careful deliberation, involving inquiries as to how many, if any, of these Chiefs desire to come over into British territory; which of them have any claim on the Imperial Government; how many followers they may have entitled to accompany them, and whether suitable locations can be found for them; and all this must be done in concert and communication with the Cape Government.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked, whether the information would be given to the House before the resumption of the debate after Easter. He thought it of great importance that they should be in possession of some information as to what was meant by the word "provision" in the Motion of the Prime Minister?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY, in reply, said, he could only promise that all the information which the Government could give would be communicated to the House before the resumption of the debate.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: What does the hon. Gentleman mean by the Chiefs "coming over?" Does he mean coming over, like Cetewayo, to this country?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: The noble Lord must know what the expression means. It means coming over the border of Bechuanaland into some portion of British territory.

IRELAND—THE LAND COMMISSION COURT INQUIRY.

Mr. GIBSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is contemplated to make a large expenditure of many thousand pounds on the Land Commission Court in Merrion Square, to make it less unsuitable than it is at present for its purposes; and, whether, before sanctioning any such expenditure, the Government will have regard to the oft repeated requests of suitors and their professional representatives that the Land Commission should hold its sittings at or near the Four Courts?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I am informed by the Land Commission that no such expenditure is contemplated. A new building has lately been commenced at Upper Merrion Street; but it is a fireproof record room.

Mr. GIBSON: Is it true that it will cost between £6,000 and £10,000?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I do not known that. The answer I have received, as I said, states that the new building about to be commenced at 24, Upper Merrion Street, is a fireproof record office. There has been no alteration in the present Court since it was arranged in 1881, and no further expenditure is contemplated upon it.

POST OFFICE—CONTRACTS—THE IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. FRENCH-BREWSTER asked the Postmaster General, When the Papers relating to the Irish Mail Contract will be laid upon the Table; and, when the House will have an opportunity of discussing them?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): Sir, it is the duty of the Treasury, and not of the Post Office, to lay these Papers upon the Table. The approved draft of the contract is now with the solicitor to the Railway Company. When it is finally settled and sealed, it will be laid upon the Table with the Papers and a Treasury Minute, and I should hope will be in the hands of hon. Members in the month of April. I may remind the House that the new contract will not take effect until the 1st of October next, and that it will have no force until approved by a Vote of the House.

Mr. GIBSON: But when will the House have an opportunity of discussing the crucial part of the question?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): So far as I am concerned, as soon as possible after the Papers are laid on the Table. But the contract, as I said, has no force at all until it has been approved by the House.

Mr. GIBSON: But are we to understand that the Papers will not be presented until the month of August, when no Members are here to discuss them?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I will undertake to see that shall not take place.

Mr. TOTTENHAM: Is the contract to be sealed before it is submitted to this House?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): Yes, according to the rules in these matters the contract is between the Government and the Company, and is a complete contract. But it contains a proviso to the effect that it shall have no force until approved by the House. It must be sealed before being submitted to the House; but if the House disapproves of it, of course the matter comes to an end.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: May I ask whether the contract was submitted to the Cabinet, or merely to the two Departments concerned?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I am not in a position to answer the Question, as I was not then Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mr. DAWSON: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether the Government, during the interval which must elapse before the contract is finally closed, will leave the London and North Western Railway Company under the belief that the contract will certainly be given to them, and will allow them to go on building boats and making other arrangements for the service, when, possibly, at the eleventh hour, the House may refuse to ratify the contract with them? Will the Government say whether it is now their intention to ratify the contract, after the expressions of opinion from hon. Members on all sides of the House?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I can give no answer to that Question. The contract has been made, and will now be sealed and laid upon the Table. I can say nothing more than that.

EGYPT—THE RUMOURED NEW LOAN.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the statement that appears in a Reuter's telegram, that it is intended to issue a new Egyptian Loan for £5,000,000, £1,500,000 of which is for the cost of the British Army of Occupation, is correct; whether, if so, Her Majesty's Government is either directly or indirectly responsible for the repayment of this money, or for the payment of interest upon it; whether, considering the estimate of the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, that the cost to Egypt of a British Army of Occupation of 12,000 men would be at the rate of £600,000 per annum, and considering that the Army of Occupation only now consists of 6,000 men, and that they are probably to leave Egypt in a few months, it is necessary to borrow £1,500,000 for their maintenance; whether the Egyptian taxpayers have assented, through their representatives, to the issue of this new Loan; and, whether the additional charge upon the taxpayers is to be met by any reduction on the interest of existing Loans?

Mr. BUXTON asked the noble Lord, Whether there is any truth in the rumour that the Egyptian Government propose to raise a new Loan of £5,000,000 to pay the Indemnity Claims and the cost of the British Army of Occupation; whether this Loan will be an addition to the present debt of Egypt, amounting as it does to £97,000,000, with an annual payment of £4,000,000 on account of interest; whether such a proposal has the approval of Her Majesty's Government; and, whether this House will have any opportunity of debating and of passing its opinion on such a proposal?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, in reply to the Question of my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), and to that of my hon. Friend the Member for Andover (Mr. Buxton), I may state that Her Majesty's Government have, as yet, received no definite proposals respecting the Loan which it is reported the Egyptian Government are about to issue, and consequently the question as to what advice they may be called upon to give has not as yet arisen. In regard to the period of the occupation of the country by British troops, I must refer my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton to the recent statement of the Prime Minister.

In answer to Sir Wilfrid Lawson,

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, the House would, no doubt, have full opportunities of discussing Egyptian affairs after Easter. He had that day presented all the Papers which were of interest in the matter, including Lord Dufferin's despatch.

Subsequently,

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had stated that there would be an opportunity after Easter to discuss Egyptian affairs. He desired to ask the Prime Minister when such opportunity would be given, seeing that additional light had been thrown upon Egyptian affairs by Lord Dufferin's latest despatch?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, if I understood the noble Lord (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) correctly, he said more and he said less than is ascribed to him. He said more, because I do not think he stated that there would be "an opportunity" for discussing Egyptian affairs after Easter. I think he said there would be "opportunities" for discussing them. In another sense he said less, because he did not promise that a specific day could be given by the Government for the purpose, and I am not aware that there is any time specially in view. That is a matter that will have to be considered according to the Rules of the House and the state of Public Business.

ARMY—DRUNKENNESS.

Mr. CAINE asked the Judge Advocate General, The number of punishments for drunkenness, or offences arising out of drunkenness, in the British Army during the year 1882, and what proportion of these were in Egypt?

The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. Osborne Morgan): Sir, the total number of men belonging to the British Army tried for drunkenness by general or district courts martial in all parts of the world in 1882 was 1,120, of whom 145 were tried in Egypt. Punishments for drunkenness inflicted by regimental courts martial or commanding officers do not necessarily come before me, and for them I must refer my hon. Friend (Mr. Caine) to the list to be found in the general annual Return of the British Army which will be published in due course. I cannot even approximately state the number of punishments awarded for "offences arising out of drunkenness," as no separate record is kept of such cases; but, no doubt, crimes directly or indirectly traceable to drunkenness, form, as in the case of civilians, a large proportion of the offences committed by soldiers. Perhaps I may take this opportunity of answering a question as to crime in Egypt, put to me the other night in the debate on the Army Estimates by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Kincardineshire (Sir George Balfour). The total number of courts martial held in Egypt upon European soldiers of all arms, received at my Office up to this day, is as follows:—General courts martial, 10; summary courts martial, 5; district courts martial, 364. The latter total may, at first sight, seem large; but it must be remembered that that Return covers more than seven months, and that at one time we had a very large number of troops serving in the country. Many of these offences, too, though no doubt serious in the military point of view, were not of themselves of a very grave nature. On the other hand, trials for drunkenness have been unusually frequent, especially when the troops have not been actively employed. In fact, I find that the more the men have to do, and the less they have to drink, the better they, as a general rule, behave.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE TENANTS' COMPENSATION BILL.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD (for Mr. James Howard) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When the Tenants' Compensation Bill is likely to be in the hands of Members; and, whether it will be introduced upon the re-assembling of Parliament or soon after?

Mr. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, the Bill was still under the careful consideration of the Government, and was in a very advanced stage. With regard to the date of its introduction, and to what he supposed he might call the effect of introducing the measure on the re-assembling of Parliament, he would venture to say one or two words, especially to those hon. Members who had not seen as much of the introduction of Bills, and who had not had as much occasion to watch their subsequent fate, perhaps, as he had. There seemed to be an opinion among certain hon. Members in the House that a real progress was made towards the settlement of a measure by the simple fact of the introduction of a Bill. It was thought that after a Bill had been introduced it was in a more hopeful condition for passing. In some cases, that might be so; but he did not hesitate to say that, in regard to Bills of great importance, Bills involving questions of great difficulty and liable to excite differences of opinion, it was not wise to introduce them, unless they were prepared to go forward with them without delay. He was acquainted with cases in which, in his opinion, the introduction of Bills of great importance had been positively disadvantageous and injurious to the progress of the question. He wished to say, however, that he had not the least intention to convey, in this case, that he anticipated a long delay before the introduction of this Bill, for he did not; but he ventured to give that opinion, because he often saw that the belief was entertained that the introduction of a Bill upon any subject was a step of very great value and importance.

MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS — THE DEPARTMENT OF THE LORD PRESIDENT.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in remodelling the Department of the Lord President, he will take into consideration the desirability of separating the actual Minister of Education in the House of Commons from that office; and of transferring to him the power of appointing the inspectors and other officers on whom the satisfactory working of the Education of the Country so greatly depends?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, he did not quite understand, in the same sense as his hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), the engagement that had been given by the Government. He did not think that the engagement given by the Government had at any time been to remodel the Department of the Lord President. The engagement of the Government had relation only to the provision made in that House for the affairs of Commerce and the affairs of Agriculture. So far as they undertook—as they did undoubtedly undertake—to consider the provision for agricultural affairs, it necessarily involved the duty of examining into the present arrangement of that part of the Office of the Lord President. But beyond that they did not go. With respect to the question opened up by his hon. Friend, that was a very large question indeed, perhaps even larger than he was aware of. There was a comprehensive arrangement which had subsisted for 40 years with regard to Education, under which the Lord President of the Council had acted as the Chief, and under which the Vice President of the Council had acted immediately under him. And his Office had gradually become one of great importance indeed. Besides that there was a Committee of Council for Education, which might not have met very frequently of late years, but which had been by no means a Committee of mere form, like the Committee of Trade and the Committee of Local Government, but which for, he thought he might venture to say, something like 30 years had met from time to time to consider all the important questions of principle that arose on the subject of education. Therefore, his hon. Friend would see that this was a very large subject, not included within any pledge of the Government; nor was he (Mr. Gladstone) prepared to say that, viewing what the Government had upon their hands, and what were the other calls on them, it was within their immediate intention to examine into this complicated matter.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL AND BECHUANALAND.

MR. TOMLINSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of the Government, before the debate on the Transvaal is resumed, to lay upon the Table of the House any Papers demonstrating the inability of the Transvaal Government to restrain those agencies which have been productive of crime and outrage in Bechuanaland, and have aggravated its disorder, or showing that Bechuanaland was in a state of disorder before those crimes and outrages took place?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, that, with respect to this Question, there were no further Papers to lay on the Table in regard to the Transvaal. The subject in the first part of the Question, whether the Transvaal Government had or had not been able to restrain certain agencies on the frontier, was a matter of opinion without doubt; but it was a matter of opinion with reference to which they thought sufficient evidence was to be drawn from the Papers on the Table. With regard to the second part of the Question, which related to the condition of Bechuanaland, as being a country subject to disorder, that was a matter which had been amply illustrated by the Papers which had been presented from time to time. There was rather a large literature on the matter; and, not to go back beyond recent years, he might supply the following references to the hon. Member:—C. 2,220—[*Laughter*]—he did not mean it was necessary to see so many as 2,220 papers, but that was the number of the Paper issued by command in 1879; also, C. 2,252 and 2,454 in the same year. In those Papers the hon. Member would, he thought, find much that bore on the matter.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—SEC. 31—APPLICATIONS FOR LOANS.

Mr. SEXTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will inquire into the practice of the Irish Board of Works in regard to loans to tenants under section thirty-one of the Land Act of 1881, and ascertain whether it has happened in numerous cases that the Board, after obtaining a fee of ten shillings from the applying tenant, and delaying for several months to deal with his application, have at length informed him that they would not proceed to take any steps in the case until the tenant forwarded to the office of the Board a receipt to prove that he had paid his rent up to the last customary gale day; if so, by virtue of what law or regulation this practice is adopted by the Board; and, having regard to the efforts made by many tenants to avail themselves of the Arrears Act by payment of the rent for 1881, the Treasury, in case they continue to insist on any evidence in regard to payment of rent as a condition precedent to allowing a loan to a tenant under section thirty-one, will consider whether it may not be expedient to regard the condition as satisfied on proof that the rent had been paid up to the last gale day of 1881?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): Sir, if the hon. Member will address these Questions to the Secretary to the Treasury after the Recess, say, on the 2nd or 3rd of April, he will be doubtless able to answer them.

Mr. SEXTON said, he would do so.

MADAGASCAR—FRENCH CLAIMS RESPECTING THE NORTH-WEST COAST.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any further communications have passed between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of France with respect to Madagascar since the 9th of February; and, if so, whether he can state the nature of those communications, or lay them upon the Table of the House; whether Her Majesty's Government are prepared to recognise, or have recognised, the French claims set forth in the following extract (Africa, No. 1, 1883), p. 42, Mons. Dúclerc to Mons. Tissot:—

> "It is necessary to recall now that the rights claimed by France on the N.W. coast of Madagascar are certain, and are confirmed by regular treaties. If the conferences were not broken off on this point it was only because the Hova envoys engaged to concede to us the demands which we have the right and determination to enforce;"

whether the Hova envoys acknowledged having made any such concessions as alluded to above; and, whether Her Majesty's Government are prepared to allow, without interference, the Madagascar Government to make concessions to the French Government of the nature alluded to above?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, Sir; no further communication has taken place. Her Majesty's Government have not been called upon to express any official opinion on the claims of the French Government referred to by my noble Friend, which, however, are new to them. The Hova Envoys are understood to deny having made the concessions referred to. Her Majesty's Government have, throughout the negotiations, shown their desire to promote a peaceful solution of the existing difficulties, and will continue to do so according as opportunity may arise. Beyond this, they are not prepared to go.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—PURCHASE OF THE ASHBURNHAM M.S.S.—THE IRISH M.S.S.

Mr. SEXTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in the event of the purchase by the State of the Ashburnham Manuscripts, the Government will be disposed to consider the propriety of depositing in some public institution in Dublin the Irish Manuscripts comprised in the Collection, so as to render them of easy and inexpensive access to students of Irish History and Literature, the great majority of such students being resident in Ireland?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Sir, the hon. Member only put his Notice on the Paper last night, and I could not very well answer it to-day. But I am under the impression that, according to the present law, all purchases, not being duplicates, made by the British Museum must be for and remain in the Museum building, and could not be disposed of or divided between the Museum and any other Institution. However, if the hon. Member will repeat his Question after Easter, I may be able to answer it more fully.

MR. SEXTON: I will do so.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—COMPENSATION TO PRISON OFFICIALS.

MR. GRAY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether there would be any objection to including in the Return recently ordered of Memorials from Irish Prison Officials for compensation for extra duties, Copies of all Correspondence on the subject between the Irish Prisons Board and the Irish Government and the Treasury?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I am afraid, I cannot undertake to add the Correspondence generally to the Return which has been ordered. It is not customary to lay before Parliament inter-departmental Correspondence, which is usually of a privileged character.

STATE OF IRELAND—COUNTY SLIGO.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has observed that, from the Return of Agrarian Outrages reported to the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary last month, it appears that no such offence, either against the person, against property, or against the public peace, was committed during the month in any part of the county Sligo; and, whether the Irish Government during the Recess will consider the removal from the county of any extra police which may be quartered there, so as to relieve the ratepayers of the county from any special burden imposed on them "by reason of the existence or apprehension of crime and outrage?"

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have observed the gratifying circumstance referred to; but I am afraid it will be slightly modified by the Return for this month. I will make inquiry with the view of ascertaining to what extent the absence of agrarian crime may be considered due to the presence of the extra police, and whether the latter can to any extent be removed with safety to the public peace. It must be remembered that under the Prevention of Crimes Act, districts may be proclaimed as requiring extra police on account of the apprehension of outrage, and it appears by the latest reports that "Boycotting" still exists in the only district in Sligo which is so proclaimed.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND)—SALARIES OF TEACHERS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, considering complaints made by teachers of Irish National Schools, that the salaries payable to them on the 12th of January last have remained unpaid until the present month, steps will be taken to cause the Board of National Education to pay the teachers their salaries, according to regulation, immediately after the quarter days, 12th January, 12th April, 12th July, and 12th October, and thus save a class of public officials from needless inconvenience and anxiety?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Commissioners of National Education inform me that the salaries of the teachers and monitors of National schools—some 16,000 to 17,000 in number—are punctually paid on each succeeding quarter-day—namely, 12th of January, 12th of April, 12th of July, and 12th of October. If, upon that day, no payment is made in any particular case or cases, it is because of some irregularity in the return of the manager, or some breach of rule involving inquiry and consideration. That is the only answer I can give; but if the hon. Member has any special case in view, perhaps he will call attention to it.

POST OFFICE—CONTRACTS—THE IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. CARINGTON asked the Postmaster General, Whether a very large sum of money would be saved to the tax payers of the United Kingdom by the acceptance of the Tender of the London and North Western Railway to convey the Mails between England and Ireland, and also if the time occupied by the journey between London and Dublin would be considerably shortened?

Mr. FAWCETT, in reply, said, that he could only say that he had nothing to add to the answer he gave to the same Question on the previous day of the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gibson).

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS — THE REBUILDING OF ANGLER'S GARDENS, ISLINGTON.

Mr. W. M. TORRENS asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, If there is any immediate prospect of rebuilding human habitations in and around the space, for more than a year left wholly vacant on the south side of Essex Road, Islington, known as Angler's Gardens?

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: Sir, I beg to inform my hon. Friend that the Board was only in a position to clear the land referred to in August, 1882; and a modification of the scheme having been found desirable, the consent of the Secretary of State for the Home Department was applied for. This was obtained on the 6th instant; and the land will now very shortly be submitted for sale by public auction, with a view to the erection of improved dwellings for the labouring classes.

LAW AND POLICE—REPORTED ATTACK ON LADY FLORENCE DIXIE.

Mr. O'SHEA asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the police have come to any definite conclusion as to the alleged murderous attack on a lady near Windsor, on Saturday the 17th instant; and, whether, considering the gravity of the comments on the subject by the Press, Her Majesty's Government intend to institute a public inquiry into the circumstances of the case?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, the matter was at present under careful and constant inquiry; but he was not in a position to make any statement on the subject. The matter was too recent, and being under the regular course of investigation by the police authorities, there was no reason whatever for interfering with that investigation.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I would ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he does not think it would be desirable to offer a reward—[*Laughter*]—to any person who comes forward with evidence to show who is the guilty party in this transaction? [*Renewed laughter.*]

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I think I may ask the House to trust the Department to take such measures as they may think requisite in the case.

IRELAND—MAINTENANCE OF HARMLESS LUNATICS AND IDIOTS.

Mr. MOLLOY: I wish to ask a Question of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, of which I have given him private Notice. It is, Whether the Government intend to make provision for the maintenance of harmless lunatics and idiots in Ireland in establishments other than the union workhouses; and, if so, how soon?

Mr. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, the subject was one which had engaged the attention of the Irish Executive, who had come to a pretty strong opinion on the matter. The Bills which the Government had ready, and which would be laid before the House at the first opportunity there was of passing them, were of a very important nature, and were, to a great extent, of an administrative character. He was sorry to say the present state of Irish Business was much worse than other Business. It could only be got through, in any reasonable time, by the assistance of those hon. Members who did not agree with the principles of Government measures. At that moment, the only Irish Bill of the Government before the House, which was not a Bill with the principles of which any hon. Member from Ireland quarrelled, and which was to benefit a very large part of Ireland, had been blocked on two occasions by an hon. Member from that country, who he (Mr.

Trevelyan) did not understand had any quarrel with it.

MR. DAWSON wished to know, whether the right hon. Gentleman was not aware that the objections of the hon. Member referred to were of a very valid nature?

NAVY—H.M.S. "VALOROUS."

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If it is the case that H.M.S. "Valorous" was sent from Plymouth to Kingstown on or about 8th instant for the purpose of conveying convicts to Holyhead; whether she left Kingstown for Holyhead on the 12th with a batch of 23 convicts, returned to Kingstown on 13th and left again on 15th with a similar batch; also, if he will state whether her duties on this particular service are now ended, and what sufficient reasons existed for departure from the usual practice of sending convicts by the ordinary passenger boats, and what has been the cost to the Country of this expedition?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, I understand that the facts are generally as stated in the hon. Member's Question. The *Valorous* was employed upon this service in consequence of a request for such a vessel from the Irish Government. I have not been able, in the course of this morning, to ascertain definitely the cost involved, which will be chiefly that of the coal consumed.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE DEBATE ON THE TRANSVAAL.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he wished to call the attention of the House to a matter of Public Business. When the Transvaal debate was adjourned last Friday, a question was put to the Prime Minister as to the day the adjournment should be fixed for, and it was decided that it should be April 3. Yet last night, or rather this morning, between 2 and 3 o'clock, in the absence of any Notice, and in the absence of those hon. Gentlemen who were interested in the Business to take place on Friday, April 6, a Motion was made from the Treasury Bench, and carried, that the adjournment of the debate should take place until April 6, the effect of which had been to displace the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) with reference to the National Expenditure. Under these circumstances, he ventured to ask the Prime Minister, why, after he had given Notice to the House that the Government would propose that the Transvaal debate should be adjourned till Tuesday, April 3, the Government, in the absence of the Prime Minister, and without Notice, proposed that that debate should be adjourned till April 6, and whether, having regard to the Motion of the hon. Member for Burnley, that course met with the right hon. Gentleman's approval?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I can on no account exempt myself from responsibility with respect to the change of day, effected by a Motion made at a late hour last night, from the Tuesday to the Friday; but I will give an explanation to my hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). It is quite true that I named the first Tuesday after the Recess, because we were anxious that the Transvaal debate should be resumed on the earliest day that could properly be taken for it. But I then learnt, in such a manner that I could not doubt the authenticity of the information, that there was great objection indeed to going on with it on Tuesday. There is this, too, to be said with regard to taking up the debate again at a Morning Sitting on Tuesday, that when the House resumes at 9 o'clock, there is, by a common understanding, no special obligation on the Government to keep a House, and it is difficult for the Government to come under such an obligation. If they did, they would be obliged to solicit hon. Gentlemen to attend three nights a-week for the keeping of a House, and that would be to impose too considerable a strain upon hon. Members. I suppose that will be accepted as a reason; but, at any rate, it was for what we believed to be the general convenience of the House that I agreed that this change should be made. I admit the point of my hon. Friend's Question, and I must assure him that it did not escape attention; but I cannot think really that he will find it necessary to conclude that the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) will suffer in consequence. The House will meet at 9 o'clock, and, at any rate, from that hour to 1 o'clock, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Burnley and those who desire to discuss that exceedingly important Motion, will have their time secured, because we shall make every effort to secure their having a House for the purpose. The hon. Member knows the position in which we stand. There are some things the Government can do; but we cannot manufacture time. We cannot ask the House to give Monday or Thursday evenings for the purpose of continuing that debate. Short of that, our desire is to make arrangements which will be most convenient for the House; and I think, upon the whole, the arrangement now proposed may be thought less inconvenient than the former one.

SCOTLAND — THE CROFTERS — THE ROYAL COMMISSION — UNAUTHORIZED PUBLICATION OF THE NAMES OF THE COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. ANDERSON: I wish to be allowed to ask the Lord Advocate a Question of which I have given him private Notice. It is, Whether his attention has been called to the circumstance that *The Scotsman* newspaper of Saturday last not only announced the names of the Royal Commissioners on the Crofter question, but stated also that these names would be announced to the House on Monday? I would ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman, if it is altogether a respectful thing to the House that a newspaper should be allowed to announce this, and to say that the House will get it by-and-bye on a certain day? I would also like to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman, if he cannot make some arrangement in his Office by which official secrets of that kind shall be prevented from being announced by a newspaper before they are announced to Members in the ordinary way?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): I did observe that announcement; but I have no idea whence the information was derived. I am not aware of it.

Mr. ANDERSON: I do not think the reply of my right hon. and learned Friend to my Question is quite sufficient. I would like to know if he will endeavour to find out how the information was procured; and, if he will take steps to prevent such official secrets leaking out from his Office in future?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): I will endeavour to do so.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, When he will make his Financial Statement?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): At this moment I am not certain.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Because I think the matter has some bearing on the arrangement made for the 6th and the day following, I wish to ask, whether it is the intention of the Government that the Financial Statement should be made on the 5th?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I hope to be able to say, before the House adjourns this evening, on what day it will be most convenient to make the Financial Statement. I could not pledge myself at this moment.

Subsequently,

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he can now state when he will be in a position to introduce the Budget?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): Sir, I hope to make the Financial Statement on Thursday, the 5th of April.

BALLOT ACT CONTINUANCE AND AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. ONSLOW asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he will have a Paper prepared, specifying the alterations which the Ballot Act Continuance Bill proposes to make in the existing law, in the same way as has been done in the case of the Bankruptcy Bill and others?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I will confer with the hon. Member on the subject. It seems to me the Bill can only be read with one Act—namely, the Ballot Act.

MOTION.

PARLIAMENT — THE EASTER RECESS.

SPAIN—EXPULSION OF CERTAIN CUBAN REFUGEES FROM GIBRALTAR.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I rise, Sir, to move that this House at its rising do adjourn till Thursday, the 29th of March. I wish, upon this Motion, to refer to that which has reached me, not by any Notice upon the Paper, but from what I think sufficient information, that it was the intention of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) to raise a question upon this Motion, on what is called the question of the Cuban refugees. Until last night, as far as I am concerned, and, indeed, until this morning, I was perfectly prepared to accept that discussion, and to interpose no obstacle to its coming on. Yesterday evening, however, my noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Granville) received a telegram from Madrid, and I saw that telegram this morning, which impressed both of us with the belief that it would not be politic, with regard to the ends which the Government has in view, and which I believe to be the same as those of the right hon. Gentleman, that that discussion should take place at the present time. The nature of that telegram is such as to give us, I will not say a certainty, but, undoubtedly, a prospect of a settlement of the matter approaching to the settlement that we have desired. I cannot, of course, control the action of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, who will exercise, as he is entitled to do, his own independent judgment on the subject; but it is the judgment of my noble Friend, and certainly it is also my own judgment, that the prospects of adjusting the difficulty would be injured, and not promoted, by a discussion of the subject at the present moment. The right hon. Gentleman will, no doubt, feel that, having that information, it was my duty to state it to the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Thursday, the 29th of March."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Sir, I have listened with attention to the statement of the Prime Minister, and I should be very sorry indeed to do anything, or take any course, at all calculated to defeat the object which we all have in view. But this is a very serious question; and I shall ask the Prime Minister, before deciding on what course I ought to take, whether, in case I do not bring the subject up now, he will give me an opportunity of discussing it afterwards, in case the negotiations do not result in the favourable issue which he has shadowed forth? The statement of the Prime Minister has taken me somewhat by surprise, because I was here until a quarter to 3 this morning, and no telegram of any kind was put into my hands. [Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE dissented]. Perhaps the noble Lord will pardon me for a moment—no telegram was shown me which would lead me to any conclusion at all like that indicated by the Prime Minister; and if the telegram which was shown me was really the only thing the Government had to satisfy—[Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: It is not the same.] In that case my observation falls to the ground. In the telegram which I saw there was nothing to lead me to change the course which I am ready to take. But, before deciding that matter, I must, as I before observed, ask the Prime Minister whether he will give me a subsequent opportunity of raising the question in case the objects in view are not attained? I think that I ought to add that, in common courtesy, I ought to have been allowed to see the telegram before the Prime Minister made the announcement.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, that it had been his desire to show the telegram, upon which the conclusion of the Prime Minister was based, to the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross); but he was unable to see him, for he was not in the House at the time the telegram arrived. He had not, however, been able to keep the telegram the whole evening, and he communicated to the right hon. Gentleman, as soon as he did see him, the same request as that now made by the Prime Minister, and also the subject of the telegram. When he spoke to the Prime Minister yesterday, he simply expressed his own individual opinion, as he had had no opportunity of communicating with the Members of the Government.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he hoped that his right hon. Friend the Member for South-West Lancashire would seriously consider before he decided to accede to the request of the Prime Minister not to bring on his Motion. He did not suppose such a request had ever before been made. The question of the Cuban refugees was one of great importance, and, though it had been before the House since last October, it was always with the greatest difficulty that they could obtain any information in regard to it from the Government. At last his right hon. Friend had found an opportunity, and there were odds against his finding it again ; and the Prime Minister had asked him not to bring on his Motion. Why ? Because a telegram had arrived from Madrid. The right hon. Gentleman, however, gave no information to the House, and did not inform them what the policy of the Government was. He therefore hoped his right hon. Friend would be careful not to lose the opportunity he now possessed of calling attention to the matter. There were many matters in connection with this question which, from the first, had been very unsatisfactory, and there were also many hon. Members on his side of the House who considered that the tone of the Government and of Lord Granville towards the Spanish Government had, from the first, been as weak and cringing as it possibly could be, and differed widely from that which had been adopted by former Foreign Ministers ; whereas, if he had adopted a firmer tone, the probability was the refugees would now be at liberty. He considered that if the tone of Lord Granville now had been the tone adopted from the first, these unfortunate men would have been given up long ago. Those men had been grossly ill-treated by the Spanish Government, and this country had suffered a tremendous disgrace and shame. Under the circumstances, in the absence of any information from the Government as to what their policy was, or as to what the Spanish Government intended to do, he did not think his right hon. Friend ought to withdraw his Motion.

Mr. GLADSTONE : I hope the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) will permit me to observe that the question is not now whether the policy of the Government, or of Lord Granville, has been of a weak and cringing tone. The question now raised is, whether there is any possibility or probability of satisfactorily dealing with this matter. If there be, what I have said will not in the least degree justify a weak and cringing policy on the part of the Government ; but it is a good reason for a separate consideration of two matters, which are in their nature distinct. It would be entirely out of place for me now to enter upon a vindication of the policy of the Government. I have no fault to find with the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross) as regards his answer to my appeal. With regard to the right hon. Gentleman not seeing the telegram, I was neither so virtuous nor so vigorous as the right hon. Gentleman and my noble Friend (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) ; for whereas they did not leave the House till 3 o'clock, I had left at a quarter-past 2, and, owing to that circumstance, I did not see the telegram. But since seeing it, I have both formed my own opinion and ascertained the opinion of Lord Granville and the Government. I think it would be a mistake were we to lay before the House, distinctly and in detail, any of the grounds upon which the opinion of the Government has been formed. That opinion is really a matter for the responsibility of the Government, and it is for the right hon. Gentleman to consider what degree of weight he shall attach to it. That is his part ; we have done ours. The right hon. Gentleman says this is his opportunity, and he wishes to have some assurance from us as to the recurrence of that opportunity. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will co-operate with us, and will not think it too much if we ask that he should take his chance of obtaining an independent opportunity. But if the right hon. Gentleman fails in obtaining an independent opportunity, and fails in obtaining it in a short time, and still finds occasion to raise the question, undoubtedly it will be our duty to assist him in obtaining that opportuinty.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS : I will to-day endeavour to obtain a place upon the Paper ; and, as I have the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that I shall have an opportunity of bringing on the question, I do not feel justified, after his statement, in carrying the matter further.

Subsequently,

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that, having been unable to secure a place for his Motion relating to the Cuban refugees, he had put down the Motion for Friday, the 30th of March, on going into Committee of Supply, and he would then press the Prime Minister for a day for the discussion of the Motion.

SCOTLAND — THE CROFTERS — DESTITUTION IN THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS.—OBSERVATIONS.

DR. CAMERON, in rising to call attention to the prevailing distress among the crofters and cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, said, he was naturally very much averse to trespassing on the House at that moment; but he had, he regretted to say, received accounts regarding the state of destitution in Scotland of so deplorable a character that he felt he would not be doing his duty if he allowed the Motion for adjournment to pass without calling attention to the question. Only about an hour ago he had received the following telegram from Mr. J. Nicol, City Chamberlain, Glasgow, the Secretary to the Committee who were devoting themselves to the relief of this destitution:—

> "Parish minister, Lochinver, Sutherland, reports death of a man on 16th from starvation, and says we shall soon have more deaths if we get no help. This is the first application from Lochinver to Glasgow Committee. The Lord Provost has directed me to telegraph clergymen to succour the famishing."

This matter had greatly exercised the minds of a number of benevolent people in Scotland, who had been endeavouring to deal with it, and only the other day he had received a packet of letters from all parts of Scotland, addressed to the Glasgow Relief Committee, calling attention to the terrible nature of the destitution that existed, and begging for assistance. He would not have troubled the House with these, but that a good deal of incredulity had been expressed as to the extremity and extent of the destitution. On March 12, the Rev. J. Finlayson, Free Church Manse, Cohjaci, by Ullapool, wrote to Mr. James Nicol—

> "After careful inquiry, I find that there are no fewer than 45 families in need of immediate relief for food. Some of these families are ten and eight in number, but others as few as three or four. Many of them have no workers to fish, should fish be got, which it is not. I hope your committee will kindly send us some aid. An average of 20*s.* or 30*s.* each family would be a great help. We cannot get anything of what was given to Ullapool; it is all too little for the destitute there itself. There are besides 125 families needing seed, corn, and potatoes. They are promised a little help from the Duke of Sutherland in the way of giving work for a short time in extending roads in the district, but the most necessitous cannot in the least be benefited by that, as they have no workers. Besides, many of them may starve before anything can be done by the Duke, and it is questionable whether he will give any help."

Here was another letter from Mr. J. M'Millan, Free Church minister, Ullapool, who wrote on March 14—

> "The committee estimate that the least we would require, at our present rate even, is £20 per week for near three months, till their land is tilled and they get off to the fishing. They must be supported during the time they are engaged in planting and sowing their fields, or starvation must be the result. We had no conception that the people were so needy until we actually came face to face with their condition."

In another letter, on the 1st of March, the same gentleman said—

> "As the result of the conference which took place, it was discovered that about 50 families were suffering from want at the present moment, and needed immediate relief, and that in a few weeks or months more it might be up to hundreds unless something were done to avert and meet it."

On the 10th of March, Mr. R. Mackenlar, Chairman of the School Board of Harris, wrote to Mr. James Nicol—

> "If Dr. Cameron's Seeds Bill does not pass I look with great alarm to the future. Next year, and in all probability many more years, must be equally trying to the great majority of our people; £30 a-week would only give 2½ stones of meal (5*s.* worth) to each of 120 families. I am confident this is under what the last few days' experience warrants me to give."

The Rev. Donald Maclean, Established Church Manse, Harris, wrote—

> "I beg to bring to your notice the case of about 20 families in my parish and neighbourhood who are actually in a state of great starvation."

He had also a letter which he had received from Rev. A. Davidson, Free Manse, Harris, on the 9th of March, who wrote—

> "I have had occasion lately to be extensively among my people, which afforded me an opportunity of knowing their state. Some said the destitution was not greater in 1846, the year of the potato famine, than in this year. All parties agree that potato seed would be the best help that could be sent to the people. At present, there are 200 or 220 families in my district that would require help. I understand that the grain crop, oats and barley, was as much a failure with many of them as the potatoes were. What could be done for grain seeds I do not know, and I am painfully informed that there are some families quite destitute and without food. The Earl of Dunmore has given some work at the Home

Farm to those who were in arrear of rent, very useful in itself, but confined to a certain class, and far from meeting a want that I may say extended to all parties."

From Skye worst accounts come. A local committee had been formed to deal with the destitution, and they reported that there were 785 families in a state of very great distress, which was likely to rapidly increase, although many of the landlords had attempted to deal with it. Mr. Macdonald, the agent of some of the principal landlords in the Island, and Secretary to the Skye Destitution Committee, Portree, wrote on March 12—

"The proprietors, I can vouch, are doing their very utmost, but local resources are quite inadequate, and a great part of the ground in Skye will be left unsown this year."

The Rev. D. Mackinnon, minister of Strath, Chairman of the Portree Destitution Meeting, wrote on March 6—

"The people are without exception almost entirely without seed corn and potatoes, and unless these can be supplied in some way next year will find them in a worse position than they are now. I believe if a loan could be had to buy seed corn and potatoes, to sell to the people, nine-tenths of them would repay the money before the end of the summer. I believe it would take £600 at the very least to supply my own parishioners, and I feel confident that not £5 of the money would be lost."

Mr. MacDonald, Free Church Manse, Kilmuir, on the 8th of March, told a similar story—

"The civil parish has a population of over 2,500—460 families in all. Of that number 150 families are in extreme destitution, now needing immediate relief. Many of our crofters who tried to reserve some little corn for seed are now obliged to use that seed in order to keep their families alive. This will not last long, and I quite expect that in a few weeks half of the families in this parish will be without food, without any way of procuring food, and without seed to put into the ground, unless large supplies shall come to them from without."

From Lewis the reports were still worse. Mr. Mackay, Chamberlain, the agent for the entire Island, so far back as January, published an appeal to the country. A local relief committee was started, and Mr. Mackay and a banker from Stornoway, went as a deputation to Glasgow and Edinburgh to collect subscriptions, and the consequence of their visit was the formation of the local relief committees in those cities. Mr. Mackay asserted that the state of matters threatened to become worse than in 1846. His last letter, dated March 8, to the Glasgow Committee, stated that there were upwards of 12,000 persons above the pauper class in a state of great destitution in Lewis, and in the next few months they were likely to be augmented by 5,000 more. A clergyman, the Rev. Angus MacIver, Uig, Stornoway, wrote on the 9th March to the Lord Provost of Glasgow—

"My parish is the extreme western part of the island, some parts of it upwards of 40 miles from Stornoway, where the people have been supplied with meal hitherto. I gave lines to some 13 or 14 heads of families lately. Many of them, I believe, were at the time facing starvation. Some 12 of them trudged away 30 miles to Stornoway to get food for their families. They left on Monday morning, and only returned on Friday morning, without getting anything for themselves or their families, walking in the streets of Stornoway the most of the time with very little food. There were only two out of the 14 who had got any supplies before."

Mr. W. Mackay wrote to Mr. Nicol, on March 1—

"It may be said that 12,310 above the pauper class are in want, and this number will be increased by 5,000 before the next harvest. At a meeting of the Stornoway Destitution Committee, held on Tuesday last, it was found that after providing for the payment of 196 tons of potatoes purchased for seed, our funds were reduced to £570, which will almost be all exhausted by the end of next week."

Here was another appeal from the Island of Boveray, North Uist—

"We, the undersigned, and residing here, have formed ourselves into a committee on behalf of 12 very destitute families on the island. They are chiefly cottars, and have lived hitherto partly by fishing and partly by the produce of some patches of land kindly given them by the crofters; but owing to the failure of potatoes and loss of corn crop by the heavy gale of 1st October last, and owing to the coast being so wild that they cannot begin the fishing sooner than April, some of them are now without food for themselves and families, without credit, and without seed of any kind to sow their lands. There are 10 more families who will be short of seed."

When he (Dr. Cameron) moved in the matter before, and endeavoured to obtain the sanction of the House to a Bill allowing advances to be made to these destitute people for the purchase of seed, he was told that there would be no necessity for seed, at all events, in Sutherlandshire, because the Duke would see that nothing went wrong there. He was not going to blame the Duke of Sutherland in the smallest degree, because it was not to be expected that a private proprietor could do everything that was necessary in the state of things now existing in the country. As a matter of fact, Mr. Alexander Fraser, Sub-Convener of the Edinburgh Committee, writing fron Grosvenor Crescent, Edinburgh, to Mr. Nichol, on the 10th March, sida—

> "As requested by the committee, last Wednesday I called upon Mr. MacDonald, and ascertained from him that the Duke of Sutherland declined to supply the crofters on his property with seed potatoes either on credit, or at a reduced price for what they could pay."

He thought it necessary to give the House his authority for what he said, and that must be his excuse for the iteration of these details. The next extract he had was from the Rev. Norman N. Mackay, Convener of the General Committee for the relief of destitution in Asseynt and Stoer, Lochniver, who, on the 8th March, wrote—

> "The Duke of Sutherland is the proprietor of Stoer and Asseynt, and he his unlikely to do anything as to seed for any excepting crofters who have the prospect of being able to pay him at the next rent time. I sent a petition from some of the crofters to His Grace three weeks ago, beseeching him to give them seed on credit, and supported the prayer of the petition by a letter from myself. On the 20th February, the factor, to whom I had also written, wrote saying—'The Duke is unwilling to give seed or meal, but the ground officer will tell the people that they can get work.' The ground officer last week informed the people that they could now get work at the Buckie Railway, and took a list of all the tenants who wished him to supply them with seed and the quantity required, warning them that if the Duke would give seed, it must be paid for with next rent, the price to be very high, potatoes not less than 10*s.* the barrel. To go to Buckie at present would be to leave their ground untilled this year, as they could not make their expenses before the spring work begins. No cottars were put on the ground officer's list, and the poorest of the crofters asked, some for no seed, and others for very little, fearing that they would be unable to pay at rent time, and would thus be liable to be deprived of their land. The families mentioned at the beginning of this statement are also the poorest of the crofters, who asked ground officer for less seed than they needed or none at all, knowing they could not pay him, and the cottars who got bits of land from the crofters to plant potatoes in. As to food, I am sorry to say we had to add 10 yesterday to the list we made a month ago of those likely to be in want of food. I hope a month will pass before we require to supply much food; but to be safe we would need to have the power."

Here was something further about Sutherland. This was an extract from a letter from Mr. James Macdonald, of Edinburgh, to Mr. Alexander Fraser—

> "It would be necessary to sell at least £450 worth of seed potatoes to the crofters in the parishes of Durness, Tongue, and Farr, on the North Coast of Sutherland, and a like quantity would be required for Assynt and Eddrachilles, on the West Coast. If your committee could grant £250, Mr. Mackay thinks the quantity named might be purchased at once, and re-sold to the people for cash at 25 per cent below cost. Local committees would be formed, who would decide the rates at which the different crofters were to pay. Some might be able to pay full cost, while others could not do more than pay 50 per cent."

His practical reason for bringing this matter before the House was very plain. He might mention that when, in the beginning of last month, he brought forward his proposal to make advances to the crofters for the purpose of purchasing seed, the first difficulty he encountered was that the Government had no official information on a point which was a matter of public notoriety in Scotland. He at once communicated with the Lord Provost of Glasgow, who was Chairman of the Glasgow Relief Committee, and an *ex-officio* member of the Board of Supervision, and the result was that he and the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, who was also an *ex-officio* member of the Board, went to the next meeting of the Board, and urged that steps should be taken to obtain information not merely as to the number of paupers, but of persons above the pauper class who were in a state of destitution. This appeared to be quite a novel proposal to the Board of Supervision. But he (Dr. Cameron) did not find fault with the Board, because it consisted principally of legal gentlemen, who had to decide disputes on legal points, and they could not be blamed if, adhering strictly to their functions, they had not got this information. The Lord Provosts of Glasgow and Edinburgh, though *ex-officio* members of the Board, almost never attended the meetings; but, on this occasion, they attended and pointed out that it would not look well to the country if it came out that the Board stuck so slavishly to the letter of its duties that it would not inquire into this matter. As a result of the remonstrances of these gentlemen, the Board agreed to consult the Government as to whether they might not ask their Inspectors to send in Reports on the subject. The Government, of course, agreed to that, and he believed that, without waiting for any request, they had sent instructions for Reports to be furnished by the Inspectors. As he had said, he did not want to find fault with the Board of Supervision; but he mentioned the matter to demonstrate that the Government must not rely upon the Board for the collection of information at such a critical period. He was not going to say what should be done; but he thought in the case of Scotland, and in the face of such destitution actually merging on famine, and causing death by starvation, the Government should take some exceptional means at once for inquiring and informing themselves on the spot as to what was going on, and not rely on reports from the Board of Supervision upon a subject which was not strictly within its province. The only other suggestion he had to make was that the Government should consider their responsibility in this crisis in the case of Scotland to be precisely what it would be in the case of any other part of the Kingdom. They should send down to the distressed districts and ascertain what the state of matters was, and do whatever might be necessary to avert starvation, and to stop the threatened increase of destitution; and he was sure that if they should somewhat exceed the literal interpretation of their powers, if they came to the House, the House would not hesitate to indemnify them on account of any steps they might feel themselves called upon to take.

Mr. WHITBREAD said, that, though he did not, in the circumstances, altogether quarrel with the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) for bringing the question under the notice of the House, he must point out that it was extremely inconvenient, not with regard to Public Business only, but because it had launched upon them an extraordinary budget of reports, which no one had any time or opportunity to verify, or even to examine. He knew that the hon. Member was engaged, with others, in a very merciful effort to relieve distress in the Highlands of Scotland; but he was surprised and pained at hearing him announce that a death from starvation had occurred in the parish of Lochinver, in Sutherland. Where the hon. Member for Glasgow got that information from he could not say; but he understood that he got it from the Rev. Mr. Mackay.

Dr. CAMERON: The information came to me within the last hour. It is from the parish minister of Lochinver, Sutherlandshire, and is as follows:—

> "Reports death of man on 16th from starvation, and says we shall soon have more deaths, if we get no help. This is the first application from Lochinver to Glasgow Committee. The Lord Provost has directed me to telegraph to succour the famishing. Kindly inform the Lord Mayor that the Lord Provost thanks him for opening a fund."

Mr. WHITBREAD said, there was no doubt that the information emanated from Mr. Mackay. Only last week he (Mr. Whitbread) received a letter from Mr. Mackay, giving an account of the destitution in the parish of Lochinver. It seemed to him (Mr. Whitbread) that Mr. Mackay, and those acting with him, were taking the most prudent, active, and energetic steps to cope with the distress. It was a very large parish of 120,000 acres, and Mr. Mackay had established committees in several different parts of the parish, and the result of the information so collected he gave to him in that letter. He said there were 300 crofters; of these, 100 were able to pay for their seed, 150 were able to obtain seed on credit, and 50 were unable either to pay or get it on credit. The steps which the Duke of Sutherland had taken were far beyond those which the hon. Member seemed to imagine. The Duke had tried, first, to find work on the railway for those who could go to it; and, besides that, he had offered to supply on credit, to all crofters who could take it, seed at a price which was not at all unreasonable for good seed. There was nothing to show, or to lead anyone to suppose for a moment, that the Duke wished to charge the crofters more for the seed than it had cost him.

Dr. CAMERON said, what he read was that the Sub-Convener of the Edinburgh Committee stated that the Duke of Sutherland declined to supply seed potatoes, either on credit or at a reduced price.

Mr. WHITBREAD replied, that his information came direct from the spot—from Mr. Mackay. He had known that gentleman for many years, and thought he was to be relied upon in every way as being as good an adviser on such a matter as anyone could have; and in his letter he distinctly stated that the Duke of Sutherland did offer seed on credit to all who would have it, and that the only persons who could not obtain it were the 50 poor crofters already alluded to as being too poor to burden themselves with debt. The parish of Lochinver was one of the most thickly populated parishes in Sutherland, and, as far as he knew of it, he did not think the distress was beyond what could be coped with by private enterprize, and with the assistance so generously given by the society which the hon. Member for Glasgow was connected with. It did not seem to him to be of such magnitude as to call strongly for the interposition of that House. He believed that if the people would set about to meet that distress, as they would in other parts of the world, the amount required was not very great; and he might say further that the letters he received from Lochinver last week said there were only two families actually in want of food, and did not give him the least idea that there was anything likeactual starvation existing.

MR. MACFARLANE said, he believed that the distress was spread over a much wider area than the parts referred to by the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread). He did not understand the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) to make a charge against anyone of neglecting these poor people; but he simply desired to call the special attention of the Government to the extent of the distress, and to call upon the Government to make special effort to relieve that distress. He (Mr. Macfarlane) hoped, this subject having been brought before the authorities, that steps would be taken to ascertain the facts as to the amount of distress, and relieve that distress. There was one other subject which he wished to bring before the attention of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and that had reference to the Royal Commission which was announced yesterday. He (Mr. Macfarlane) had received telegrams expressing something not far short of consternation at the constitution of that Commission. Neither he, nor any of those who communicated with him, wished to say a word against any of the Gentlemen appointed on the Commission, except this, that they did not fairly represent the classes who were most deeply interested in this question. It was certainly right and proper that a certain number of landlords should represent their own interests on that Commission; but they should also have Gentlemen upon it in whom there was confidence, and who were thoroughly impartial. He had intended to ballot today for the opportunity of bringing forward a Motion, praying Her Majesty to appoint one or two additional Commissioners, specially to represent the crofter class. What he feared was, that the result of the labours of the Commission as appointed would be unsatisfactory to those most deeply concerned. It would not be satisfactory to the landlords, if the Commission was discredited in advance; and if the people were impressed, however wrongly, with the opinion that it would not fairly go into the question, the object of the Commission would not be obtained. He wanted to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman, if it was too late to add even one special representative of the crofter class, to give these people the assurance that their case would be thoroughly investigated from their own point of view. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman would not make that addition, he (Mr. Macfarlane) was certain the result of the work of the Commission would be a fiasco. Let the right hon. Gentleman put on any partizan landlord that he liked; but, at the same time, let him put on a partizan from the other side to counteract him. He regretted that the name of Mr. Mackenzie, of Inverness, who was a great authority on this subject, had not been put on the Commission, as he would have given complete confidence to the class for whom he (Mr. Macfarlane) spoke.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he very much regretted that the hon. Member for Carlow County (Mr. Macfarlane), at the commencement of a Commission which was intended to satisfy all Parties, had attempted to discredit that Commission. He thought the remarks which the hon. Gentleman had made were entirely without foundation. Nobody could have taken greater pains than he (Sir William Harcourt) had to form that Commission of impartial persons, who would fully and adequately represent all the interests concerned. It certainly had never been his desire to put violent partizans upon the Commission to decide upon the matter. He had endeavoured to avoid that course; and his principal desire was to obtain persons who should adequately represent the interests, and, he might say, enjoy the confidence also, of the crofters. He had accordingly applied to those persons who, he thought, was entitled to that confidence. He received their advice on the subject, and went beyond the advice they gave him in the number of persons to represent their interests on the Commission. Several names were sent to him, and he selected from them, giving a larger proportion than that asked for. When he applied to one of those Gentlemen whom the hon. Gentleman had described as a partizan landlord——

Mr. MACFARLANE said, what he stated was that he should not object even to a partizan landlord. He never said there was one on the Commission.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he selected two Gentlemen who were well known, and whom he considered would adequately represent the counties of Inverness and Ross—Mr. Cameron, of Lochiel, and Sir Kenneth Mackenzie. The latter expressed a wish that there should be nobody of the landlord class on the Commission; but he (Sir William Harcourt) said that was an idea which he could not entertain. How was this Commission constituted? It was constituted of two Gentlemen who represented not merely the landlord interest, but something more than that. There were also three Gentlemen who were specially selected in the interest of the crofters. These Gentlemen spoke the Gaelic language, and were intimately connected with the crofter interest themselves—Professor Mackinnon, Professor of Gaelic; Sheriff Nicolson, of Kirkcudbridgeshire; and his hon. Friend the Member for Inverness Burghs (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh), who had been the formost man in taking up this question in a moderate spirit, and not in connection with any revolutionary idea. That was the constitution of the Commission—three Gentlemen who must be considered as specially representing the crofters, and two connected with the landlord interest. Then he had also selected a Nobleman who had no special connection with the question, but who was a man of great experience, and who had taken an important part in the affairs of India. He also occupied a high rank in his own country (Scotland), and he did not think there was anyone who could be considered a more impartial man to preside over the Commission. He believed the House was of opinion that the Commission was fairly constituted, and that it would be able to remedy the grievances complained of. He hoped the attempt of the hon. Member to discredit the Commission would not be successful either in that House, or in Scotland. With reference to the matter brought forward by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), he begged to assure him—and he thought the hon. Member was already aware of the fact—that the Government were extremely conscious of the gravity of this subject. The Government were very carefully watching it; but in dealing with it, everyone must know that if the Government were to step in too prematurely, they would only aggravate the evil. Therefore, it was absolutely necessary to watch and to see what could be done, in the first instance, by those whose duty it was to relieve the distress. The land itself was responsible for the sustenance of the poor, and he would do everything—and he thought that was probably one of the intentions of his hon. Friend—to make known to the public the extent of this distress in order to stimulate and encourage private benevolence. Those were the two sources that unquestionably should be resorted to in the first instance; and it would be the duty of the Government, aided by the Board of Supervision and their officers, after they had made inquiries as to the condition of the distressed districts, to watch very carefully, and to see that if those means were not sufficient, the people should not be allowed to suffer to any extreme extent. He thought that was probably the declaration which his hon. Friend desired to obtain from the Government, and he gave it him in all sincerity.

Mr. ANDERSON said, there was one point in the matter which he thought had not been entirely understood by the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken, or by hon. Members—namely, that the Parochial Boards in Scotland had no power to assist the able-bodied poor, and that was where the grievance and difficulty lay. Under the English Poor Law that power existed, and the able-bodied poor could get relief; but in Scotland the Parochial Board had no power to give such relief. What was needed in this case was that the Government should give instructions to the

Scotch Parochial Boards that they must take care that no one should starve, and that Government would indemnify them for any action they took under these circumstances. This was no new grievance; they had felt the want of such a power over and over again, and in every time of exceptional distress; and in every Amendment Bill that had been brought into the House to amend the Scotch Poor Law he had endeavoured to carry an Amendment giving Parochial Boards the power, in times of exceptional distress, either local or general, that was now withheld from them—that of relieving the able-bodied poor. Without some such power as that, cases such as the present would every now and again be occurring in Scotland.

Colonel NOLAN said, that he thought the present was a proper occasion for an Irish Member to call the attention of the Government to the necessity for seed potatoes that existed in certain parts of Ireland. There was no general necessity for seed; but there was no doubt that, in certain districts, seed was very badly required, and that the present was the time to meet that demand. Every question that had been raised by Scotch Members in relation to their own country equally applied to Ireland in certain districts. The second point that the Scotch Members had pointed out was, that the Duke of Sutherland was making arrangements for building a railroad, and so affording employment after the spring work was over. Some such work as that was much wanted in Ireland, where the pinch would be felt after the spring work was over; but they had no Duke of Sutherland in Ireland. A third point was that, in Ireland as in Scotland, there was no power to grant outdoor relief to able-bodied paupers, and they were exactly in the same position as the crofters of Scotland. He hoped the Government would inquire into the matter of necessity for seeds in the West of Ireland, and in any case he thought this was a proper time for an Irish Member to call attention to the question.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he hoped the Government would do their duty with reference to the distress in Scotland, and they would not again hear repeated the terrible state of things to which the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) had called attention. The Government said they were going to make inquiries; they were going to wait—he was afraid they were going to wait to be furnished with statistics while people were starving, where people had died of starvation. The people were walking 30 miles to and 30 miles back to get to their work and to get food; and the hon. Member for Glasgow told them that 200 Scotch families were in that condition. These people did not want seed potatoes; they wanted food, and the Government ought to have the courage of their position, and say that they would see that no person died of starvation. He hoped sincerely, in the interests of the Scotch poor, that the Government would not adopt the same course in Scotland as what they did in Ireland. The Irish poor were offered the workhouse, and nothing else; and he trusted the Government would take a more humane course in Scotland, for it would be a disgrace to the House and the country if any person was allowed to die of starvation. There was a Mace lying on the Table of the House which would sell for a good sum of money; and if the House had not any other means in that rich country to prevent people from starving, he thought they ought to sell it, and give the proceeds in relief. ["Oh, oh!" *and laughter.*] It would certainly be much better to do that than to allow persons to walk 30 miles to and 30 miles back in a day in search of employment which they could not find after all. He trusted, therefore, that in Ireland and Scotland the Government would not fail in its duty in relieving the distress acknowledged to exist amongst the poor.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Thursday the 29th of March.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

BANKRUPTCY BILL.—[Bill 4.]

(*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Solicitor General, Mr. John Holms.*)

FURTHER PROCEEDINGS.

Order read for resuming Further Proceedings after Second Reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures."—(*Mr. Chamberlain.*)

Mr. RAIKES, in moving, as an Amendment—

> "That in the absence of any definite regulations for the transaction of public business by the Standing Committees, it is inexpedient to transfer to those bodies the jurisdiction hitherto exercised over Public Bills by Committees of the whole House,"

said, that while it would not be desirable or right on that occasion to re-open the general controversy as to the desirability of the new machinery created in the course of the Autumn Session, seeing that it was an accomplished fact, he thought the House would not be unwilling to pause for a few minutes to consider a step so momentous as that proposed on the present occasion, and which would give effect to a very remarkable change in the system of legislation. They all knew that the Prime Minister regarded this part of the scheme of Procedure proposed last year as remedial; while the earlier Resolutions were rather the coercive part of his policy; and, therefore, they should all of them be more disinclined to criticize it than they otherwise might. But the House had been placed in no small difficulty by the determination of the Government, in the course of last Session, that the procedure of these Standing Committees was to be, not that of the House, but that of a Select Committee; and it was really upon that point that he wished to offer a few observations to the House. They were asked to supersede the jurisdiction which the House had hitherto exercised over all legislation that came before it, and to transfer that jurisdiction to a small body, no doubt selected with the intention of its possessing what was called a microcosmic character, but which was not a Committee of the Whole House. Such a Committee would have to subsist for some time before it could have the measure of public confidence which the House had when in Committee. Great reason ought, in his judgment, to be adduced in favour of a change in their proceedings which was likely to be fraught with results so considerable. While they were told that this was to multiply the voices of the House of Commons, it appeared to him to be more analogous to shutting up its natural organ of speech, and making it speak through both its ears. Select Committees, he would point out, might be roughly divided into two classes—the class of Select Committee which had legislative functions, and was occupied with Private Bills; and, in the second place, that class of Committees which was rather of an advisory or consultative character, and which was the Select Committee to which they generally gave that name. He would also point out that the procedure of those two classes of Select Committees varied in some very important points. In the case of a Select Committee on Private Bills, the Chairman was allowed a vote, and he was also allowed to give a casting vote; but in a Select Committee on public matters the Chairman was not allowed to vote, and had only a casting vote. They were entitled to ask which of those two classes of Select Committees was to shape the procedure which was to be adopted in the Standing Committees? He would ask, besides, whether any decision was to be arrived at outside of those Committees as to the mode in which their Members were to address the Chair—whether they were to rise in their places or not? That was a matter of more importance than might appear on the face it. Next, there was a point of even more importance—that of the publication of their proceedings. Her Majesty's Government, he knew, had made some provision for the admission of the public; and he was glad that the Committees were to be allowed to be master of their own proceedings, and to have the power of admitting and excluding strangers. They might say some provision had been made for the publication of the proceedings of the Standing Committees in the ordinary channels of information; but he did not see himself that the space in the new rooms admitted of the information being diffused very widely. They might, he thought, squeeze four reporters into the box; but when they came to an important question, and when there would be reporters from all the London newspapers, and from most of the great Provincial newspapers, it would be found to be rather difficult to arrange the claims of the respective journals as to the possession of those seats. But another important question in connection with the publication of their proceedings was, how the House was to be officially informed as to the proceedings of this Committee. He believed that when Notice was given of an Amendment on a Bill like the present, by any Member of the House who did not happen to be a Member of the Standing Committee, that Amendment would be placed on the Notice Paper in the usual manner, and the Committee would be called upon to consider it on its merits. How such Amendments would fare in the absence of those who were responsible for them remained to be seen. What was the authority which was to regulate proceedings of that sort? He was anxious to hear some suggestion from the Government which would simplify the matter. Was the question of the procedure of the Committees to be left to the Speaker, or to the Chairmen's Panel, who had been chosen by the Committee of Selection; or to the Committee of Selection itself; or to the Standing Committees themselves? All those matters were left in the dark. It was to be regretted that the Government, in creating those new tribunals, had not formed a definite scheme with regard to their procedure. Another question was, what was to be the power of the Committees with respect to their own adjournment? Were they to adjourn as the majority might determine, when, perhaps, there was only a small number in attendance? And were they to be empowered to adjourn for any length of time they pleased —say, for three weeks, or a month? Such a power might be extremely inconvenient; but he did not see what check on such proceedings was provided. On the other hand, there would be a certain amount of inconvenience if the Committee were compelled to sit during whole days when there was no question before it; and it might be extremely embarrassing to proceed with a Bill when it was intended to remodel some of its clauses. Then, again, how were divisions to be taken? There was no difficulty with a Select Committee, because the numbers were small and Members answered to their names, and the names were taken down. He presumed that was to be the form in the present case, because they had been informed that the practice of Select Committees was to be followed unless it was otherwise ordered. But in a Committee of 60 or 70 Members there would be some difficulty in adopting that course. Again, what was to be the position of the Chairman? There was a difference of practice between the Private Bill Committees, which were legislative, and the Select Committees, which were simply advisory. He gathered that the Procedure of the latter would be followed with respect to the Chairman. The Chairmen of Select Committees occupied a different position from the Chairman of Committees of the Whole House, and were enabled to speak and vote. It would be a misfortune, considering the eminence of the Chairmen of these Standing Committees, if they were not allowed to take part in discussions. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) was Chairman of one of the Committees, and it would be a pity if he could not contribute to the discussions. But, at the same time, it was not an unmixed advantage for a Chairman to take part in debate, as he would find it difficult to maintain the traditional authority and impartiality of the Chair, and more especially when, as was extremely probable, his ruling might be questioned by the very Members with whom he might have just previously been engaged in an animated dispute. That authority and impartiality were an heritage of the House which ought to be strictly maintained. How little the question was understood out-of-doors might be gathered from the statement made that morning in a daily newspaper, which was supposed to express the views of the Ministerial Party, that the proceedings in those Committees would be governed by the proceedings of Committees of the Whole House. He wished it were so, for then the House would know where it was, and he could look forward to the proceedings of those Committees with more hope than he could pretend now to entertain. He had always regarded the whole scheme as objectionable and unconstitutional. Members of that House were sent to represent their constituents, and they were not empowered by those whom they represented to delegate their functions to others. He believed these bodies would embarrass and complicate the working of the House. He would think otherwise if he thought they would give—as they were promised to give—greater opportunities for the expression of individual opinion. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister said they would tend to liberate the House from thraldom, and encourage young Members to speak and develop the latent talent of the House. He (Mr. Raikes) was sure that would be a good result; but he doubted whether it would be so. Speaking as an ex-Chairman of Committees, he would be glad if young Members could be induced to speak; and any Chairman would, for example, rather listen to a young Member than hear the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone) address the Committee for half an hour. The working of those Committees would be extremely likely to disappoint those who had formed sanguine expectations. He would be very glad if the right hon. Gentleman should have succeeded in forging a new weapon to make the House more useful to the country; but, as the question now stood, he thought the new system was open to the gravest objection. What was chiefly desired was a statement from the Government as to some simple and plain Standing Orders which would have the authority of the House, and would simplify the procedure of the Committees. They were entitled to ask the Government to come forward with some proposal. He believed the functions to be delegated to these Standing Committees were such as should not be given to any Committee. The right hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Amendment which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the absence of any definite regulations for the transaction of public business by the Standing Committees, it is inexpedient to transfer to those bodies the jurisdiction hitherto exercised over Public Bills by Committees of the Whole House,"—(*Mr. Raikes,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. LYON PLAYFAIR: I do not intend to follow my right hon. Friend (Mr. Raikes) in his attacks on the Committees, or his prophecies as to their failure. If my right hon. Friend had found it to have been compatible with his engagements to act on the Panel of Chairmen, when requested to do so by the Committee of Selection, I am sure that he would have found it unnecessary to submit this Motion to the House. The Standing Orders in relation to the Standing Committees provide—

"That the procedure in such Committees shall be the same as in a Select Committee, unless the House shall otherwise provide."

This Instruction is quite definite, and the Panel of Chairmen has had several meetings for the purpose of considering whether the procedure of Select Committees was sufficiently definite and comprehensive to guide the deliberations of Standing Committees, which differed from them chiefly in size and importance. They found that in practice the Amendments to a Bill are considered and determined in a Select Committee upon the same procedure as that of a Committee of the Whole House. Even in regard to debate, the practice is the same, although it is apt to lose some of its formality from the small number of Members of a Select Committee. This was the only essential point on which the Panel of Chairmen thought it necessary to be quite clear, that there should be the same formality of speaking and debate as there is in a Committee of the Whole House; for, without this formality, a large Committee of 80 Members is likely to get into confusion. But this is a mere detail, which varies in Select Committees themselves in accordance with the character of the Chairman who presides; and it was not in contravention of the Standing Order, and did not, therefore, require any authority from the House. The Panel of Chairmen carefully considered and laid down for themselves the mode of procedure in Standing Committees; but, in doing so, they only formulated the practice of Select Committees when performed in a formal and efficient manner, either according to Standing Orders, or established usage. They thought it would be most convenient that the Committees should meet on separate days, and considered that, on the whole, Mondays and Fridays would be most suitable for the Trade Committee, and Tuesdays and Thursdays for the Law Committee, until the House entered regularly into its Morning Sittings. The hours of sitting proposed are from 12 to 3.45. The Panel of Chairmen provided for the due printing and circulation of Amendments, not only to Members of the Committee, but also to the Whole House, through the authority which Mr. Speaker already possesses. Although minute details had to be considered as to the mode of taking and recording divisions, there was nothing in these that did not entirely adapt themselves to the practice of Select Committees, and they were not of a character which the House required to approve. In fact, after careful consideration of the procedure, the Panel of Chairmen thought the Standing Order of the House was quite sufficient for the guidance of the presiding Chairman of each Committee. They had no doubt that the ready co-operation of the Committee itself would soon adjust any unexpected difficulty which might arise. They were not empowered by the House, and much less were the Government empowered by the Standing Order, to propose any formal Rules for the guidance of the Standing Committees. The House in its wisdom enjoined the procedure of Select Committees; and beyond conducting this procedure with increased formality of debate, there was nothing else required, in the opinion of the Chairmen, to enable the Standing Committees to be conducted with efficiency. I trust, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Raikes) will be satisfied that the various points have been considered, which may enable the Members of the Committee to pursue their labours with method and efficiency, and that he will not consider it necessary to divide the House upon this Motion.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE pointed out that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Lyon Playfair) had not answered the question which had been put by his right hon. Friend (Mr. Raikes), as to whether the Chairman was entitled to take part in the discussion as in the Select Committee?

MR. LYON PLAYFAIR: The Panel of Chairmen have received no power from the House to make Rules; but they have agreed among themselves to follow mainly the practice of Committees of the Whole House.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he presumed that the Amendments to any Bill referred to a Grand Committee would, as a matter of form, have to be presented at the Table of the House, printed, and then, under Standing Order 22, referred to the Committee. He wished to know whether this reference to the Committee would not merely be a matter of form, but whether, when the Amendments were sent upstairs, they would be brought to the attention of the Committee, as the clauses to which they referred were brought forward? If not, the Member interested in any particular Amendment would have to be running after some Member of the Committee to ensure their being proposed at the proper time.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, the right hon. Gentleman the late Chairman of Committees did not appear to have even attempted to make any answer to most of the questions put to him by his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes). The Resolutions relating to the Grand Committees had not received the same attention as the other Resolutions, for everyone was so sick of the subject at the Autumn Session that all the Amendments relating to the formation of these Committees were dropped on the last day of the Session. The question of these Grand Committees required more careful consideration than the House had as yet given to it. He had examined the composition of these four Committees with some curiosity; and, so far from the Government majority being proportionately represented on them, there was no such thing at all. If hon. Members from Ireland sitting below the Gangway on the Opposition side were classed as part of the regular Opposition it would be found that on the Grand Committee on Law the Government had only a majority of three, while on the Committee of Trade and Commerce they were in a minority of two. This might lead to awkward results for the Government; for supposing in the case of an important Government Bill, such as the Bankruptcy Bill, a Motion were carried adjourning the Committee for a month, there would be very little chance of the Bill passing. Again, after the first one or two meetings of a Committee the attendance might be very scanty, and opportunities might then arise for sharp practice, placing the Government in an embarrassing position. He thought, therefore, the Government ought to express their opinion as to whether a Motion to adjourn the Committee for a month was one which it was competent for the Committee to carry; and, if not, whether it would be competent for the Committee to carry any Motion at all. Although a Bill such as the Bankruptcy Bill might not be a Party question, there might be details on which very strong opinions were entertained, and it was only right that those opinions should be properly represented. He also thought the Prime Minister, who had been responsible for the introduction of these Resolutions, should decide whether the Chairman could take part in debate or not. At the same time, he thought it very singular if the Chairman were allowed to do so, for he would thereby expose himself to taunts and observations of a scornful character, to which, having regard to the dignity of his position, he ought not to be exposed. He would point out to the Government that the Panel of Chairmen had been left entirely without Rules for their guidance. There was nothing to prevent any Member questioning the Chairman's decision and debating it. Besides those he had mentioned, there were many other points which might be raised with regard to these Grand Committees; and he did not think, therefore, that the Government would lose any time if they were to postpone the matter until after the Easter Recess, and to give it their consideration in the meantime. If Amendments were hastily run over in Committee, owing to Members not being in their places, lengthy debates would arise in the House and Motions to re-commit the Bill, and more time would probably be lost than at present. He thought the point brought forward by his right hon. Friend would be found well worthy the consideration of the House.

Mr. W. M. TORRENS said, they had believed that this new expedient in legislation would be a reflection of the character of the House; in other words, that these Legislative Bodies to whom they deputed their authority would be representative of the various interests in the country. He owned that nothing would have induced him to acquiesce in the appointment of such a new authority if he had not believed that it would be thoroughly representative. An analysis of the list of the 64 Gentlemen whose names had been submitted as representative of the House on this question would, however, show that that principle had not been adhered to. In introducing his Bill the President of the Board of Trade expounded to the House the far-reaching effect of the measure, and did not disguise that it would have the most momentous effects upon the habits and social condition of the people. The body delegated by the House to scrutinize the Bill ought, therefore, to be representative of their interests. As regarded political Parties, he believed the balance had been struck fairly well; but there was an almost entire absence on the Committee of Representatives of the mass of the industrial community and of retail trade and labour. Upon that Committee, of the 10 Metropolitan cities four were absolutely unrepresented—Marylebone, Finsbury, Chelsea, and Southwark—with upwards of 1,500,000 inhabitants — were unrepresented. In Ireland, of five so-called cities, two—Cork and Limerick—were totally excluded. Twenty-eight towns and cities in England, all of them containing above 40,000, many above 60,000, and several above 100,000, inhabitants, and with a total population of 2,500,000, were also unrepresented. With the disfranchised portion of the Metropolis, that made 4,000,000 of people without representation on the Committee; and those 4,000,000, it should be remembered, consisted mainly of the industrial population, whose social position this Bill was intended to change. One city excluded was Norwich—a most industrious and enterprizing place—which deserved greater consideration. Nor was one of the six Members representing the county in which Norwich was situated on the Committee. Had this Bill not affected all classes of the community he should not have raised this question. He objected also to this Panel on the ground that it was essentially one of capitalists. These were not times when the House should delegate its authority exclusively to those whose influence was supposed to be exerted only on one side. The Committee should have had upon it the Representatives of such towns as Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Brighton, Nottingham, Bradford, and Bolton. He hoped that the Government would use its superintending care in this matter, and make the Committee more representative of the industrial classes. In his judgment, the division of the House into three or four Panels would have been a much better plan; but, at any rate, the Grand Committees should be increased to the number of 100. He wished the experiment of the Grand Committees every success; but, if it were to have that success, an alteration must be made in the direction he had indicated.

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY said, he felt bound to vindicate the action of the Committee of Selection. He regretted that the hon. Member for Finsbury

(Mr. W. M. Torrens) had not given him Notice of his intended attack, for, had Notice been given, he would have been better prepared to refute the charges that had been made. The Committee of Selection believed that the Members whom they had chosen represented the House politically and territorially, and also represented its intelligence and talent, as shown in the debates. The hon. Member for Finsbury complained that certain large towns were not represented; but he would remind the hon. Member that 24 large towns were represented, including Liverpool, with 493,000 inhabitants; Glasgow, with 477,000; Manchester, with 383,000; Birmingham, with 343,000: Leeds, with 259,000; Sheffield, with 239,000; Bristol, with 182,000; Stoke-upon-Trent, with 120,000; Salford, with 124,000; Hull, with 123,000; Portsmouth, with 113,000. Then there were the Cities of London and Westminster, the Metropolitan boroughs of Hackney, with 362,000 inhabitants; the Tower Hamlets, with 391,000; and Greenwich, with 169,000. There were also the Cities of Dublin, with 267,000 inhabitants, and Belfast, with 174,000. Among the great county constituencies were Yorkshire, South-West Riding, with 397,000; North Durham, with 225,000; Mid Surrey, with 203,000; South Essex, with 181,000; West Cornwall, with 161,000; West Gloucestershire, with 158,000; East Suffolk, with 157,000; West Kent, with 154,000; South Northumberland, with 110,000; and Perthshire, with 101,000. Then there were other industrial centres, important, but not numerically strong, such as Preston, Wigan, Huddersfield, and Burnley. Among Members representing smaller constituencies, but connected with trade and commerce, were the Members for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), for Aylesbury (Sir Nathaniel de Rothschild), for Ross and Cromarty (Sir Alexander Matheson), and for Downpatrick (Mr. Mulholland). The hon. Member said that capitalists only were on the Committee. Was the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent (Mr. Broadhurst) a capitalist? The hon. Member pointed out that the City of Cork was not represented. That was true; but the House would see, on the other hand, that the County of Cork was represented, while the City of Cork was represented on the Law Committee by one of its Members (Mr. Parnell), who had expressed publicly in the House his desire to be on that Committee. It might also be true that the City of Norwich was not represented; but there were special difficulties in obtaining an hon. Member representing that neighbourhood. The Committee of Selection might have made some mistakes; but they had throughout been actuated by a desire to do their duty conscientiously. If there were any omission from the list of the Committee which it might be desirable to fill up, the case could be met by the exercise of the provision which enabled the Committee of Selection to add the names of 15 specially qualified Gentlemen.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he was one of those who felt keenly the incompleteness—he might almost say the ambiguity—in which this question of Standing Committees was left by the House at the end of the Autumn Session; and in consequence he had expressed some little hesitation in acting as Chairman of one of those Committees. But having discussed the matter with friends who had given much time and thought to the subject, he was convinced that it was his duty to endeavour to assist in giving the experiment the best chance of success in his power. At the same time, he should not have accepted the Chairmanship of one of these Committees if it had been understood that the Chairman was to be a partizan Chairman; and he made it a *sine quâ non* that there was nothing in the Standing Orders of Select Committees which should prevent the procedure of Standing Committees being assimilated as much as possible, as regarded form and order of debate, with the proceedings of Committees of the Whole House. The assistance of the Speaker in forming the procedure of Standing Committees would be highly desirable; but much must be left to experience. It would have been highly imprudent to lay down a scheme of procedure which could not have been exhaustive, and so must have offered loopholes to attack. It was far wiser, the House having determined to try an experiment, that Standing Committees should commence to sit unshackled by any new Rules of Procedure.

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I think my hon. Friend the Member for Finsbury (Mr. W. M. Torrens) has introduced into this discussion matter which was hardly within the immediate scope of the subject before us. I am glad, however, that an opportunity has been given to the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir John R. Mowbray) to show the great care with which the Committee of Selection has discharged its important duties in connection with the selection of the Standing Committees; and I am very glad to have an opportunity of expressing my sense of obligation to the Committee of Selection for the manner in which those duties have been performed. The speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Finsbury, who has very clear views on the present question, distinctly shows that his objections go to the root of the whole matter. They are not objections applicable to the manner in which the Committee of Selection has performed its duty, but to the duty which has been given to that Committee. My hon. Friend said, and I have no doubt truly, that there are 29 towns of 40,000 people unrepresented, and there are also 26 large towns unrepresented, it being claimed by my hon. Friend that those large towns should be represented; 29 plus 26 make 55, so that, in a Committee of 65 or 70 persons, the Committee of Selection, according to my hon. Friend, would have been obliged to begin by appointing 55 Members for large towns of about 40,000 people. It is, therefore, quite clear that the objection of my hon. Friend is really an objection to the number of the Committee. He says it should have been larger—that is, he objects to the Standing Order itself. I think it is quite unnecessary to anticipate, as the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) has done, the possibility of the failure of those Committees in consequence of gross and monstrous error. Of course, if we are to suppose the Members of any of the bodies to which the House delegates its powers to be actuated by folly or criminality, we might fear most absurd and monstrous consequences. I do not, however, think it is necessary to entertain that supposition, which appears to be at the basis of the whole argument of the noble Lord. Happily, we can proceed, to a great extent, in matters of this kind upon the principle of confidence; and I must say I have known no more satisfactory sign of the manner in which the principle of confidence can be entertained, and can be applied to a large portion, at any rate, of the Business of this House—no clearer proof of the disposition that always exists to withdraw from the arena of Party contention very important portions of our legislative work—than has been afforded to us, in the first place, by the manner in which Gentlemen sitting on both sides of this House have consented to undertake very onerous duties, and to become responsible for the working of a measure, for the original inception of which they have no responsibility whatever, and of which they may have disapproved. I cannot conceive anything more agreeable than to witness conduct of that kind, now exemplified in the remarkable concurrence of my right hon. Friend on this side and of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, who has just sat down, and who is himself one of the Members to whom I refer in mentioning the manner in which the spirit of co-operation has been displayed, even upon a subject which might have afforded us material for a long debate, and even, I might say, of a long contention. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has stated that, in his judgment, it would have been a mistake if the Panel of Chairmen had endeavoured to lay down a set of Rules for the guidance of these Committees. He says they are bound by the Order of the House to adopt the procedure of Select Committees, as it is expressed in Standing Orders, and as it is established, no doubt, by practice. As to what lies beyond that, the Panel of Chairmen have determined that it is better to wait the teaching and guidance of experience. That is exactly acting upon what has been declared in this House, and thoroughly understood in this House before the House arrived at its final decision. The right hon. Gentleman says, in all truth, that it would have been a great mistake on the part of the Panel of Chairmen if they had endeavoured to frame a set of Rules with regard to which, in the first place, their authority might have been questioned; and, in the second place, they might have been certain that their enumeration might not have been complete. In that I entirely agree with the right hon. Gentleman. They would have made a great mistake had they endeavoured to anticipate beforehand cases that might possibly arise in working out an experiment which contains within it so much of novelty. But I will go further, and say that, great as that mistake would have been on the part of the Panel of

Chairmen, it would have been a still greater mistake were we to adopt the advice of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), and in this House to attempt to perform the functions which the Panel of Chairmen considered they were unable to perform. I do not mean we should have laboured under any defect of authority; but I do mean this—that we should have discussions of a much more promiscuous and miscellaneous character, much less closely adhering to the point, proceeding from Members, in many cases, much less qualified than the Panel of Chairmen are, to discuss the matter, and always labouring under this difficulty, that experience alone can guide you along a path which is, in a considerable degree, novel. That is the state of the case as to the general grounds. At the end of November or the beginning of December the House adopted this proposition, that we should make an experiment. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) says, with truth, that a number of Amendments distributed over the Notice Paper were not discussed. That was so; but those Notices disappeared, mainly on this ground—that the Government were willing to give satisfaction to what they thought the reasonable inclination of a large portion of the House to bring the experiment within narrow limits, so that we might see what we were about, and not commit ourselves wholesale to a new system, until we had some experience of the working of it. As far as the main matters are concerned in the Rules applicable to Select Committees and the usages of these Committees, and as to all that lies beyond, it would be better to wait the teaching of experience, as it will be represented to us through the able and experienced body of Gentlemen who have undertaken to act on the Panel of Chairmen. I am bound to say that all the points the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) has enumerated were points which, I hold in my humble judgment, can easily be disposed of when they come to be put in practice in these Committees. With regard to the question suggested by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) as to the position of the Chairman, there is no doubt that the Chairman in the Standing Committees will be entitled to speak. As these Grand Committees are to be governed by the Rules of Procedure which governs Select Committees, it will clearly be within the discretion of the Chairman to give his opinion. It might be said, from the nature of these bodies, that it would not be expedient that the Chairman should avail himself to the full of the rights he may possess as a Member of the Committee. That may be so; but the degree in which he should exercise that right, and the question whether it is desirable to impose any limitation of that right—these are questions which we could not possibly discuss with advantage. We must feel our way in such matters. Put men of sense in the Chair, and these men of sense, with the Committee around them, will be perfectly able to form weighty and trustworthy judgments on any questions that may arise. I hope it will not be necessary to go through all the points raised by the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge, because I would much rather, now that the House has taken its course, and has determined upon an experiment of a certain character and limit, as far as Grand Committees are concerned—I think it is very much better that that should be held to be under the care and guardianship of those who have received the confidence of the House, the Members of the Committee of Selection, and the Panel of Chairmen, rather than that it should be treated by myself as Leader of the House, or by other Members of the Government, because our desire is—as we feel we are working for a common interest, and until the time may come when we are to consider whether we are to carry the experiment further, or recede from it altogether—that as far as possible the matter should remain in the hands of those who would speak without the possibility of any selfish interest or Party prejudice, as the right hon Gentleman has just spoken this evening. An hon. Member had spoken of Amendments *ab extra.* Papers are often referred now to a Committee which is sitting; but they do not prescribe the mode in which the Committee should deal with those Papers. It is far better for the present that we should trust the discretion of the Committee, as to the mode of dealing with those Amendments. We have shown distinctly to the Committee that we wish to retain for all the Members of this House the power of making suggestions and Amendments; and no doubt the Committee, if they would preserve the confidence of the House, will perceive, when they observe Amendments on the Notice Paper, that the House desires that those Amendments should be taken into consideration. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock seems to think that the difference between the two modes of procedure—the procedure before the Private Bill Committees and that before Select Committees—is not sufficiently marked. I think I may give the noble Lord the assurance that this is not so. The proceedings before Private Bill Committees are under separate Rules of their own, and will not interfere or clash with the proceedings of these Standing Committees. The proceedings of Select Committees are governed by certain Standing Orders, by usage, and by tradition. I will not dwell longer on this matter, believing that the question is a simple one, and that we decided it last December. We stand simply on the proposition that, as to what remains incomplete in the practical mode necessary for the conduct of Business before these Standing Committees, it is best that in the present state of things we should wait for experience and take that as our guide.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, the right hon. Gentleman has somewhat misunderstood the Motion of my right hon. Friend, and has put upon it a construction which the observations of my right hon. Friend did not convey. The right hon. Gentleman seems to think that my right hon. Friend desires to express an opinion that definite regulations ought to be made in and by this House for the prosecution of Business before the Standing Committees. What I understood him to say was that, before any Bill was committed to one of the Standing Committees, the regulations which he desires to see should be made somewhere, by some authority, and that we should know what it was we were doing when we sent up a Bill to be dealt with before one of these Committees. There is a great distinction between that proposal and a proposal that the matter should be discussed in the House. Everybody feels —even those who, like myself and others, have been sceptical as to the working of the Grand Committees—that the experiment ought to be fairly tried; and we are desirous that it should be fairly tried, if at all. But the question is—What is the best way of trying it? I do not say there should be a detailed code of regulations on every point; but I think we should be informed as to some of the main principles upon which the Committees must act, whether experimental or otherwise. This discussion has been very useful, and we have learned a great deal that will be of value to us as throwing light on the situation; but still we are left in an unsatisfactory position with regard to one question which has been referred to. The cardinal question is that of the position of the Chairman, and I think that is a point upon which it would be extremely desirable that there should be a clear understanding. The answer given is, that we are to be guided by the Rules of the Select Committee. If you are, of course the Chairman will take a very active part in the discussion of the Bill, and will not only vote when called upon for his casting vote, but will probably draw up himself and propose Amendments to be discussed. Surely the point has by this time been fully considered by the Government? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Edinburgh (Mr. Lyon Playfair) has given no certain sound on this question; my right hon. Friend the Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth) has said that he understands it very clearly; but the Prime Minister had made the whole matter obscure and doubtful. What has been said I have no doubt will be carefully weighed by the Chairman, and the Committee will give proper weight to what, I think, I may say is the obvious sense of the House, that the Chairman's business is to act as Chairman, and he must consider that that is the more important part of his duty, and not the promotion of this or that particular view. No doubt it will be a great loss if the Chairman should be precluded from giving his opinion; but if we are to give the Standing Committees a fair chance, they must be so guided that the duty of the Chairman must be to make himself efficient in that post, and not an advocate. I hope my right hon. Friend will feel it unnecessary to divide the House on this question, but will content himself with the useful discussion that has been raised.

MR. NORWOOD said, he regretted the conspicuous absence of the legal element from the Grand Committee to which the Bankruptcy Bill was to be referred. The Solicitor General and the Solicitor General for Scotland were to be Members of the Committee; but, except for those two hon. and learned Gentlemen, the Committee would not have the valuable help of any of the 11 barristers and solicitors who had taken part in the debate last night. In considering the clauses of the Bill it would be a distinct disadvantage to be without the assistance of Gentlemen specially acquainted with the mode and conduct of bankruptcy proceedings; and he hoped, therefore, that a few Members of the Legal Profession would be added to the Committee. With regard to the general question, he was glad that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Edinburgh (Mr. Lyon Playfair) had elicited so much information from the Government; and he felt sure that the Government themselves would see the advantage of carefully preparing the Rules under which delegated Business was to be conducted. One point, however, remained unsettled, and it would be well to know whether the Grand Committees were to sit four days a week or only two, and at what hour they were to meet. He would only add that the Chairman ought not, in his opinion, to take a leading part in the proceedings.

MR. RITCHIE remarked that the position in which the House was placed was well illustrated by the contrary views taken by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth) and by the Prime Minister as to the duties of the Chairmen of the new Committees. Were the Chairmen to act like Chairmen of Committees of the Whole House, or like Chairmen of Select Committees? It had been suggested that the Panel of Chairmen should lay down Rules of Procedure; but the Standing Order gave them no such authority, and the question was eminently one for the decision of the House. The new procedure had been described, correctly enough, as an experiment; but it was a most important experiment, and he should have preferred to see it tried on some measure of less consequence than the Bankruptcy Bill. It did not appear that anything had been laid down as to what should be done in the event of there not being a quorum of a Grand Committee. It was a pity that this experiment was to be tried under unfavourable auspices, because the course of procedure had not been settled. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would not divide the House, but would be satisfied with the discussion.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he wished to draw attention to a point which seemed to have escaped the observation of hon. Members who had taken part in the discussion up to the present. He desired to point out that provision had only been made for four reporters in each of the Grand Committee Rooms—that, in all probability, the Serjeant-at-Arms would experience great difficulty in allocating the seats, and that whatever arrangement he made would be sure to give offence to many newspapers. As the House was aware, a certain sum of money was given to Mr. Hansard for reporting the debates of the House, and also for reporting the debates in Committee of the Whole House. Mr. Hansard did not report the proceedings of Select Committees. Well, these Grand Committees were neither Committees of the Whole House, nor Select Committees, and were not within the terms of the arrangement with Mr. Hansard. It was evidently intended that their proceedings should be reported in some way, otherwise accommodation would not have been prepared for four reporters; and he would therefore suggest, as a means of making it easier to give satisfaction to all newspapers, that instead of admitting four reporters they should admit only one, who should give copies of his reports to all the newspapers that required them. Some arrangement of this kind might be made with Mr. Hansard. It would, of course, involve an extra Vote; but he thought that such an arrangement as that would be found to give satisfaction. For his own part, he agreed with those people who believed that their Business would go on better if they had no reports at all; still, that was not the general view; and he, therefore, thought the suggestion he now made deserved some consideration.

MR. GREGORY said, he wished to make one practical suggestion to the Chairmen's Panel. It appeared to him that there was considerable difficulty about the point which had been raised with regard to Amendments. As he understood the arrangement at present, if a Member, either through his constituents, or through being connected with a public body, proposed an Amendment, and was not a Member of the Grand Committee, he must take his chance of having the Amendment discussed or brought before the Committee by an hon. Member who did belong to it, but would not have an opportunity of representing his own views of the Amendment which had been suggested to him. Then, when the Bill went back to the House, if those Amendments were not in the Bill, and the Member interested in them tried to raise them again, he would be told that they had been considered before the Committee; and, although he had not had an opportunity of representing his constituents or his own views upon them, it would be impossible for him, after they had been considered by the Grand Committee, to raise them again for the consideration of the House. That might be a very serious and difficult position, and the only way of obviating it that occurred to him was that a Member, not being a Member of the Grand Committee and having Amendments on the Paper, should be allowed to attend the Committee, not as a voter, but as an advocate, so that he should have an opportunity of placing his own views before the Committee. The Amendments would then be properly discussed. That was the only way out of the difficulty which he could think of; and he threw out the suggestion for the consideration of the Chairmen's Panel, who would be able to decide what it was worth.

Mr. WHITBREAD said, the Leader of the Opposition appeared to think that there ought to be some Rules framed, not by the House, but by some other authority, for the guidance of the Standing Committees. But who were to frame them? The Chairmen's Panel had no power to frame Rules, and he had come to the conclusion that they had better be left to the practice established under the Standing Orders, or that the House must be asked to frame Rules; and the latter alternative was not desired. The Chairmen's Panel would be doing all that lay in their power if they came to an agreement to make certain recommendations with regard to procedure to the Committees when they met. The House had indicated pretty clearly in the Standing Orders that the Chairman of Ways and Means was an officer to keep Order in debate, and in that respect differed from an ordinary Chairman of a Select Committee, who had charge of the measure before him; and any Chairman who wished to keep control of a Committee would be careful to avoid entering into a debate in such a way as to expose himself to a charge of partizanship. The noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) had expressed his fear that the Government would lose its authority in these Committees. The Standing Committees, however, had been so composed as to give to every section and Party in the House a strict representation according to its number; the majority of the Government, the strength of the Opposition, and that of other Parties, were all fairly represented on the Committees. They were told by the House to make each Committee a miniature House, and he believed the mandate had been well carried out. His hon. Friend (Mr. W. M. Torrens) had complained that some four Metropolitan constituencies and 26 large towns were not represented; but when these were compared with the remaining Metropolitan boroughs and the 29 large towns which were represented, he thought it must be plain that the representation was on a fair and sound basis. With regard to the lack of the legal element on the Trade Committee, to which the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Norwood) drew attention, he would merely say that the Committee was not yet fully constructed, and therefore the criticisms were somewhat premature. The House had given them power, after having made a miniature of the House at large, to add 15 specialists; and the claims of the Legal Profession to a larger representation would not be overlooked. With reference to the remarks of his hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie), he would suggest that a Grand Committee should be left to follow the practice of Select Committees, governed by the Standing Order, in the event of a quorum not being constituted. The suggestion which had been offered with regard to reporters was well worthy of consideration. It was within the province of the Speaker to make arrangements for reporters; but as the available space would be very limited, perhaps it would be possible to arrange that a single report should be accessible to all who wished to have it. In conclusion, he stated that the Chairmen's Panel had agreed that there should be two Sittings of each Committee every week.

MR. DAWSON said, that the discussion on this question was confined to a mere criticism of the proposals of the Government; but no Member had made a practical suggestion on the matter. Now, it appeared to him that a better plan than that of the Government would be if the whole House sat in the afternoon for the purpose of Business, and, rising for an interval, it could sit again for Business with which the House alone was concerned. If that suggestion were adopted the continuous character of the proceedings would be maintained, and they would not be kept there until an unreasonably late hour, and the Speaker would not have to suffer the dreadful hardships to which he was at present subjected. He thought it right to make that suggestion, inasmuch as it had been stated that the Government intended to dwell on this subject further during the Recess; and perhaps they would take into consideration whether their purposes would not be better attained by the plan he suggested than that of the Grand Committees.

MR. WARTON complained that the President of the Board of Trade seemed determined that his Bill, or none, should pass. He (Mr. Warton), however, was of opinion that the Bankruptcy Bills of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) and the hon. Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) should also be referred to this Grand Committee.

MR. LEWIS asked when the House was to understand that the 15 special Members of the Trade Committee were to be named, and whether Notice of such Motion would be given?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, that was a matter entirely for the Committee of Selection. He had, however, conferred with the Chairman of the Trade Committee, who thought it would probably not be convenient for that Committee to meet so early as the first Monday after the Easter Recess. He proposed, therefore, to put down the first meeting of the Committee for Monday, the 9th of April, which would leave plenty of time for the addition of the 15 names necessary to complete the Committee.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question again proposed.

MR. DAWSON said, he quite appreciated the great merit of this Bill, and the great ability which the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) had displayed in introducing it; and for that reason he desired to know why Ireland was excluded from the benefits of the measure? The Secretary of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce was in favour of the Bill; and if it were true that the Bill had the approval of the commercial element in Ireland, he did not see why that country should be excluded from its operation. He thought that, on social matters of this kind, it would be much better if the Government legislated courageously for the two countries on the same basis; and then, if the Irish Members found it necessary to dissent from any part of the measure, they could do so by moving an Amendment. In his opinion, the legislation for the two countries ought to be uniform.

MR. MELDON said, that he should dissent from the view taken by the right hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Dawson), as to the desire that his Bill should be extended to Ireland. He thought that in Ireland people were very well satisfied with their present bankruptcy system; and he should, therefore, protest against the extension of the provisions of this Bill to that country.

MR. DAWSON: In personal explanation, I have every respect for the legal opinion of the hon. and learned Member for Kildare. ["Order, order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman is not at liberty to discuss the measure.

MR. DAWSON: Merely in personal explanation, I wish to say that I have had the authority of the Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin that this Bill has met with the approval of the mercantile classes in Ireland.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, he was inclined to agree with the right hon. Gentleman that it was desirable, wherever feasible, that legislation for the three countries should be on the same lines. But in the present case there was already separate legislation for Ireland, Scotland, and England; and as he had no information which led him to believe that the Scotch or Irish were dissatisfied with the present system, he did not feel justified in attempting to impose upon them what might or might not be an improvement. He had, however, since the introduction of the first Bill, which was on the same principle as the Bill just read a second time, received information from the Dublin Chamber of Commerce and several Irish Members on both sides of the House that they would be very glad to have its provisions extended to Ireland. His answer was, if that should turn out to be a general opinion, he thought it a matter in which the principle of Home Rule might apply, and that he did not think the Government would have the slightest objection to extend the Bill to Ireland. But he was afraid, after what had fallen from the hon. and learned Member for Kildare (Mr. Meldon), there was no such unanimity of feeling as would induce the Government to adopt that course.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked, as a point of Order, whether there would be any difficulty in the way of an hon. Member who wished to move an Instruction to one of the new Committees?

MR. SPEAKER said, there could be no doubt that it would be competent for the House to instruct the Committee in the manner suggested by the hon. and gallant Baronet.

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *committed* to the Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures.

Ordered, That the Committee do sit and proceed on Monday 9th April, at Twelve of the clock.

SEA AND COAST FISHERIES FUND (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 116.]

(*Mr. Trevelyan.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. TREVELYAN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that objections to the Bill had been made by the hon. Members for Waterford and Dublin; but after a long consultation with those hon. Gentlemen he was able to satisfy them completely on the points they raised. Another hon. Member (Mr. Callan) also objected to the measure on precisely similar grounds; but he gave him ample opportunity of proposing his Amendment when the Bill had reached its Committee stage. This measure proposed to do for the North and East of Ireland what the Reproductive Loans Fund and another measure did for the South and West; and he hoped, after the promise he had made, that the hon. Member (Mr. Callan) would now allow the Bill to be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Trevelyan.*)

MR. CALLAN said, that his constituents would be amongst those who would derive benefit from this measure; but there were one or two portions of the Bill to which he should object. One was the proposal to place the Fund under the control of the Board of Works. He was afraid that the Board of Works had such an insatiable maw that it would swallow all the money that would be given for the purposes of the Bill. He would accept, however, the assurance given by the Chief Secretary that ample time would be given on the Committee stage of the Bill to consider all its details; and he did not, therefore, propose to prevent its second reading, which he certainly would have done had not the assurance been given.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* 5th April.

BANKRUPTCY (No. 2) BILL.—[BILL 82.]

(*Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Baring, Mr. Davey, Mr. Samuel Morley, Mr. Whitley.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, he rose to move that the Speaker leave the Chair in order that the Bill might go into Committee. He had no desire to proceed further until he saw what became of the Government Bankruptcy Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Sir John Lubbock.*)

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, that this Bill had been read a second time without discussion; but he had not understood that it was the wish of the hon.

Gentleman to proceed with it to the Committee stage. He would, therefore, have to oppose the Motion, as it would be inconvenient to have two Bankruptcy Bills in Committee at the same time.

Sir **JOHN LUBBOCK** merely wished that the Bill should pass into the Committee stage. He did not intend to proceed further with it at present.

Mr. **CHAMBERLAIN** said, he understood that it was the hon. Gentleman's desire to refer the Bill, along with the Government measure, to the Grand Committee.

Sir **JOHN LUBBOCK** said, he was not anxious to refer it to the Grand Committee. It was just possible that the Government Bill might not pass into law; and, in that event, his Bill contained provisions on which there was practically no difference of opinion, and it might be passed. If the Government would consent to this he would postpone his Bill for some weeks. He hoped the Government would allow him to take this step.

Mr. **CHAMBERLAIN** said, he must offer opposition to the hon. Member proceeding further with his Bill at this stage.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 65; Noes 55: Majority 10.—(Div. List, No. 42.)

Bill *considered* in Committee; Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday* 29th March.

LONDON BROKERS' RELIEF ACT (1870) REPEAL BILL.

Ordered, That the Order [16th February] that the London Brokers' Relief Act (1870) Repeal Bill be read a second time upon Wednesday 9th May be read, and discharged.

Ordered, That the Bill be withdrawn.

Leave given to present another Bill instead thereof.

BROKERS' (CITY OF LONDON) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Richard Martin, Bill to relieve the Brokers of the City of London from the necessity of being admitted by the Court of Mayor and Aldermen, and from all payments to the Chamberlain of that City, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Richard Martin, Mr. Magniac, and Mr. Buxton.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 127.]

House adjourned at five minutes before Seven o'clock till Thursday 29th March.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 29th March, 1883.

MINUTES.]—New Member Sworn—Thomas Mayne, esquire, *for* Tipperary.

Supply—*considered in Committee*—Civil Service Estimates—Class I.—Public Works and Buildings, Votes 1 to 3.

Public Bills—*Resolution in Committee—Ordered*—Liquor Traffic Veto (Scotland) *.

First Reading—National Gallery Loan * [128].

Second Reading—Payment of Wages in Public-houses Prohibition [126].

Third Reading—Consolidated Fund (No. 2) *, and *passed*.

QUESTIONS.

POST OFFICE — COMMUNICATION FROM ADEN TO MADAGASCAR.

Sir **HARRY VERNEY** asked, Whether Her Majesty's Government will take steps to keep open communication from Aden to Madagascar for passengers and the mails?

Mr. **FAWCETT**: I am glad to be able to tell my hon. Friend that, so far as I know, there is no reason to apprehend any interruption of the postal communication from Aden to Madagascar. The only mail steamers on that line are the French steamers, running once a month; and nothing is known at the Post Office of any intention to withdraw that means of communication for mails and passengers.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—CASE OF JOHN HARTE.

Mr. **JUSTIN M'CARTHY** asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that a young man named John Harte was arrested on the 17th of February last in Longford, and kept in prison until the 21st, and that the police broke into his house, forced open his trunk and tore up the hearthstone, with the result that nothing was found to justify any charge against the young man; whether about twenty persons, men and women, were summoned to appear for examination at the sessions in Longford Court-House on the 21st February, many of them having to come in from distant parts of the county, and, after having been detained the whole day, were not examined; and, whether he will inquire into the cause of these proceedings?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I have inquired into this case, and I find that John Harte was arrested on the 17th of February for drunkenness. On his person were found documents which caused grave suspicions of his being concerned in an illegal combination and in outrages which had occurred in the district. He was brought before a magistrate next day and remanded, in order to give time for inquiry. His house was searched, but it was not broken into, as alleged, nor was his trunk forced open, nor the hearthstone torn up. Further documents of a suspicious character were found. An inquiry was subsequently held, under Section 16 of the Prevention of Crime Act, into some of the outrages which had been perpetrated in the neighbourhood, and a number of persons were summoned to attend. None of them came from a distant part of the county. Some of them were examined on oath, and others questioned. They were not all examined. The magistrates decided that it was useless to proceed with the inquiry at the time, and it was adjourned, and Harte discharged.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—THE "ACHILLES" IN HYDE PARK.

Mr. SCHREIBER asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he has now received a report on the condition of the "Achilles" in Hyde Park; and, whether the process of corrosion, the effects of which are so plainly visible, is to continue unchecked until it has rendered the statue insecure?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I have had a Report upon the condition of the "Achilles" statue, to the effect that it is suffering a good deal from decay. It will be necessary to obtain professional advice as to the steps to be taken for arresting this, and for making good the defects; and this I propose at once to do.

RUSSIA—CORONATION OF THE CZAR.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he would state what was the date of the first intimation that Her Majesty's Government received that the Coronation of the Czar would take place this year?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: A despatch was received on the 10th ultimo from Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg, which enclosed the text of a Manifesto issued by the Czar announcing that the Coronation would be celebrated in May; and on the 22nd ultimo, Her Majesty's Government received from His Excellency a copy of a Note from the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, inviting a Representative of Her Majesty to attend the ceremony. With regard to the expenses of the Special Embassy, it is proposed, as I indicated the other day, to follow the precedent of Lord Beaconsfield's Embassy to Berlin, and lay the Supplementary Estimate on the Table when the amount is clearly ascertained, so that it may be voted during the present Session. I may add that the Estimates for the financial year are prepared early in January, and that it would have caused considerable inconvenience to add to them the cost of this Embassy, which was not decided upon until the end of February.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Will it be laid upon the Table before His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh goes to Moscow?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I cannot answer that Question to-day; because, if my hon. Friend would follow what I have stated, he will see that I have made the presentation of the Estimate contingent on an accurate knowledge of the probable amount of the expenditure.

Mr. LABOUCHERE; Can the noble Lord not make a general Estimate of what the expenditure is likely to be? That can be done now.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I shall present the Estimate as soon as I possibly can.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Is it not possible for the noble Lord to lay on the Table an approximate Estimate?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I think that Question is practically the same as that which I answered just now.

OFFICE OF LAND REGISTRY—REGISTRATION OF ESTATES.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What is the total number and aggregate value of estates registered in the Office of Land

Registry during the year ended 31st December 1882?

Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE: The total number of dealings with estates at the Land Registry in the year 1882 was 648; and the value of those placed on the register (in the technical sense) was £1,103,000. But the number placed on the register for the first time was only 14, and their value about £120,000.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, that in Committee of Supply he should call attention to the fact that only 14 estates had been registered during the past year, and that he should move a reduction of £2,000 on the Vote.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—PARLIAMENTARY OATHS ACT (1866) AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, that, in the absence of the Prime Minister, he wished to ask the Home Secretary, for the convenience of Members who had not yet reached London, and of others in the country, whether the second reading of the Parliamentary Oaths Act (1866) Amendment Bill would be taken this week; and, if not, whether the Government would be good enough to name a day on which the second reading would be taken?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he would assure the hon. Member that ample Notice should be given of the second reading. It would not be taken this week certainly; but he could not say any more until the Prime Minister returned.

Mr. NEWDEGATE: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman say that it shall not be taken on Monday?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I do not think Monday would come within the term "ample Notice."

LAW AND POLICE—REPORTED ATTACK ON LADY FLORENCE DIXIE.

Mr. O'SHEA: I wish to ask the Home Secretary a Question of which I have given him private Notice. It was, Whether sufficient investigation has now taken place as to the alleged murderous attack upon Lady Florence Dixie; and, whether, as a result of the inquiries at Windsor, and of the professional examination of the cuts on Lady Florence Dixie's clothing, the police have come to any definite conclusion in the matter?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: The accounts in this case rest mainly on the statements of Lady Florence Dixie. The investigations of the police into this matter have not resulted in discovering any further circumstances in confirmation of it.

LAW AND POLICE—SEIZURE OF INFERNAL MACHINES AT LIVERPOOL.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: May I ask a Question arising from a notification we have seen in the public journals—Whether it is true that there has been a seizure of explosives and infernal machines at Liverpool to-day?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I heard just before I came to the House that such an arrest had been made; and I think that I would rather not say any more in reference to the details of it.

SPAIN—EXPULSION OF CERTAIN CUBAN REFUGEES FROM GIBRALTAR—THE PAPERS.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the despatches had been received from Madrid on which the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government based his appeal to the right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross) not to proceed with his Motion in regard to the Cuban refugees?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, Notice had been given of a Question in reference to this question for to-morrow, and he hoped by that time to be able to answer it.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — BALLOT ACT CONTINUANCE AND AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. ONSLOW asked at what hour the Ballot Act Continuance and Amendment Bill would be taken?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he could make no promise in regard to the question; but the Rules of the House would prevent the Bill being taken after half-past 12.

CHANNEL TUNNEL COMMITTEE.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Will the President of the Board of Trade proceed to-night with his Motion for the appointment of the Channel Tunnel Committee?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: My right hon. Friend is not here to-night, so the right hon. Gentleman may be certain that the Motion will not come on.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

INLAND POSTAL TELEGRAMS.

RESOLUTION.

Dr. CAMERON, in rising to move—

> "That the time has arrived when the minimum charge for Inland Postal Telegrams should be reduced to sixpence,"

said, that it was 13 years since the Telegraph Service of the country came into the hands of the Government. The number of telegrams which were then transmitted was some 6,000,000 per annum. Now, that number had risen to 31,000,000. The capacity of the mechanism of the Telegraph Companies, or of the Post Office, which now represented them, had meanwhile been enormously increased by various scientific discoveries. When the transfer was made, the instrument on which, practically, the whole of the work was done was the old Morse system, the capacity of which was comparatively limited. At the time of the transfer the Wheatstone system was introduced, which at one stroke trebled the working capacity of the old system; and since then the duplex telegraph had been discovered, which still further increased the capacity of the work of the telegraph wire. Now, very few people had any idea of the rate which telegrams could be transmitted by the Morse instrument, which had been so long in use. It was possible to transmit not far short of a *Times* column an hour with a single operator at each end of the wire. By means of the automatic instrument or duplex system that amount of matter could be very largely increased. The result of the change which had taken place by the transference of the Telegraph Department to the Post Office was very remarkable. Two great changes had occurred, increased facilities had been afforded, and the prices of telegrams, which up to the time of the change were not uniform, were, on the assumption of the wire by the Post Office, made uniform, the minimum charge being 1*s*. The result of the reduction in price was very noteworthy. At the time of the transfer, as he had already mentioned, the number of telegrams transmitted annually was 6,000,000—that was in 1869. In the year 1871-2 the number had doubled itself, and 12,000,000 messages were transmitted. In 1873-4 the number received trebled to 18,000,000 messages. In 1878-9 the original number was quadrupled; and in the year 1881-2, which was the last year for which they had the Reports, five times the number of messages originally sent had been transmitted. That showed the immense effect which the reduction of the price had had in increasing the number of telegrams sent. But, as proving how very materially that increased facility had tended to the same end, he might quote the case of London. In London, at the time of the transfer, there were 6*d*. telegrams. The system was not very well elaborated, and the consequence was that it was not very much availed of. At the time of the transfer there were 60 offices in London. There were now, or there were two or three years ago, 400 offices, and the result of this increase of offices, even though accompanied by the doubling of the price, was that between 1869 and 1880 the number of messages transmitted in London increased 600 per cent. That was a very remarkable fact, and it would seem to show that the increased facilities had even more to do with the development of telegraphing than reduced prices. But the statistics he had given regarding the increase in the whole country showed how very stimulating an effect the reduction of price had upon the increase of telegraphic receipts. Now, he gave the Post Office every credit for the way in which it had fostered the telegraph business; and he was free at once to confess that in every respect, except in the matter of price, the Telegraph Service of Great Britain would bear favourable comparison with that of any other country; but in regard to the matter of price it was much too high. Belgium and Switzerland and other countries had half-a-franc telegrams; in Paris, the telegraphic system was supplemented by a system of pneumatic tubes, through which they could send messages called telegrams, though they might be more properly described as pneumatic post cards, without restriction as to the number of words, at a cost of half-a-franc or less. Last year the Postmaster General, in replying to a Motion similar to that which he was now making, stated that the number of messages per day sent from all the telegraph offices in this country was 80,000, and it appeared that the number of post offices from which they were sent was 5,600. Now, that would give an average only of 14 messages per day from each of the post offices. He would ask the House to remember that 25 messages per hour was a fair average amount of work for an ordinary telegraphist with a Morse instrument. The state of things which they now had, therefore, amounted to this—that from each telegraph office in this country was sent a number of messages which afforded little over half-an-hour's work per day for the operator. It would, therefore, at once be seen that there was ample room for increased business, without any very great increase of expenditure. On the same occasion, the right hon. Gentleman told them that the present charges were virtually prohibitive, not only in the case of the working classes, but with the middle classes also. As a matter of fact, these charges had remained unchanged for 13 years. Now, those circumstances would, he thought, tend to explain the impatience for reform which had been manifested in many quarters. In July, 1880, a very influential deputation from the Society of Arts waited upon the Postmaster General for the purpose of bringing the subject under his notice. He had the advantage of the right hon. Gentleman's friendship before he earned his well-merited promotion to the Treasury Bench, and he had the advantage at that time of hearing from his lips speeches and doctrines of profound wisdom, from which he hoped he had benefited; and amongst the other doctrines which he taught in those days was that, having once brought influence to bear upon a Government and induced them to admit anything which was right, they should make a point of pinning them down to their admission. He wished to profit by the advice of the right hon. Gentleman, and to endeavour to pin down the Government, of which the right hon. Gentleman was a Member, to the admission of the propositions laid down by him. In his reply to the deputation to which he (Dr. Cameron) had referred, his right hon. Friend, in the first place, laid down two principles. He said—

> "If the price charged for telegrams is not sufficient to make the Telegraph Service commercially remunerative, then the deficiency which will undoubtedly arise must be met out of the general taxation of the country."

And then he went on to point out very fairly that any such proceeding would be a violation of the true principles of economy, as much as it would be a violation to encourage any particular trade by way of bounty. But, on the other hand, he said—

> "If a price was charged for a telegram which is more than sufficient to make the Service commercially remunerative, then the difference between the two—the price which would make the Telegraph Service remunerative, and the price which is charged—is really so much taxation imposed upon the people, just as if the tax-gatherer stood over every sender of a telegram and levied a tax at the time when the telegram was sent."

Now, he thought there were two very unjust principles which lay at the root of the whole matter. In reply to the deputation, his right hon Friend discussed various propositions which had been made for giving increased facilities to the public, and he dismissed them for various reasons, with one exception. That exception which he proposed to make, and which, he said, the Post Office were quite ready to adopt, if the Treasury would only sanction it, was a system of 6*d.* telegrams based on this idea, that there was to be a modified word-rate system of telegrams. The right hon. Gentleman stated that almost entirely at the instigation and under the influence of England a word-rate telegram had been adopted in most of the countries throughout the world. Having pressed a word-rate system on other countries, it seemed only consistent that they should adopt it themselves. It would have a number of advantages. It would do away with a great amount of useless work which was now thrown upon the Telegraph Department in consequence of persons being allowed to send addresses to an unlimited extent. People constantly sent telegrams such as this example which he gave to the deputation—

"From Wm. Hy. Robinson to John James Smith, Something Street, such a town, such a district, such a country. I shall have the greatest possible pleasure in dining with you to-morrow;"

whereas he might have said—

"Robinson to Smith—Dine with you to-morrow."

And the right hon. Gentleman pointed out to the deputation that a system of word-rates would get rid of all these superfluous words which the Post Office was not paid for at all. He pointed out, further, that the adoption of the word-rate would do away with an anomaly which existed—that a person could actually send a telegram from the remotest point of Ireland or Scotland to Brussels or Paris at a cheaper rate than such telegram could be sent from the House of Commons to the City, for by the Postal Convention the charge for telegrams to Belgium was 2*d.* per word, and to any part of France 2½*d.* A sender in Ireland or Scotland could send, therefore, a short telegram to Brussels for 8*d.*; whereas the minimum charge in London was 1*s.* His right hon. Friend proposed to adopt a modified word-rate, making a minimum charge of 6*d.*, and for 6*d.* he proposed to allow 12 words, and to charge above 12 words a halfpenny per word extra. He had no doubt in his mind that that would have many advantages over the present system. That was the proposal which the Postmaster General expressed himself willing to adopt; and he thought as a practical man, believing it to be an improvement, it was not his present business to discuss whether that was the very best possible improvement; it was his business to urge its adoption upon the Government. The only point which his right hon. Friend's reply to the deputation left untouched and unsettled was the expediency of taxing telegrams. On that point his right hon. Friend pointed out very clearly that it was not the business of his Department to decide as to that. That was a question for the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He brought forward the Motion—and he did so last year—because he was absolutely opposed to the taxation of telegrams; and he believed that taxation could be levied in no other manner that would be so prejudicial to the commerce, intercourse, and convenience of the country. At the present moment there was practically no taxation of telegrams, or, at all events, the principle of the taxation of telegrams had not been affirmed. The surplus revenue earned up to the present time had been so small that it was impossible by sacrificing it to confer any substantial advantage upon the public. But the Telegraph Revenue was increasing; and it appeared to him that they had now arrived at a point where a remission of the taxation must be made in the shape of extra facilities for the public, or the vicious principle of the taxation of telegrams for the purpose of Revenue must be affirmed. They had, it might be contended, not yet arrived exactly at that point, but they were remarkably near it; and his object in bringing forward the Motion from year to year had been to afford the Government no excuse for allowing the point to be passed, but to bring up the subject every year; and the moment that it was admitted that a change could be made without loss to the general taxpayer, he should ask the House to indicate its opinion that that change might be made. The right hon. Gentleman, in reply to the deputation, said he considered it would be better to wait a year or two, and to make the change which he proposed in a complete manner, rather than to attempt anything piecemeal. Well, they had waited a year or two—they had waited three years—and he thought that fact alone justified them in bringing up the matter at the present time. Now, what was the financial position of the question? When the Committee upon Postal Telegrams sat in 1876, Mr. Stevenson Blackwood, a very able officer of the Post Office—the Secretary, he believed, he was—proposed to draw up a statement of the receipts and expenditure of the Post Office on the same basis as if it were a commercial Company, and in such a manner as to show what dividend it would pay were it a commercial Company. Those statements had been drawn up yearly, and he held in his hand a number of statements ranging over the years from 1876 down to the 31st of March, 1881. Unfortunately, the statement for 1882 had not been issued; but he had the necessary and important figures in regard to 1882 from the speech of the Postmaster General in reply to his Motion last year. From these statistics it appeared that in 1876 the amount of Revenue derived by the Post Office for telegrams, after payment of all expenditure except the interest on borrowed capital, was £197,000. That, again, had increased in five years up to 1881 to £440,000. In other words, there was an increase at the rate of £50,000 a year. In 1882 the wages of the telegraph operators were increased by £80,000; and yet the profit of the Telegraph Department was £400,000. [Mr. FAWCETT: That is only an Estimate.] Unfortunately, the Return had not been issued; but that was the Estimate which the right hon. Gentleman made in June or July last. But in any case, if that Estimate were correct, it would show that the amount of increase in that year, putting aside the increase of wages, was £40,000, which was very similar to the average of previous years. Well, he presumed that the Revenue was increasing. It must be remembered that they had not now to deal with the financial year 1882-3. If any change were to take place it would come into operation in the financial year 1883-4; so that they had two years to add to the profits that had been already shown. He could not tell whether the profits had increased at the same rate for that year; but, making an allowance for the payment of the extra wages to the telegraphists, if they had so increased, the Revenue, including interest on the borrowed capital, should not be far short of £500,000 sterling. If they had not increased, then it appeared to him that they had now reached a point when the stimulating effect of the reduction to the uniform rate of 1*s.* had been exhausted, and when, on commercial principles, they should endeavour to stimulate the business by making further improvements in its management. Of course, he could not guarantee these figures. The right hon. Gentleman had not intimated whether they were correct or not; but they could not be very far off the mark. Now, the charge for interest on borrowed capital was £326,000 per annum. Making allowance for that, the result of the commercial balance sheets drawn up by Mr. Blackwood had been to show that after paying interest on borrowed capital the profits in 1880 amounted to £28,000 in addition, the interest amounting to £326,000; in 1881, the net profit was £144,000; in 1882, with an extra sum of £80,000 added in the shape of increased salaries, the net profit was £100,000. But assuming an increase of £40,000 for the year now ending, and assuming the increase given by the right hon. Gentleman last year to have been near the mark, the free profit this year should be £114,000; and for the year on which they were about to enter—namely, 1883-4—it should be £154,000. He had described the alteration which the right hon. Gentleman proposed and said the Post Office was prepared to adopt if the Treasury would sanction it. The cost of that alteration had been carefully made out by Mr. Patey, one of the most experienced and trusted officials of the Post Office; and his right hon. Friend told the deputation that that Estimate had been made out on the safe side as regarded the expenditure, and that Estimate showed that the change could be effected by a loss in the first year of £167,000 on the existing Revenue; but he believed that in consequence of the increase of salaries to the telegraphists the Postmaster General increased that sum by £10,000, and put the cost at £177,000. But it would be seen that if matters had been going on improving at the normal rate, so far as the Telegraph Revenue was concerned, they would, in the year 1883-4, have a free profit, after paying all charges for interest on borrowed capital, of somewhere about £160,000 or £170,000. In fact, there would be almost the amount required to make the change. There might be a difference of a few thousands; but, as the right hon. Gentleman told the deputation and the House last year, Mr. Patey's Estimate had been considered to err on the side of excessive caution. If they lost a few thousands this year, it must be remembered that the Treasury had been pocketing a free Revenue from the Postal Telegraph Service ever since 1880, for the profit between 1880 and 1882 had been about £216,000, and if that progress should have been maintained during the year ending the 31st of this month, it would amount to £330,000; and if his Estimate, which, of course, was purely hypothetical, and which was based on a continuance of the increase of Postal Telegraph Revenue at the average rate of preceding years, were maintained, by the end of 1884 the amount pocketed, in the shape of absolute profit on the Telegraph Service, should be between £480,000 and

£500,000. The cost of the reduction for the first year was estimated at £177,000, and the Postmaster General told the deputation that in three or four years the loss to the Revenue would be entirely made up by the increased business. He (Dr. Cameron) thought it would be made up much sooner than in three or four years; and he pointed in proof of his contention to the stimulating effect which the adoption of the 1*s.* rate had had on the development of telegraphy in this country. He could not doubt that if they made the reduction to 6*d.* the same tendency would manifest itself. If they assumed Mr. Patey's figures to be correct, and that it would take three or four years to reach the same position with regard to the Revenue as now existed, they would have this remarkable effect, which demonstrated the fallacy of his Estimate—that if they allowed the increase per annum in profits to be as at present, the total loss would only extend to £480,000; while if it took place at the slower rate four and a-half years would suffice to place the Revenue where it was, and the total loss would be under £500,000. He maintained that before the end of the present year the Government would have pocketed a sufficient amount out of the free Revenue of the Telegraph Department to wipe off any loss which might occur from first to last—even assuming Mr. Patey's pessimist Estimate to be absolutely correct. His later figures had been avowedly based on the Estimates; but he did maintain that if they had not arrived at the particular point at which the change might be made and 6*d.* telegrams adopted, they were within a very short distance of it. The two or three years which the Postmaster General spoke of when he addressed the deputation had now passed. It must, therefore, be only a question of months when the point would be reached at which the Treasury could assent, if it chose, to the principles which the right hon. Gentleman laid down in his speech. He maintained that the principle of taxing telegraphy was most erroneous. It was one of the worst taxes on knowledge—a tax on economy, on time, and on the production of wealth. Instead of maintaining a price which was prohibitory not only to the working but to the middle classes, they ought to take every means in their power to encourage telegraphy. They ought to educate the rising generation to it; and he would suggest to the Government that the composing of telegrams would form a useful part of the education in our board schools. As the Select Committee of 1876 had pointed out, the Postal Telegraph system differed only from a commercial undertaking in this—that it was taken over by the State primarily for the convenience of the public, and that all increase of traffic which could be created without loss to the Revenue added to national value of the system. The right hon. Gentleman had before expressed his adhesion to the principle, and therefore he had confined himself to the one point. He had endeavoured to show that, if not in this year—1883-4—at least in the next, the point would be reached at which the reduction could be made without, in the smallest degree, encroaching on the national resources. They were now at the very turning point of the question; and he trusted that the House of Commons would at least lay down the principle that telegraphy should not be taxed. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Postmaster General disputed his figures, he trusted that, at the earliest moment, at least the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be prepared to express his entire adhesion to the economic doctrine which his Colleague had laid down, and his hearty approval in principle of that great improvement in the Telegraphic Service of the country, for which the Postmaster General had told them his Department was perfectly prepared.

Mr. PULESTON seconded the Motion with great satisfaction, because it was a question, of all others, which demanded public attention. He knew the Postmaster General required no conversion on the point; but the question was, whether the Treasury were prepared to acquiesce in the proposed change? It by no means followed that the cheapening of telegraphy would reduce the Revenue; he thought experience showed that the reduction of the price of telegrams tended to greatly increase the business done. He knew that Mr. Pender's experience of the reduction of prices in cable telegrams was that it had resulted in an immediate loss to the revenue of the Company; but he believed it was the fact that in a short time after the reduction from 3*s.* a word to 1*s.* the revenue sprang up to what it was before the change. The proposed reform was one which was needed quite independently of the pounds, shillings, and pence part of the question. It was a reform which was needed in consonance with the other useful and practical reforms which had been inaugurated by the Postmaster General, and for which he received the grateful thanks of the community. If the minimum rate were reduced to 6*d.* half-a-dozen messages would be sent where one was despatched now, and the additional expenditure would be nothing like that in proportion; but even if the additional cost were fully up to the increase in business, still, in the public interest, this was a reform which ought to be accomplished. He considered that the estimate of Revenue was computed on an erroneous basis. It was true the capital of the original outlay was £10,500,000; but one-third, or at least one-fourth, of that amount ought to be written off. The interest on the whole amount was £325,000 a-year, which was considerably below the present net Revenue. A good deal was charged to Revenue that ought properly to be charged to capital. For instance, he understood that £30,000 was taken from Revenue for the building of a Post Office in Manchester, and the Revenue was hampered by charges of that kind. Another reason why the change should be made was found in the progress which was being made with telephones. It was the old custom to think that when gas came in there would be no more use for oil; that when the Underground Railway was built there would be no need for omnibuses, and so on. But experience had proved the folly of such ideas. In America, independently of the natural growth and increase of the telegraphic system, it was largely increased by and in consequence of the general use and adaptation of the telephone in that country, and he had no doubt the same result would be obtained here. Last year the Postmaster General suggested that a word rate might be adopted—namely, that 12 words should be sent for 6*d.*, and that one halfpenny should be charged for each additional word. If such a system were introduced, he thought, instead of charging one halfpenny for each word, the giving of three words for 1*d.* would be much more convenient and popular. On national as well as on commercial grounds he hoped the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow would be adopted by the Government.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the time has arrived when the minimum charge for Inland Postal Telegrams should be reduced to sixpence,"—(*Dr. Cameron*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. CAUSTON said, he agreed with the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) that the time had now arrived when an alteration should be made in telegraphic charges; but he also thought there was another subject that should be brought before the attention of the Postmaster General—namely, the question of telephones. There was no doubt telephones were making rapid progress in this country, though not such a rapid progress as was being made in other countries. He would like to ask the Postmaster General if it was possible, under present arrangements, for private individuals to undertake telephone arrangements for the Metropolis? He understood that a satisfactory Telephonic Service could be supplied at the rate of 2*d.* per message, delivered at the houses. The idea would be to have stations at an interval of one-eighth of a mile; and if that were done a profit could be made. A further proposal would be that individuals might be allowed to enter these offices, and for the price of 1*d.* to send a message to anyone within the Metropolitan district. The hon. Member for Glasgow had suggested that telegraphic education should be introduced into our board schools; and certainly, when the system of telephonic communication had been extended, it would be necessary to teach the young people shorthand, so that they might be able to take down the messages as they were delivered. He thought, however, that the time had not quite arrived when this subject could be dealt with in a practical manner; but he threw out these remarks, in order that the Postmaster General might have the opportunity of stating what objection he entertained to the introduction of a system of telephonic messages.

Sir HENRY PEEK said, that the difficulty which the Postmaster General had to encounter in dealing with this subject was the extreme want of room, owing to the increase in every Department of the Postal Service. The letters had increased in one year 5½ per cent; postcards, 10 per cent; packets, 12¾ per cent; newspapers, 5¼ per cent; registered letters, 8½ per cent. In 1872 the average number of letters for each individual in the United Kingdom was 28; whereas in 1882 the average had risen to 35. Last year the number of telegraphic messages was 31,345,861, which was an increase of 1,933,879 over the messages of the preceding year. It was a singular fact that, of all the telegraphic messages of the United Kingdom, five out of eight passed through St. Martin's-le-Grand. The Chief Office was so choked that it could do no more business; and he had it on good authority that the officials were worked under such unsatisfactory conditions that there was now a higher sick list than ever was known in the Department before. The Post Office was about to institute a Parcels Post, which he believed would develop into a most extensive business, and larger premises would be absolutely necessary for the efficient working of that and other Departments all crowded, and many at considerable distances apart. He suggested that acquiring the site of Christ's Hospital was the only way of meeting the increasing difficulties. Hon. Members were doubtless aware that a Royal Commission, consisting of Mr. Walpole, the late Recorder, Mr. W. E. Forster, the Dean of Christchurch, and Mr. Walter, had wound up an exhaustive Report with—

> "For a thorough reform in the management and discipline of Christ's Hospital we think that its removal from London is indispensable."

Consequently, the opportunity presented itself to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Five acres of land within 100 yards of St. Martin's-le-Grand—which was as nearly as possible the centre of the Metropolis—and within 700 yards of the Bank of England, were now to be had for £600,000, which he considered a reasonable sum. Let the Chancellor of the Exchequer do in this matter what the Earl of Beaconsfield had done in Egypt. The noble Earl bought the Suez Canal Shares for less than £4,000,000, and to-day on the market they could be sold for £9,000,000; while in 11 years' time, when entitled to full dividends, they would at present value be worth £21,000,000. Let the Chancellor of the Exchequer make up his mind and buy the five acres, which he would certainly find of the greatest service when the parcels business developed, as it certainly would if there was plenty of room for development. They must remember, too, that the Post Office ought not to be considered as a productive Department; it was intended, not to produce revenue, but to afford business facilities for the people generally. Last year, however, it produced a profit of £3,100,475, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer calmly proposed to look for a further increase of £200,000. The general convenience of the public was what the Post Office was intended to supply, and it ought not to be turned to any other purpose. He hoped the Government would put a bold front on the matter, and carry out the suggestion now made.

Sir BALDWYN LEIGHTON objected to the idea that the Post Office ought not to be considered a Revenue-producing Department. It was said that it was a tax upon the industry and wealth of the country; but surely a tax on its wealth was legitimate, large numbers of telegrams being merely sent for purposes of private convenience. A change in the system of return telegrams might, however, be adopted with great advantage, and, in his opinion, with little or no loss to the Revenue, by charging 6*d.* instead of 1*s.* for the return message.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR urged the Government to extend telegraphic communication to outlying parts of the country, whether the localities were, or were not, prepared to give a guarantee to the Post Office for the due collection of the Revenue; and he pointed out that three places in his county would be greatly benefited by such a service, for one of which a guarantee had already been given and the communication established; but the other two places had not yet been able to arrange the guarantee, and, consequently, the lines had not been put up. He complained that the cost of establishing telegraphic communication between the Shetland Islands and the mainland had not been borne by the Government. The lines were, however, to be supplied, but at the charge of the fees levied upon the fish-curers of herrings, so that £1,000 was this year paid to the Telegraph Department out of the funds derived from the brand fees obtained from herring brands. The telegraph ought to be extended for the benefit of the people; and, whether there was a loss upon a particular line or not, he thought it should be carried out at the cost of the Department. The convenience of the public should be mainly considered, and not the profit which the lines might yield. Indeed, the country should be kept well informed as to the places not yet put in telegraphic communication with the world.

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE believed that, instead of involving a loss to the Revenue, 6*d.* telegrams would result in a gain. He thought that when they were considering this question they ought to take into consideration the suggestion which he had made last year with regard to reply telegrams—that a telegram and a reply might be had for 1*s.* 6*d.* He would be quite willing to allow the return form to be only available within 48 hours of the despatch of the message, and to limit it to 10 words.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, the object at which the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) aimed was one which every Member of this House would wish to see carried out at the earliest possible opportunity; and he, for one, was pleased that he should have raised the question now. He had only one word to say as to the mode in which that object should be realized. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman his Successor (Mr. Fawcett)—whom they were all delighted to see in his place again—would not say he was prepared to grant a 6*d.* rate at the cost of abolishing free addresses. He was convinced that the abolition of that privilege would be a very great privation and injury to the very large body of the poorer classes of the people who now used the telegraph.

MR. FAWCETT: The wording of the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow is such that I feel some doubt whether I am the proper Minister to reply to it. My hon. Friend lays it down distinctly that the time has now come when the charge for telegrams should be reduced. The position I have always taken up since I have been Postmaster General is, that the decision of that question, involving as it does a sacrifice of Revenue, does not depend upon the person who happens to be at the head of the Post Office, but must be determined by the Government, or by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who is primarily responsible for the finances of the country. Some words were let fall by the Mover and Seconder of the Motion, which might lead to the conclusion that there was a conflict of opinion between the Treasury and myself on this question. I should be extremely sorry if such a conclusion were accepted by the House. What I did say, in reply to a deputation to which my hon. Friend referred—and I am delighted to be pinned to everything which I then said—was simply that, as far as those who administered the Post Office were concerned, nothing would give us greater pleasure than to be told by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or by the Government, that the time had arrived when the financial position of the country was such that they could afford to sacrifice the temporary loss of Revenue which the reduction in the charge for telegrams would involve. Whether that time has come or not, it would be obvious to the House that that is a question that cannot be determined by me. But as I have devoted a considerable amount of attention to the question—knowing how keen and widespread is the interest felt in it throughout the country—I hope the House will not think I am trespassing unduly upon their time, if I lay before them some facts which will enable the House and the country, and, perhaps, the Government, to form an opinion in reference to it. It unfortunately happens, in opposition to the opinion expressed by the Seconder of the Motion, that seldom, if ever, can great postal or telegraph improvements be carried out without leading for a time to some loss of Revenue. This was even the case with the penny post. The success of the penny postage has been remarkable; but great as has been its financial success ultimately, and incalculable as have been the advantages which it conferred upon the community, it is a singular fact that more than 16 years elapsed before the penny postage yielded as large a net Revenue to the State as was yielded before it was introduced. And, although I believe that ultimately the Telegraph Revenue would recover the loss which would result from a reduction in the charge, yet I am bound to tell the House frankly what the loss is estimated at. If telegrams are to be reduced in price, it can be done in three different ways. As my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow suggested, we may have a charge of one halfpenny a word, with a minimum charge of 6*d.*, the address being charged for; or, secondly, as has been advocated by the noble Lord who preceded me in Office (Lord John Manners), we may continue to have the address free; and I would suggest that if that were done we should then have a minimum charge of 6*d.* for the first six words, with one halfpenny for every word beyond the six. There is no doubt much force in what the noble Lord has stated, and that the abolition of free addresses would bear most heavily upon the poor. A well-known man's address is generally a short one, and in many cases would be simply the name of the town in which he lives; whereas a poor person's address would often have to name the court and the street in which he lived. It would be found that the poor person's address was often several words longer than rich persons'; and, therefore, to charge for the address at one halfpenny per word would undoubtedly press somewhat heavily upon the poor. I believe it is the case that in no country except our own are free addresses allowed; but as the English people have been accustomed to them for 10 years, I am afraid they would feel their abolition a grievance. There is a third way, and a very simple way, in which the change might be carried out. You might give a free address, and then six words for 6*d.*, 12 words for 9*d.*, and 20 words for 1*s.* That would be a very simple plan. But, unfortunately, the costliness of these plans varies in proportion with their convenience. The first plan, charging one halfpenny per word for the address, is the least costly to the Department, but, I think, would be the least convenient. The second plan—a free address and a minimum charge of 6*d.*—is more convenient, but considerably more costly; and the third plan is the most costly of all. Therefore, we are reduced to a financial consideration; and the Government has to consider, when the change is adopted, what amount of Revenue are they prepared to sacrifice for the convenience of the public, and I will state what are the Estimates of the loss that would be involved; but I warn the House not to place too much confidence in these Estimates. They are the best we are able to obtain after great labour and difficulty, and I am sure they are sincere; but the House will see the difficulty of forecasting accurately the results of such reductions of charge. The problem depends upon three factors. In the first place, we have to estimate what will be the number of messages sent under a reduced tariff; and that, after all, is little more than guessing. Secondly, we have to consider, if a word rate is adopted, what will be the average yield of each message, or how many words on an average will be sent. Thirdly, we have to conclude what will be the cost of each message when the number of words is reduced. I have called to my assistance two of the ablest officials in the Post Office, who have had great experience of telegraphic work, and they have arrived at somewhat different conclusions as to the financial results. In order to be on the safe side, I will take the Estimate of the official who puts the loss at the maximum amount. He estimates that the loss in the Revenue, calculated on commercial principles, during the first year, if a rate of ½*d.* per word were adopted, and if the address were charged for, would be, as stated by my hon. Friend, £177,000; but that loss would rapidly diminish, and in four years' time the telegraphs would yield as large a net Revenue under the reduced tariff as they are yielding at the present time. That is the most unfavourable Estimate. With regard to the second plan—free addresses and a charge of 6*d.* for the first six words—although I think that would be a more acceptable plan to the public, it would, unfortunately, be more costly; and the Estimates agree that the loss, if this plan were adopted, instead of being £177,000 in the first year, would be £150,000 more, or £320,000. That would reduce the present commercial revenue from telegraphs to the very small sum of £40,000. But in stating the advantages which belong to free addresses, and also admitting the disadvantages which would attach to charging for each word of the address, I think I am bound to point out a consideration of no small importance on the other side. There can be no doubt that the present plan is extremely wasteful, as I can show by a very simple statement. Since I last addressed the House on this subject we have been at some pains to obtain Returns from all the Continental countries as to the number of words in their telegrams, and we have made a calculation of the average length of telegrams in our own country. We arrived at this very striking result—that the average length of Continental telegrams, including the addresses, is 16 words; whereas the average length of our telegrams, including the addresses, is no less than 29 words, or about 80 per cent more. I cannot help thinking that the reason we have such a high average is that people often put in unnecessarily long addresses, and think that, as they have paid for 20 words, whether they need use them or not, they might as well take advantage of the full allowance. In many cases I believe that is done, and that often the only results are that the officials are given more trouble, whilst the telegram is made much less distinct, and more liable to mistakes than it otherwise would be. But I am anxious, before I sit down, to point out some of the advantages which I think would result from a reduction in the price of telegrams. In the first place, I cannot help thinking that there is great force in what was urged by my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow, that considering we have, at the present time, 5,700 offices from which telegrams are sent, and 175 offices, in addition, at which business is carried on under a system of guarantee, only 80,000 telegrams, on an average, are sent each day, or 14 or 15 telegrams from each office, the business done is, after all, small. I cannot help thinking, too, as I said on a previous occasion, that 1*s.* is a prohibitory charge. It is, to a great extent, prohibitory to a considerable section of the middle and poorer classes. We know the great anxiety which prevails in cases of illness that friends should know the latest possible information about the patient's state, and the number of anxious inquiries that are made. We know, also, that poor people's feelings in such cases are the same as those of the rich; and if a poor woman in London has a daughter ill in Manchester she is naturally as anxious to be informed, with the same promptitude, of any change in her child's condition as would be the wealthiest in the land. When I remember that this is only one instance of the extent to which the telegraph might be used if the charge were reduced, I cannot help coming to the conclusion that, when the day arrives on which the Government says we are in a position to be able to afford the sacrifice of Revenue which we are told will take place, that announcement will be received by the great majority of the country with satisfaction and with gratitude. There is another consideration, and that is, what would be the effect of cheaper telegrams upon our commercial interests? The telegraph is now a means of commercial communication. No inconsiderable portion of the business of the country is done by telegrams. English trade has had, during the last four or five years, many and increasing difficulties to contend with. We who keep absolutely, as I hope we always shall, to a strict policy of Free Trade, have constantly to face tariffs framed more and more in a hostile spirit against us; and I think it is no exaggeration to say that, taking a review of the past few years, English trade has had greater difficulties to contend with from the protective system which is maintained in other countries than it ever had formerly. This being the case, it seems to me of great importance—because when a struggle is keen and close a very small point makes a difference—that, as far as we can help it, English trade should be placed under no disadvantage. The fact is not to be denied that, comparing the minimum telegraph charge in England with other countries, and regarding the telegraph as an important means of commercial communication, our minimum charge is no less than 140 per cent more than is the minimum charge in most Continental countries. We are actually in this position—that we can send a short telegram from any part of England to any part of Belgium for 8*d.*, and from John o' Groats to any part of France for 10*d.*; and yet, if we want to telegraph to a place only a few miles distant, or even from one part of London to another, we have to pay 50 per cent more than we should pay for a short telegram to Belgium, and 20 per cent more than we should pay for a short telegram to France. I cannot help admitting that this is a very striking anomaly. In order partly to meet it, it has been suggested that we should return to the old system, and have two different rates of telegraph charges; that we should give up the principle of uniformity; that we should send a telegram, for instance, in London and in the large towns for 6*d*. I have made, to the best of my ability, a calculation as to the financial result of that, and I find the saving would be so very trifling that it would only diminish the loss upon a general reduction by some £50,000 a-year. It seems to me it would be much to be regretted if the important principle of uniformity were infringed upon; and, as far as my opinion is concerned, I should not recommend any deviation from that principle. Again, the suggestion has been thrown out that a smaller charge should be made for a return telegram. I am perfectly willing to consider that subject; but it seems to me that, if we have 6*d*. telegrams at all, it is better not to do the thing by driblets, but to wait until we can have the change completely and effectually introduced. Now, I come to a part of the speech of the hon. Member for Glasgow, from which, unfortunately, I have considerably to differ. I should be very glad, indeed, if I could accept his hypothetical figures as the figures of the case. My hon. Friend correctly gives the commercial Revenue from telegrams in 1880-1 as £440,000; and he calculates that between 1876 and 1881 there has been an annual increase of £50,000 a-year in the commercial profits. He assumes that, as it were, by an irresistible law of nature, this increase has gone on; and, upon that hypothesis, he estimates the commercial Revenue of the Telegraph Department in the present year at over £500,000. [Dr. CAMERON: Under £500,000. I said £474,000.] Well, under £500,000; but, unfortunately, that increase, which had gone on steadily between 1876 and 1881, when the commercial profit of the telegraphs was £440,000, took an extraordinary drop between 1880-1 and 1881-2; and this drop, although I believe it will ultimately be recovered, has not yet been recovered. I will give my hon. Friend and the House the Revenue of the Telegraph Department, calculated on commercial principles, during the last three years; and my hon. Friend will at once see that this law of continuous growth does not, unfortunately, apply to the Telegraph Service. In 1880-1 the commercial profit upon the Telegraph Service was £440,000; in 1881-2 it sank to £353,000; and during the present year—with the increased capital expenditure of £200,000, and upon which, of course, interest ought to be allowed—the commercial Revenue is estimated at £363,000; but, reckoning £6,000 for interest, it is only about £4,000, instead of £50,000 better than the previous year. No doubt the falling-off of the Revenue has been due to the circumstances at which my hon. Friend hinted. The salaries of the telegraph *employés* have—I will not say by the pressure of the House, but, certainly, with the approval of the House—been increased. I do not regret that increase; I think the extra pay they received was due to them; and if I had not thought so no number of Memorials would have induced me to recommend the Treasury to have made such a large sacrifice of Revenue. But I hope, as I sometimes hear that there is still in certain quarters some discontent, that it will be borne in mind that £80,000 a-year is a very large sum to take from the taxpayers of the country; and the result of it has been that it has reduced the commercial profit of the Department by that amount; because, of course, you cannot spend the money and keep it too—a simple maxim that appears to be sometimes forgotten. Let us consider what is the financial position of the Service? The capital may be taken at £10,500,000; and £353,000—which was the commercial profit of the year 1881-2—would represent an interest on the capital of about 3¼ per cent. The profit of the present year represents 3½ per cent, or a trifle more. Therefore, from this point of view, the Telegraph Service may be considered at the present time to be just a paying concern, yielding a current rate of interest on the capital that has been expended. But there is another consideration which I feel I should not be dealing frankly with the House if I did not say a few words upon. The capital of the Telegraph Service—£10,500,000—represents the sum which was paid by the State for the Telegraphs. But owing to the blunder committed by the Government and sanctioned by Parliament—for both the Government and Parliament were alike responsible in the matter—we are saddled with what may be regarded as a useless capital expenditure of £3,500,000; because I have been told on the highest authority—and great pains have been taken to investigate the subject—that if, instead of the £10,500,000 that were paid for the Telegraphs, £7,000,000 had been paid, that would have been a large if not an extravagant sum. It is scarcely fair, after making that mistake, to say to a Department—" We hand you over a concern for which we blundered into paying £10,500,000, when the utmost we should have given was £7,000,000; and you must make a commercial profit, not on the real commercial value of the thing we handed over to you, but on the amount which, through carelessness, was squandered?" I think that is a very fair way of putting the case; and if we take the capital account of the Telegraphs at £7,000,000, we shall then find that in the present year, taking the commercial profit at £360,000, we are making a profit of about 5 per cent. I have now endeavoured to redeem the promise that I would frankly state the facts that are in my possession. The question before the House is one that does not rest with me to determine. I can only say that although there may be some difficulties about buildings, as has been pointed out by the hon. Baronet (Sir Henry Peek), those difficulties at the present moment have, to a great extent, been removed. What we may require in the future I cannot say, because there really seems to be no limit to the increase of business connected with the Post Office if increased facilities are afforded. But, whatever buildings may be required, I believe they will and must be supplied; because I feel certain the public would never sanction being deprived of any postal facilities through want of buildings. But, leaving future wants to the future, we are supplying those buildings which we think are necessary for our present wants; and, whether the day comes soon or whether it comes late, the very moment we receive an instruction from those who are in superior authority over us, either from the Government or from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the Revenue is in a position to lose for one year £170,000, and for four years an aggregate loss of £450,000, I can only repeat that that news will be welcomed at the Post Office. All that we consider we have to do is to make what Revenue we are ordered to make for the Government, at the same time giving the utmost facilities possible to the general public, either in the way of postal or telegraph service communication.

MR. W. FOWLER said, he thought a larger question lay behind that as to the blunder in calculation made in 1868 and 1869. It was quite true that the Telegraph and the Post Office ought to be regarded as one Department; but this Department ought to be managed for the public benefit. He questioned the propriety of the Government making money by a Department; all profit made should be utilized for the benefit of the country. He held that they should long ago have had 6*d.* telegrams and halfpenny letters, and they would have had them if the money made by the Department had not been taken hold of by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for buying powder and shot, and for every other purpose not connected with the Post Office. Instead of appropriating the income arising from it to the good of the community, in connection with the Department that made the money, he appropriated it to the general Revenue of the country. The Government ought not to be so anxious to make money. What was this £170,000 a-year which they asked for to the Government? The Postmaster General was tied hand and foot simply because the Chancellor of the Exchequer was short of money. He did not think the money so appropriated by the Government was fair and legitimate Revenue. The Revenue was, in fact, made in an unfair way, because the public were charged more than they ought to pay. All they asked was that out of £3,100,000 made by the Department, £170,000 should be devoted to an enormous public advantage; and he thought they ought, if possible, to compel the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give up this sum. He hoped the Government would not renew the blunder made in 1868 and 1869, and that the boon now asked would not be refused simply because they had given 50 per cent more than the telegraphs were worth; and, therefore, he should vote in favour of the present Motion.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he had been appealed to from both sides of the House, and very properly by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, to state upon this very important question what the view of the Government, as distinct from the purely administrative view of the Post Office, might be upon this question. He would say, to begin with, that he conceived when the Government undertook the purchase of the Telegraphs, and when the rate was fixed at 1*s.* for 20 words, it was so fixed with the distinct understanding—in fact, it was so stated—that a reduction would take place in the rate when the state of the Telegraph account would admit of that reduction. He quite agreed that the reduction of the rate from 1*s.* to whatever sum the condition of the Revenue permitted would be a great boon to the public; and he did not deny that when they compared the system on which telegrams were paid for abroad with the system on which they were paid for in this country, the comparison was, except with regard to charging for the address, to our disadvantage. In all these respects he quite agreed with what had been said in support of the Motion on both sides of the House; but the question was, could the Government legitimately, at the present moment, agree to reduce the charge to 6*d.* with the modifications which his right hon. Friend had so fully explained to the House; or would it be more expedient to wait until the financial condition of the Telegraph Department was shown to be more satisfactory than it was at present? Now, supposing the reduction were made, there would, at any rate, be a loss of £170,000. ["No!"] He had great respect for the opinions of hon. Gentlemen; but he felt bound to say that, considering the Postmaster General had given that figure last year, and that after a year's experience he adhered to that statement, he must attach more weight to it than to the opinions, however valuable, of those who had not had the advantage of his right hon. Friend's knowledge on the subject. On a question of this kind he thought the authoritative opinion of the Postmaster General ought not to be lightly put aside. But what was the lowest estimated loss? The Postmaster General had stated to the House that, taking the profits on a 6*d.* telegram at 1½*d.*, there would be a loss of £170,000; and, before accepting his right hon. Friend's estimate as final and conclusive, it was only right that it should be scrutinized to the bottom; but, having held the Office of Chancellor of the Exchequer only a few weeks, it would be impossible for him to accept the responsibility of stating that the loss estimated by his right hon. Friend would be the total loss. His right hon. Friend had explained that the average amount received on each 1*s.* telegram of 20 words was 1*s.* 0½*d.*—that was to say, the excess over the minimum rate was only ½*d.*; but in the calculation of the sixpenny rate it was assumed that the average length of a telegram would not be represented by 6*d.* or 6½*d.*, but by 10*d.*, or an excess of 4*d.* So that, while at present the average excess over the minimum rate was 4 per cent, in future the average excess would be 66 per cent over the minimum rate. That might be the case; but, as the whole question depended on that calculation, it would be the duty of the Treasury, before accepting it as a basis, to be perfectly satisfied of its correctness. He should certainly hesitate to assume, and he would warn the House not to assume, that the loss on the reduced rate would only amount to £170,000 until they had had an opportunity of testing the matter. Even assuming that the loss would only be £170,000, he was not prepared to say at that moment that the House ought to pass a Resolution consenting to the loss of that sum. He had heard with surprise in the course of debate some of the statements which had been made in regard to the unimportance of large items of expenditure; and he was all the more surprised when he remembered the great anxiety which had been expressed during the present Session in regard to the Public Expenditure and the care which ought to be taken over it. The hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Henry Peek) had suggested that the Government, for the extension of the Post Office business, should at once purchase property in the City of London for £600,000. But what would the House say if the Government were to ask for £600,000 more taxation? Hon. Gentlemen who were so indignant on this subject would be the first to denounce the Government for its extravagance. He also heard with surprise his hon. Friend who spoke last say that they ought to spend the profit derived from the Post Office on buildings, and so on, and giving greater facilities. That was all very well; but hon. Members should recollect that if the £3,000,000 the Post Office produced were spent in that way the House would have to find taxes to meet that loss of receipt. That £3,000,000 enabled them to reduce taxation for which they would otherwise have to come to Parliament and ask for an additional 1½*d.* in the pound of Income Tax, or some other impost. In his opinion, it was necessary to proceed with caution. He would remind the House what they were doing that year for the Post Office. On their recommendation Parliament had already passed the necessary Act for the carrying out of a postal parcels system, in which his right hon. Friend had taken so admirable an interest, and which he had perfected in its inception, and in obtaining for it the approval of Parliament. That would add to the cost of the Post Office an expenditure of upwards of £400,000 or £500,000 a year. It was true that there would be an equivalent addition to the receipts, and that the country would not be losers; but was it prudent, in the same year when they were undertaking so large an expenditure as that, also to largely increase the Telegraph business of the Post Office at an undoubted loss of £170,000 a year, and without knowing that it would not be greater? He did not believe that it would be wise to undertake the responsibility of that expenditure at the present moment. Once again, however, he would most explicitly state that he was most strongly in favour of a reduction of the telegraph rates as soon as it became feasible. In 1868, when the original proposals to purchase the telegraphs were brought before Parliament, he had advocated them; and he well remembered the promise held out that the reduction to 6*d.* was only a question of time. But he hoped that the House would not agree to the Motion. This, however, he would undertake—that between the present time and next year the question should be most thoroughly investigated; and if they could find any mode in their power of carrying out the proposal they would only be too glad to ask Parliament to adopt it.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, with regard to this sum of £170,000 or £177,000, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to have forgotten for the moment, with reference to the question of the change costing £170,000, that there had been another Estimate furnished by another official of the Post Office, and that, therefore, it seemed to be a moot point even in the Post Office. Business men, however, were quite competent and able to apply business tests to a question of this description, and they knew as well as the authorities at the Post Office and the Treasury knew that one uniform law in business was that a reduction in the price of an article meant an increase in the consumption of that article. Therefore, they believed that a reduction in the charges for telegrams would be succeeded by an increase of business in that Department. He did not think that the figure was too high. He was quite willing to accept it at £170,000; and he was prepared to say that, for the convenience of the public, and having regard to the general regulations of the Post Office and the Telegraph Department, that was an expenditure that the House ought to sanction. The question of the sanction of that expenditure was not a question either for the Post Office or the Treasury; it was one for the House to determine. There had not been a single argument used that night by the Chancellor of the Exchequer against this proposition which could not have been used with equal force and effect, and was used, he might say, with equal force, but happily not with equal effect, against the introduction of the penny postage. The Postmaster General told them that it took some 16 years before the Revenue recuperated itself for the loss through the adoption of the penny postage; but that argument held good as an argument now, because if it had prevailed then they would never have had the penny postage. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said—"We do not wish to increase the Expenditure;" but when they knew the nature of the Votes to be proposed that night, the extravagant expenditure under the Civil Service Estimates—there was a proposition he learnt, for example, to continue a subvention of £250,000 to turnpike roads—he thought even the most economical Member of that House would be favourable to sanctioning a diminution of Revenue of even £200,000 a-year to confer this great boon upon all classes of the country, and specially the poorer classes. He was sure the proposal would be warmly accepted by the country; and, as regarded the objection that they must wait till they saw their way clear, that time would never come if they did so.

He firmly believed that the House would be found quite willing and ready to find the money when it was wanted. On the broad general principle that the cost of telegrams should be reduced, he hoped his hon. Friend would proceed to a division.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 50; Noes 68: Majority 18.—(Div. List, No. 43.)

Words *added*.

Main Question, as amended, put.

Resolved, That the time has arrived when the minimum charge for Inland Postal Telegrams should be reduced to sixpence.

Resolved, That this House will immediately resolve itself into the Committee of Supply.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

COMMISSIONERS OF HER MAJESTY'S WOODS, &c.—RESOLUTION.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD, in rising to call attention to the Reports of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues; and to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, it is inexpedient that the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, should make any further purchase of land,"

said, the facts he had to submit were not only novel, but had a direct bearing upon the Motion which had just been carried; for if Her Majesty's Government desired to find a place where they might save not less than £50,000 a-year, the Department of Woods and Forests was that locality. His proposals would be in the direction of the recommendations contained in the Report of a Committee in 1854, which had never been carried out. When this Department was established, the Crown Lands were divided into two categories, the one producing no revenue being placed under the Department of the First Commissioner of Works, and that which was held to produce revenue being placed under the Department of Woods and Forests. From that arrangement Windsor Forest was excepted, on the ground that it produced revenue, and the domain of Windsor extended over 14,000 acres. In principle, however, there was no difference between Windsor Park and the Royal Parks in London, for all produced revenue for grazing or sundries. There was no good reason why the £20,000 a-year excess of cost at Windsor should be charged to the Land Revenue which did not apply to the £110,000 a-year voted for the maintenance of the Royal Parks in the Metropolis. Besides parks, the Department of Woods and Forests had 70,000 acres of agricultural land, of which 17,000 were in Lincolnshire, 13,000 in Yorkshire, and 8,000 in Wiltshire, producing an annual rental of more than 32*s*. an acre. There were also 500 houses let at rack rents, and 5,000 houses built by lessees of Crown Lands. In urging the sale of the saleable portion of this property he was proposing no change of law, but only that the Commissioners should do what their Act already permitted to be done. The public supposition was that the Department of Woods and Forests dealt only with a grand domain; but in reality it was a land jobbing business, dealing with estates in various parts of the country. In 30 years it had sold more than 20,000 acres for £1,000,000 sterling. The Land Revenue was increasing mainly because of such matters as the new lease of Messrs. Spiers and Pond's premises, of the "Unicorn" in Jermyn Street, and of the Old Colosseum in Regent's Park, where the land had been let from time to time at advanced rates. Within the last three years the Department had spent £80,000 in the purchase of ground rents in Shoe Lane and Farringdon Street, and they had sold £80,000 worth in Pimlico to the Metropolitan Board of Works. These were specimens of the traffic in real property which was carried on by this Department, to the great advantage of the agents and solicitors who managed the business, and who made very considerable fortunes through their connection with the Department. In his opinion, a Department of the State ought not to compete with the middle classes in the purchase of ground rents. No doubt the income of the Department was paid into the Exchequer, but only during the lifetime of the Queen; and whatever augmentation went on until the demise of the Crown would be of advantage, not to the public, but to the inheritor of the value of the land revenue on the demise of the Crown. He wished particularly to call attention to the deduction which was made from the gross income received. If, say, the Land Revenue Department received £390,000 a-year, the total deduction, including the Vote of £22,000 by that House, amounted, according to one of the Commissioners, to the amazing amount of 22½ per cent, or £110,000 a-year. The disadvantages under which the Commissioners laboured as agricultural landlords had a direct bearing upon the discussion which would go on for many years as to the advantages or disadvantages of State ownership of land. The cost of managing farms by this Department was not less than 13 per cent. In letting a farm in Hampshire one of the Commissioners declared that he never had so much trouble in getting rid of a tenant, and that a private landlord could have got rid of him much quicker. It was one of the obligations of the Crown in letting farms that it should be done by tender. With regard to the letting of a farm in Scotland, the Commissioner regretted that he was not able to accept the second tenderer, as he was sure it would have saved the Crown and the public £7,000. It would not be possible to make a statement showing more clearly the disadvantage of Corporations being in possession of land. The Crown lands might be divided into two categories—Royal parks and forests, over which there were no powers of sale; and other lands, with regard to which such powers existed. The former were lands which the nation ought to dedicate to the Royal dignity and public recreation. And as to all the other class which had been placed in the commercial category, the Commissioners ought to be encouraged to exercise their statutory powers of sale, and to invest the proceeds in the Funds. All he asked was, that Her Majesty's Government should encourage the sale of the saleable lands. Her Majesty had made a request that she should be permitted to purchase the Claremont Estate. It was for the public advantage that Her Majesty should become the purchaser of Claremont, and he desired to extend a similar privilege to every other person, as that would be for the public advantage. There was nothing in the Crown Lands Acts which prevented the Commissioners of Woods and Forests from selling those lands. The advantage of such a policy would be that it would put an end to the present traffic in real property by the Department. The State or any other Corporation ought to be permitted only to hold such lands as were required for the purposes of the State or of the Corporation. That change would promote the abolition of the Department of Woods and Forests, and would save directly the sum of £22,000 a-year, which was voted by the House. But that would be only a small part of the saving. The value of the lands over which the Department had now absolute powers of sale, if invested at 3 per cent, would produce £440,000 a-year, which, compared with the present net income of £390,000, and taking into account the annual Vote by the House, would involve a saving of £70,000 a-year; in fact, he believed it might be made £100,000. He would only add that the policy he advocated was not a new one. His object in bringing forward this Motion was to effect a large economic change, as well as to secure, as far as possible, a reduction of the extent of land held in mortmain, and the abolition, as soon as might be, of the practice of Corporations holding real property under that condition. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Resolution which stood in his name.

MR. JAMES HOWARD, in seconding the Motion, said, that the management of the Crown lands was most expensive. He certainly must condemn a system which enabled Corporations to abstract land from the general market, and to hold it in mortmain; and to his knowledge there was a strong feeling springing up in the country against any Corporation holding lands, especially agricultural. The management of Crown lands in his county—Bedfordshire—had not been wise or proper; and it might be remembered that, two years ago, he had brought that fact under the notice of the House. Among other matters, he would call attention to the fact that no less than 28 cottages on these estates had been sold, and to the great mistake which had been made in the management of the estates by so doing; and he asked would any landlord adopt such a policy on his estate? In his opinion, the fact showed the utter unfitness of the Department of Woods and Forests to manage property. He contended that a lack of interest had been shown by the Administration, not only in the condition of the farmers, but also in that of the labourers, in support of which contention he read a report of the sanitary authority of Bedfordshire having reference to those estates. He would pass to another feature of the case, and would see how the interests of the public had been looked after; and, in the first place, there could be no doubt that far too much money had been given for those estates. But, leaving the Crown estates of Bedfordshire, he would ask what had been the history of the management of Delamere Forest, which contained something like 5,000 acres? He was informed that in 1851 Mr. Naylor was anxious to purchase the property, and offered £370,000 for it, but it was refused. A few years afterwards a clearance was made, and some of the lands and three farms were set out; but the expenses were very large and swallowed up all the proceeds derived from the sale of the timber. The revenue from the property had never been more than £4,000 a-year, and for a considerable period it was not more than £2,000 a-year. He had made a calculation that if Mr. Naylor's offer had been accepted, and the money invested at the time in Consols for the public benefit, the income would have been about £12,000 a-year; consequently, the country had lost £250,000.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it is inexpedient that the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, should make any further purchase of land,"—(*Mr. Arthur Arnold,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I hope it is not the intention of my hon. Friend to press this Motion on the House. At the same time, I speak with a good deal of sympathy for the general views which he expressed in very distinct and definite terms—at the time he brought forward the larger and, in my view, the clearer question last year, the question of the land held by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. The effect of the debate on that occasion was, I think, to place the question more favourably before the public, and to clear the ground for ulterior proceedings. My hon. Friend appears not to have thought fit not to return to the discussion of that subject, but rather contemplated a kind of circuit amongst the different classes of property held in mortmain. That is a very large question, and I will just say a very few words on the Motion, and then on the views he entertains on the subject of mortmain. I am not able to follow the Mover of the Motion into the particular propositions he laid down, and I may perhaps observe, I hope in no censorious spirit, that the Motion which he has just made does not appear to me to be in entire conformity with his speech or entirely adequate to the purpose he has in view. He says there have been expensive transactions in the Office of Woods and Forests, to the management of which he has paid a marked and, I think, a very just tribute. But he has found fault with the practice that has been largely in use in that Department of investing the proceeds of sales in the purchase of ground rents. He objects to the purchase of ground rents, because he says the Office of Woods and Forests becomes a competitor with private individuals desiring an investment, and he recommends instead that they should purchase in the Funds. But he refutes his own objection by recommending a purchase in the Funds. It is perfectly clear that in purchasing in the Funds the Office would compete with private investors as much as in the purchase of ground rents; and looking at the law as it stands, and considering we are not about to recast the law—which in point of fact we could hardly do without opening all the questions which are more conveniently considered at the commencement of a Reign—I am myself disposed to give relative commendation to the purchase of ground rents, because it tends in the direction of economy. It very much simplifies the operations of the Departments, and so far is, I think, entitled to the sympathy of my hon. Friend and those who think with him. Not only so; but I think both the Mover and the Seconder will agree that if there is to be mortmain at all, mortmain appears before us in a much more innocuous form and entails far less inconvenience when it is confined to ground rents, than when it embraces the management of agricultural land. Therefore, I should be sorry if it were supposed I am prepared to concur in the censure as to the purchase of ground rents. And with respect to the purchase of these ground rents, they have a more profitable investment. I understand the net income obtained by them is not less than £3 18*s.* per cent, and besides the net income there is undoubtedly the expectation of a large additional value in reversion, some portion of which may accrue to us during the present Reign, and the rest of which, of course, comes in the first instance to the Throne, but still would probably be made the subject of negotiations at the commencement of a new Reign similar to those which took place at the beginning of the present and the past Reigns. My hon. Friend suggested that a very simple process, as he appeared to think, would be to carry over to the Office of Works the ownership, or at any rate the maintenance and management, of forests, which, as he says, ought to be preserved for the purpose of public recreation. [MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD: I referred only to the New Forest.] I will take it that way, and must say that my hon. Friend is extremely liberal to the happy and fortunate individuals who enjoy recreation there; but I am by no means sure that my hon. Friend is equally liberal to the public. If we are told that as a perpetual institution of this country the New Forest is for ever to be held for public recreation, I must ask myself some questions. At what cost to the public will it be so held, and what number of individuals and what proportion of the public will be able to enjoy the recreation which is secured for ever at that cost? I do not know whether my hon. Friend has gone into that question, which is undoubtedly a very large question; but I am not by any means prepared to say at this moment that we can sanction the transference of these forest properties to the Department of Works. With regard to Delamere Forest, it appears, from the remarks of the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. J. Howard), that there has been an opportunity of making a large increase of the revenue, and I am inclined to believe that the same thing would apply to the New Forest. I do not know whether it is intended to convey a censure on the Department for not accepting the offer of Mr. Naylor. I rather apprehend that the Commissioners would not have been permitted by law to accept the offer.

MR. JAMES HOWARD: I merely wished to show how unfit the Department were to manage such property.

MR. GLADSTONE: The question is whether by law the Department could have accepted the offer.

MR. JAMES HOWARD: There were certain negotiations.

MR. GLADSTONE: Unless the hon. Gentleman is in a position to say that the Commissioners were free to accept the offer, he cannot use the point to show their incapacity. Looking to the Motion before the House, and after what I said as to the purchase of ground rents as a profitable, safe, and secure proceeding, and one which is provident with reference to the future, and tends greatly to diminish the inconvenience of the mortmain, and to simplify and cheapen the management, I think it would hardly be desirable that the House should arrive at a general proposition, which would, as I understand it, distinctly condemn the purchase of ground rents. Of course, the Resolution would have no effect upon the law as it now stands; but it would be an expression of the opinion and judgment of this House, which is no slight matter. It is not desirable that we should go to a vote on this subject; it is a subject which is conveniently considered at the commencement of a Reign, and there are considerable difficulties in approaching it at other periods, because we rest on a contract in regard to our power over the management of Crown lands, and an alteration of that contract might be attended with some difficulty. Here is another argument which ought to have great weight with the House. It is true that there is an element of mortmain involved in the holding of Crown land, and especially a strong element of mortmain as regards the agricultural part of it. But the agricultural land is but a small part of the whole, and the great mass of the whole leasehold property and ground rents is very much less obnoxious to the argument against mortmain than the holding of agricultural lands. Both on that account, and because in respect to other descriptions of mortmain there is no question as to compact with the Crown to be considered, I submit that in the natural order of things we should do well first to consider a case where the objection to mortmain applies with very much greater strength, and where there is no embarrassment in approaching it, if we desire to approach it, and to postpone to a more convenient season the passing of a Resolution with reference to Crown lands, at any rate, with respect to the principle of holding property in the land. There are vast masses of agricultural land held, first of all by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners — the richest Corporation in the country—and secondly, by endowed institutions of every description. I suppose I am correct in saying that it is millions, and not hundreds of thousands, that they amount to. [Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD: £2,000,000.] It is a grave and serious question whether some attempt ought not to be made for the liberation of that land. I think any hon. Gentleman would be well employing his time to examine into that subject with the view to practical results, whatever form and degree and in whatever direction it might seem desirable to apply his efforts. I think in saying this I am only repeating what appeared to be the general feeling of the House when the question was discussed last year with regard to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. Undoubtedly this time is not favourable, because the market is not in a strong and healthy condition for receiving any large portion of property of this description; but, on the other hand, those who have been accustomed to attach in former times a very high and perhaps exaggerated value to the holding of land as by far the best form of holding property, have had a lesson during the last few years which perhaps may tend to open their minds on the subject, and diminish the resistance which at another period might have been experienced in introducing some modification of the present law. Therefore, while I retain my general good will to the general purposes of my hon. Friend, I would point out that it would be premature in us to pass a Resolution of this kind, which certainly, if it were passed, ought not to remain without result, and which, at the same time, it would be difficult and contrary to usage to follow up by attempts to alter the conditions of the law at the present time. Likewise, I think it is too wide an assertion to make, that no portion of the proceeds of Crown lands ought to be invested in the purchase of ground rents. There is really an element of reform and improvement involved in that kind of transaction, and we should be inconsistent in condemning such a course as that before we took any effective steps for dealing with the general question of the Law of Mortmain, where property is held in mortmain, under conditions the most unfavourable that can be conceived, and which is managed in a great number of instances by bodies that are essentially and practically unfitted to deal with it or turn it to good uses.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—THE CENTRAL HALL.

OBSERVATIONS.

MR. SCHREIBER, in rising to call attention to the unfinished state of the Central Hall of the Houses of Parliament, said: I very much wish, Mr. Speaker, that I knew, or could imagine, what there is that can be said against the Notice of Motion which stands upon the Paper in my name. It would then be easier for me to make a speech in moving it, and I should also, perhaps, be able, at the same time, to do something towards shortening the discussion to which it may give rise. As it is, I feel myself very much in the position of what the French call "preaching to the converted;" for I never yet met anyone, either in this House, or out of it, who denied that the decoration of the Central Hall must some day be completed, or who seriously maintained that having been begun in mosaics, it could be finished in anything else. What is it, then, Sir, that hinders its completion? Well, as I understand my right hon. Friend the present First Commissioner, simply and solely the want of an expression of opinion on the part of this House in favour of the decoration by mosaics; and this it is the object of the present discussion to elicit. It will soon, Sir, be 11 years since the decoration of the Central Hall was seriously debated in this House, and at that time there was a remarkable "concensus" of opinion in favour of mosaics on the part of all whose opinion was entitled to weight upon a question of the kind. Perhaps, the

House will allow me to give them a few brief extracts from the speeches made on that occasion. The debate, Sir, took place on the 1st of July, 1872, and is reported in Vol. 212, of *Hansard*, pp. 444-5-6-7-8—

"Mr. BERNAL OSBORNE: With respect to the representation of our patron saint, we were in what the Americans would call 'a tarnation tight fix.' In the Central Hall we had got St. George and the Dragon in mosaics up near the roof, and he believed it would be found more expensive in the end to take down that patron saint, than to put up the other three patron saints under this Mosaic Dispensation.

"Lord JOHN MANNERS: There would be a certain incongruity in having one panel filled with a mosaic, and the other three with frescoes. At any rate, the panel opposite to St. George ought to be filled with a mosaic. As a matter of congruity and harmony, it would be better to have all the panels filled with mosaic, of the enduring qualities of which there could be no doubt.

"Lord ELCHO: Under all the circumstances, the best course to take would be to complete the whole of the panels in the Central Hall in the same style of decoration as had been already begun.

"Mr. ALFRED SEYMOUR: It would be a thousand pities to destroy almost the only indestructible work of art in the House, and nothing could be more foolish than to put up three other frescoes, when those which they already had were tumbling to pieces.

"Mr. COWPER-TEMPLE: It was important, however, to avoid any retrograde movement, and as they had begun with mosaics in the Central Hall, it was advisable to go on with the work. The mosaic decoration being in its infancy, was capable of much improvement, and was admirably suited to large buildings; and, therefore, he hoped the decoration of the Central Hall would be finished in the style which had already been adopted.

"Mr. BERESFORD HOPE must protest against the idea that in striking out this item, they would be substituting mere decoration for fine art; they were simply preferring one process of fine art to another. If it was supposed that the mistakes made in the frescoes might be avoided, was there not ground for expecting that the mosaic might also be improved?

"Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK understood that Mr. Salviati was not satisfied with the execution of the work; therefore the most reasonable thing seemed to him to be that before they discontinued it they should try if it would not succeed when the work was better executed. Let them see whether on the Continent, and more especially at Rome, improved methods could not be found of dealing with the subject."

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. SCHREIBER continued: I have also the authority of my right hon. Friend the Member for Rutland (Mr. Gerard Noel) for saying there was nothing he desired more, during his term of Office, than to have associated his name with the completion of the Central Hall in mosaics. But my right hon. Friend fell upon evil times; his years of Office were the "lean years" of Lord Beaconsfield's Administration, and, in a word, he could not get the money. But I know that objection is taken to the mosaic picture of St. George, which is already in its place. In the first place, hon. Members say that they cannot see it. That is due, by day, to the effect of painted glass in the windows; and the remedy is to remove the painted glass, and glaze the windows *en grisaille;* and, by night, I think it not improbable that the electric light may be tried with advantage for the illumination of the Hall; and here I should like, with the permission of the House, to read what Sir Henry (then Mr.) Layard thought it would be necessary to do, in order to give a fair trial to the decoration which he was then proposing to adopt. Speaking on the 28th June, 1869, he said—

"What he was about to do was undertaken at the suggestion of the architect himself. The hall was exceedingly dark for the greater part of the year, and even during the day it was necessary to burn gas. The lantern would be altered so as to admit more light. . . . . The architect suggested that a mosaic surface, which would reflect light, might be applied to the panels; and the two artists selected for preparing cartoons for this work were well known for their ability. Another part of the expenditure was for a change in the windows—such as had been advantageously effected in the gallery between the Queen's robing room and the House of Lords, when the noble Lord (Lord John Manners) was in Office."—(3 *Hansard*, [197] 684.)

In the next place, I am aware that fault is found with the design of St. George, and I quite understand that hon. Members would have preferred the effigy with which they are familiar on the sovereigns of Her Majesty; but the artist had to remember that he was about to place the patron saint of England in the company of an apostle and two bishops of the 6th century, who are not known to have shared his equestrian tastes. So Mr. Poynter set him upon foot, gave him two female supporters, and wrote underneath—"St. George of England." Well, then, as to the expense, the original cost was £150 for the design of St. George, and £500 for the mosaic. Both will cost more now. Mr. Poynter, having risen to eminence in his Profession, makes no more designs for £150, and mosaics, I believe, are dearer. But, in any case, a sum of from £3,000 to £5,000 will finish the Hall, which Sir Charles Barry always intended to be the principal feature of this stately pile. And the thing, Sir, once done is done for all time; while, for the cost, the sum required has been wasted ten times over on telegrams and printing, since the present Government has been in power. Mr. Speaker, I must be allowed to express my surprise that it has been left for an English Member to raise this discussion. I remember, it is not so many years ago since Society was convulsed with the wrongs of the Scottish Lion. But now, forsooth, the patron saint of Scotland is "left out in the cold" for a dozen years and more, and when Notice is given of a Motion on his behalf, Scotch Baronets are clamorous to know his name! Sir, there is no secret about the names of any of these holy men. They may always be had on application to the policeman on duty at the Central Hall. I, therefore, Sir, do hope that Scotch and Welsh and Irish Members will atone for their neglect in past years by supporting this Motion in debate, and that my right hon. Friend the First Commissioner will seize the opportunity, which will otherwise be snatched from him by a Conservative Successor, of associating his name with the completion of a work which will redound at once to his credit and to the taste of Parliament and of the nation.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he hoped that the First Commissioner of Works would not launch into any expenditure of this description. He would take his stand on two grounds. He would say either that it must be shown that the work proposed to be executed would be an excellent work of art, or else it must be shown that the employment of the country's money in this particular form would be an advantage to Art generally, and tend to its advancement. With regard to the mosaic work, not only in the Central Hall, but in connection with the Albert Memorial, it had been pronounced a failure by nearly all competent judges. It was impossible in the present day to obtain satisfactory results in mosaic. Artists in mosaic in the present day did not distinguish themselves as their predecessors had done in the last century, or the century before. For this reason, among others, the Dome of St. Paul's was standing unfinished. A year or two ago an attempt was made to establish a School of Mosaic at South Kensington; but it was found impracticable to do so, and the attempt was abandoned. If the panels in the Central Hall were to be filled up, in his opinion it should be done with paintings in oil, and they would stand the climate well. The hon. Member would, he supposed, go to Venice for his mosaics. He was himself tolerably familiar with Venice, and he ventured to say that there was no artist in Venice at this moment who had the slightest pretensions to mosaic work, even of a third or fourth rate order. The plan was not one calculated to encourage art in this country, and he hoped such an expenditure of public money would not be sanctioned.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that this question was discussed in the House not only 10 years ago, as the hon. Member had said, but also two years ago, and on that recent occasion the hon. Member failed to receive support from any quarter of the House. Even the Scotchmen, and Irishmen, and Welshmen to whom he had appealed did not think it necessary to say a word in favour of the Motion. He could say no more than he said on that occasion. He fully sympathized with all the hon. Member had said as to the beauty of the Central Hall, and he believed it would be desirable to complete it in a manner that would be worthy of the House, and would stand the criticism of art. If he could have seen his way to the attainment of that result, he would not have hesitated to recommend any expenditure that might be necessary; but he was bound to say that, in the present state of opinion upon the subject, it would not be possible for him, with any chance of success, to make any proposal to the House in that direction. The mosaic which now filled one of the panels had been condemned by almost all the highest authorities on art. Mr. Ayrton, when First Commissioner of Works, had a Committee appointed on this subject, which was composed of well-known artists, and they unanimously condemned the picture, and did not recommend that the remaining panels should be filled with mosaics, but strongly recommended the adoption of frescoes. Mr. Ayrton submitted a Vote for that purpose; but so hostile was the general feeling to any expenditure on frescoes that he was compelled to withdraw the Vote. Since that time no action has been taken in the matter; and, in all probability, if he were to follow the advice of the hon. Member for Poole (Mr. Schreiber), and propose an expenditure of £5,000 for filling the three panels, he should also fail to carry the Vote. Under these circumstances, he could not hold out any hope that this expenditure would be incurred. The hon. Member was wrong in supposing that the work could be executed for the sum he had named, because, as had been pointed out, the School of Mosaic set up in South Kensington had already ceased to exist, and they should have to go to Venice or some other place abroad for artists to execute the work. Under all the circumstances he could only repeat what he said two years ago — namely, that no good purpose would be served by entering into the question until he could obtain a general concurrence of opinion on the part of hon. Members as to what ought to be done. He believed, indeed, that it would be wise to complete the decorations of the Central Hall at some future time. But it was undesirable to fill the three vacant panels with works of art which would not be worthy of them.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY.—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £30,053, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Maintenance and Repair of Royal Palaces."

MR. DILLWYN, in moving to reduce the Vote by £1,068, said, it appeared to him to be high time for the House of Commons to put its foot down pretty firmly in order to prevent the continual enormous increase of our Expenditure, especially with regard to the Civil Service Estimates. There had been a large increase in the amount of the Estimates for the Army and Navy; but while hon. Members knew that there had been exceptional causes for these increases, it was still necessary to see that each and every Estimate was so prepared as that the Committee of Supply could keep a check upon its various items. There were several Members of the House who had been long trying to do this. Some economists thought the only way to bring about a reduction of Expenditure, at any time when it grew excessive, was to change the Government, and so bring new life into the conduct of Departments; others were of opinion that the end in view would be gained by iterated and reiterated protests on every occasion when the Estimates were under consideration. His own view was that the most effectual course would be to attack the Estimates in every possible way, and, if necessary, to take exception to, and cavil at, every item. The very *raison d'etre* of the present Government was that it should reduce Expenditure; but the country did not see that they were fulfilling the function for which they were chosen to any extent. No doubt, it might be said that the whole of the Estimates for the present year were less than they were last year; but looking at the original Estimates of this year, he found that they were very little less, as far as this particular Department, at any rate, was concerned, than those of last year, and he had no doubt that if the Committee agreed to them as they stood, Supplementary Estimates would be hereafter introduced which would bring them fully up to the old figure. He would, in the first place, say that while he moved the reduction of this Vote, he was not the man to oppose the granting of any sum necessary to provide everything that might be required by Her Majesty for her own comfort and convenience, and he felt sure the unanimous feeling of the Committee would be with him in saying this. Parliament would readily grant all that was requisite in this respect; but he thought he should be able to show that this Vote could be safely reduced without trenching in any possible way upon the requirements of the Queen, whom he held in every possible respect. There was a reduction under the head of New Works and Fittings; but that was a matter of course, because the new works and the renewal of fittings had been finished, and no further new works or fittings were at present required. But the whole Vote showed an increase of £1,068, as compared with last year's Vote, and this he looked upon with some jealously, because he did not think it was required by the necessities of the Public Service, and because he thought it the duty of Parliament to put its foot down, wherever possible, in order to prevent any needless expenditure of public money. He would, without going at length into details, show by reference to some few items why the Committee ought to make the reduction he proposed, or perhaps it would be more correct to say why they should refuse to grant the excess which was demanded by the Department. There were several unnecessary items of charge, which, if disallowed, would much more than cover the small reduction which he proposed, and they were items which he could not believe were asked for by Her Majesty herself, but were intended to provide for the convenience of certain great people about the Court, whose requirements, if they were all provided for, would cause a continual increase in the amount of the Estimates. For instance, he found, under the heading of Charges on Account of Buckingham Palace, a sum of £500 set down for the erection of a permanent covering at the Privy Purse and Equerries' entrance. He could not see that this was at all necessary. The gentlemen iu question might use umbrellas, and certainly did not require more or different permanent coverings than any other persons. Then, when he came to the case of Windsor Castle, he found an item of £150 for paving the roadways on each side of the cow-houses, and he could not understand that this was, in any sense, a national expenditure, or that Her Majesty would desire it to be so regarded. These might be, perhaps, regarded by some as small affairs; but it must not be forgotten that "every mickle makes a muckle," and the only way to keep down Expenditure was to watch and control it at every point where this could be legitimately done. Under the heading of Charges on Account of St. James's Palace, he found an estimate of £150 for preparing and fitting up the residence of the Assistant Keeper of the Privy Purse, together with a further sum of £550 for furnishing the residence of the same gentleman. He had no information as to the functions of this official; but he could not help thinking that the sums proposed to be expended on his account might well be saved as far as the National Expenditure was concerned. Without further going into details, he might say that the items he had mentioned as being items which ought not to be charged to the public, would cover by more than £300 the reduction which he proposed to make in the Vote. He therefore moved to reduce the Vote by the sum of £1,068.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR, in seconding the Motion, said, he thought his hon. Friend the Member for Swansea was very moderate in the amount of reduction which he proposed. In his view, the reduction ought to have been such as would bring down the cost to the State of maintaining Royal Palaces to a sum not greater than it was half a century ago. At that date the charges for maintenance of Royal Palaces fell on the Crown, and were defrayed out of the Crown Revenues. But from the year the Civil List was paid and the Crown Lands handed over to the country, the cost of the Royal Palaces had increased, and now the outlay was upwards of £36,000, of which only £13,000 was this year charged for Palaces in the occupation of Her Majesty, and the balance of £23,000 for palaces mainly occupied by Royal personages and by private persons. It was perfectly true that the amount asked to be voted was smaller than that voted in 1881-2, but that did not alter the fact that it was still far too large. He agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for Swansea that Parliament ought to, and would willingly, vote whatever might be required for the convenience or comfort of the Queen; but it must not be forgotten that St. James's and Kensington Palaces were used, to all intents and purposes, as private residences, partly by Royal personages, but mainly by others as offices and as private residences; and that Hampton Court Palace was wholly set apart for the accommodation of persons who before they went there had not been accustomed to live in palaces, and who would be more comfortable if they were provided with the means of living elsewhere. In addition to these occupants of so-called Royal Palaces, who deserved to be provided for in some way, there were others who were not on the same footing, and of whose names he had moved for and obtained leave for a Return in the last Government, but, out of delicacy, he had abstained from pressing it, not wishing to make known the parties who had been lodged, by order of the Queen, in that Palace. His own view was that the whole sum voted for the maintenance of Palaces not actually occupied by the Queen ought to be disallowed; and he warned the Government that so strong a feeling in this respect was growing up, particularly in Scotland, that if the present system of extravagant Estimates went on much longer, there would be a change of Government. It was the duty of the Liberal Party to adopt an economical policy, and he warned them that they must act upon their obvious duty, or they would be superseded in the government of the country.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £28,985, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Maintenance and Repair of Royal Palaces."—(*Mr. Dillwyn.*)

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he wished, before the First Commissioner of Works replied to the criticisms of the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), to ask whether it was possible for him, which he greatly doubted, to give some satisfactory explanation of the item for "Ordinary Repairs and Maintenance," which appeared on page 4 of the Estimate? The amounts put down under that heading were almost incredible when they came to be looked into. Although, no doubt, Royal Palaces were kept up with a greater amount of care and luxury than was the case with ordinary private residences, he did not think the difference in cost, as far as "repairs and maintenance" were concerned, ought to be more than 25 or 30 per cent in favour of the Royal Palaces. So far from this being the case, however, he did not hesitate to say that the difference was not less than 200 to 300 per cent. For instance, the cost of the ordinary repairs and maintenance of the Royal Mews at Pimlico was put down at £1,350—an amount which he regarded as being simply preposterous. How many horses did, or could, the Royal Mews at Pimlico hold? Were there 50 or 60 or 70 horses there? There were lots of private stables that would hold as large or a larger number of horses than either of those he had mentioned; and he ventured to say that in none of them did the "ordinary repairs and maintenance"—which he understood to mean bricks and mortar and carpentry—come to more than £10 a stall. Yet, as he had stated, the sum set down for the Royal Mews was £1,350. Then, when they came to the Windsor Castle Vote, they found an item for "Ordinary Repairs and Maintenance" on account of the Home Park and the Royal Kitchen Garden amounting to £6,000. A charge of that kind passed beyond all ordinary belief. There was not a gentleman in this country, with the most profuse style of living, who would tolerate such an expense for a moment on his own property. Many hon. Members were acquainted with the cost of keeping up large estates, and he asked them whether the amount he had named was one which the Government ought to demand or the Committee to grant? It was clear to him that there must be serious extravagance, if not even robbery, somewhere. Then, when he came to the items for St. James's Palace, he found £1,408 set down for State Rooms, Gardens, and Offices, and £1,560 for Residences of Members of the Royal Family; so that it came to a sum of close upon £3,000 a-year, for bricks and mortar and carpentry, asked for the maintenance of one of the most dingy and disreputable looking buildings of its class in the world, on which he did not believe more than £300 a-year were spent. He asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would give some details as to these items of expenditure; and whether he would state to the Committee that he had himself ever gone through the items? If the right hon. Gentleman could not do so, it was only possible to say that it was matter for deep regret he should have asked the Committee to agree to the Estimate, and it was to be hoped the Committee would insist on full and most complete details being supplied. The question would, however, arise again upon another Vote, and he would now say nothing further than that he was surprised the hon. Member for Swansea had not asked for a larger reduction.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he also was surprised that his hon. Friend the Member for Swansea had not asked for a larger reduction; but he was not surprised that his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had withdrawn from the House during the progress of the Vote, for the reading of the items contained in the Vote must have been exceedingly melancholy work for him. He also felt sure that the First Commissioner of Works must feel it an exceedingly difficult task to come and ask for this Vote in his official capacity. He shared the regret which had been expressed, that his hon. Friend the Member for Swansea had not asked for a larger reduction of the Vote. The proposal of his hon. Friend was an exceedingly moderate one, and the least that those who shared his views could do would be to support him. His own opinion was that the Vote ought to be reduced by £35,954, because the only item of any sort of value was one of £99 for a Royal Observatory, which he presumed was of some use. He noticed that there were 15 Palaces; but it was very well known that Her Majesty hardly ever resided in any of them, for she had houses of her own which she preferred to occupy. Among them was Clarence House. This was inhabited by the Duke of Edinburgh, who enjoyed an annual income, given to him by the country, of £25,000. If a house was given to him, in addition to this large sum of money, surely the least thing he could do would be to keep it in proper repair, as Members of that House did, instead of coming sponging on the country, and asking for every little bit of furniture that he wanted. Then he noticed that there was an item of £946 for Hampton Court Stud-house, and a little lower down in the Estimate there was £507 for the Buck-house, Garden, and Stables. This last house, he believed, was occupied by a gentleman who received a salary for looking after the stud-house. So here they had £1,453 spent on this stud-house for the raising of yearlings, independently of the wages of stablemen, cost of keep, &c., and if the country could make any profit out of the business, he saw no reason why the yearlings should not be raised; but he looked in vain for any account of the sums received for their sale. It was too bad of his hon. Friend the Member for Swansea to have proposed so astoundingly moderate a reduction, which, in the circumstances, they could not do better than accept. [Mr. R. N. FOWLER: Oh, oh!] It was but natural that the worthy Alderman, with the instinct of his class, should be opposed to economy, and in favour of extravagance. Let him, therefore, go into the Lobby alone, or in company with the Government and their supporters. His own view was that, disregarding the answers with which they were constantly met, that these were mere questions of minor detail, they could only bring about a system of economy by attacking the Estimates at every vulnerable point. With changing Ministries—it did not matter whether they were Conservative or Liberal—the Estimates were brought in year by year with little or no alteration, simply because they had been brought in before. The Liberal Party had put the present Government in power in order to obtain a reduction in the Public Expenditure, and until that reduction was obtained, they would oppose not only this particular Vote, but every other one.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that whatever criticisms might be passed upon the Civil Service Estimates for the current year, as a whole, he did not think the present one was fairly open to objection. Since he had held his present Office there had been very considerable reductions made in the Votes for this Department. As compared with two years ago, the reduction was £8,000 on this particular Vote, and as compared with last year it had been £4,000. He could only say that a great many of the demands made upon the public purse had been cut down with no scrupulous hand. His hon. Friend the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) and his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) took exception to several items included in the Vote; but the Vote itself was a decrease this year in the amount of the Estimate, as compared with last year, of no less than £5,376; while there were only a few small items of increase amounting, in the aggregate, to £1,068. The hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) thought that the reduction of £5,376 in the expenditure was scarcely sufficient, and therefore proposed, in addition, to cut off the £1,068 of increase. The first item of increase was one of £500 for the erection of permanent coverings to the Privy Purse and Equerries' entrance. That was not a very large item, and it was required in order to provide a covered entrance for the ladies and gentlemen attending the Court festivities, in order that they might be able to ride up under cover. Hitherto the ladies and gentlemen attending the Court had to drive up without any covering for their carriages, in evening dress, exposed to rain and all kinds of inclement weather. The amount had been asked for years ago, but it had always been delayed in consequence of other works having been required. Now that they were making a large reduction of expenditure, it was thought to be not unreasonable to include in the Vote a small item for an improvement that was imperatively required for the comfort and convenience of ladies and gentlemen attending the Court. Then came a small item of £150 for preparing and putting up a residence for the Assistant Keeper of the Privy Purse. That was an expenditure which the Government were bound, under positive arrangements with the Crown, to undertake. In 1838, when the Royal Palaces were taken over and placed upon the Civil Service Votes, an express arrangement was made with the Crown that the internal repairs of certain Palaces, including the furniture, should be maintained by a Vote in the Estimates annually brought before Parliament. Among other cases were those of St. James's Palace, Windsor Castle, and various other Royal Palaces, in regard to which the external repairs only were taken over; but in the case of St. James's Palace, the internal arrangements, including the furniture and the repairs of the private apartments of the persons residing there, were undertaken by the State. This small item of £150 was for putting the house of the Assistant Keeper of the Privy Purse in a proper state of repair; and there was another sum of £550 for furnishing the residence of the same officer. As he had already explained, this expenditure they were bound to undertake, under the express arrangement which was made with the Crown in 1838; and on that ground it was imperative to insert the amount in the Estimates. There was also a small item of £150 for the paving the approaches to a cow-house at Windsor Castle—a very small matter, indeed, to which he did not apprehend that his hon. Friend would raise any serious objection. It was a very trivial matter, and affected the entrance to the Home Park at Windsor. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) took exception to the expenditure on repairs generally; but he could not imagine that the noble Lord was serious in some of the remarks he had made. The noble Lord said the expenditure was "monstrous," and talked of it involving "robbery."

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL wished to explain. He had only made use of the word "robbery" in the conversational way in which it was employed to denote extortion, and not in the way of imputing absolute crime.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he was glad to hear that explanation. He was glad to find that the noble Lord had only used the word in a conversational sense; but, at the same time, he did not think it was an expression which ought to be used in that House even in a conversational sense.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Why not?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that after the explanation of the noble Lord he would pass that matter by. No doubt, the Royal Palaces did cost a very large sum for repairs; but it must be remembered what huge buildings they were. Windsor Castle, as everbody knew, covered an enormous extent of ground. He did not believe that there was a private residence in the country which at all approached it in size. Indeed, he did not think there was a private residence one-half or one-third as large as Windsor Castle; and he was of opinion that the relative expenditure on the repairs of that great building were not at all excessive. As an illustration, he would take one of the items which appeared in the Estimate—namely, the repairs of Hampton Court Palace. Probably, hon. Members might think that the sum asked for was rather large; but it must be borne in mind that Hampton Court Palace covered a very large area of ground, and was a very costly building to keep in repair. Hon. Members might feel surprise at the annual cost; but the building itself contained a considerable number of apartments, and provided homes for from 40 to 50 families. Several hundreds of people resided in that Palace in one way or another, and he was informed that the Palace itself covered something like six acres of land. When they had a building covering such an immense extent of land, and inhabited by so large a number of people, hon. Members must not be surprised that the Government were compelled to ask Parliament for a considerable expenditure in the shape of repairs. The roof alone cost a large sum annually to keep in repair. He could not undertake to go positively through every item of the repairs of all these Palaces and explain all the details; but he could assure the Committee that he had from time to time gone into specials accounts in regard to individual Palaces, with a view of forming an opinion as to whether the repairs were excessive or not, or the expenditure legitimate or not, and he had almost invariably come to the conclusion that the repairs were justifiable, and that the expenditure ought to be incurred and appear upon the Estimate. In particular, he had gone through the items included in the next Vote—namely, that for Marlborough House—to which the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) had made special reference. With regard to that Vote, he had made a close examination of every item, and he had satisfied himself that the work could not be done for a less sum. He only mentioned the case of Marlborough House by way of illustration. As he had said, it was impossible for him to go into every item connected with the repairs of these Royal Palaces; but, from time to time, he had taken here and there individual cases which came before his Department in which there had been an increase, and the result in every case had been to satisfy him that the expenditure was justifiable, and either that the money had actually been spent, or ought to be spent, and placed on the Vote. Under these circumstances, seeing that the Vote which he now submitted to the Committee showed a reduction of £4,308 as compared with last year, and of more than £8,000 as compared with the previous year, he did not think that hon. Members would very strongly call this particular Vote in question, whatever view they might entertain of the expenditure upon the Civil Service of the country generally. It must also be recollected that this was a Vote which Her Majesty's Government had absolutely no interest in enlarging.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER wished to say a few words to express what he thought in regard to these Estimates. He did not consider that the expenditure was at all excessive. For instance, the sum asked for the Royal Kitchen Garden in the Windsor Home Park was only £908 this year, whereas last year it amounted to £5,107. Therefore, upon that item alone, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Commissioner of Works had effected a saving of more than £4,000, because there was a very large expenditure last year, and only a comparatively small one this. He apprehended that that would be the case in regard to most of the items for repairs. It was found necessary to go to a large expenditure in one year, and in the next there was comparatively nothing to spend, and the total amount expended in each year was not unreasonable. Hon. Members knew very well that that was what generally occurred in regard to their own private expenditure. A considerable sum of money was expended in the repairs of a residence in one year, and in consequence of having incurred that expenditure, they reasonably calculated upon spending very little more for some time to come. What they ought to feel in regard to the present Estimates was, that the right hon. Gentleman had been able to effect a considerable saving this year, and the fact that there were, nevertheless, items upon which there had been an increase, was owing to circumstances such as those he had named. Repairs were required in one year and not in another; and in regard to the present Vote, he thought the Committee ought to pass it without hesitation. He knew that the Vote was attacked on other grounds by his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere)—a very able critic. He had read with great interest a paper recently published by the hon. Member in a monthly periodical. It was not very often that he agreed with the hon. Member; but he had certainly read this particular article, if not altogether with agreement in the views it expressed, at all events, with a feeling that the hon, Member fairly depicted the state to which things were coming in this country. He would recommend all his Liberal friends to read the article, because he thought that in it the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) showed pretty plainly what the principles of Democracy were. He could give no better advice to his Liberal Friends than that they should carefully study the views of the hon. Member, who was a man of the future, and showed precisely what the principles of the Party were coming to. He was not surprised to find that an hon. Member holding the views expressed in the article in question should come down to the House, and without the slightest compunction suggest that the whole of this Vote should be swept away. His hon. Friend, no doubt, was perfectly consistent in the views he expressed, but those who differed entirely from his hon. Friend were quite satisfied to support the Government in the Vote which had been placed before the Committee.

Mr. WADDY said, he did not think that the answer given to the Committee by the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works quite covered the ground, especially in regard to the items which related to Hampton Court Palace. The right hon. Gentleman told them that there were a great number of people living in that Palace. Then why did they not do the repairs themselves? He did not see why, because so many people were provided with residences in the Palace, that it was at all necessary for the Government to come to the House of Commons and require Parliament to make provision for the ordinary repair and maintenance of the apartments occupied by such persons. Comparing one side of the Estimate with the other, he found that while more than £6,000 were necessary to keep the Palace in repair; on the other side, a sum of £1,163 more was asked for in order to keep the Palace going. Why on earth these items should appear in the Estimates at all he did not understand, and he ventured to think that it was hardly fair to require Parliament to make such provision. Of course it was very well known that these Palaces were not in the occupation of Her Majesty, although they all appeared in the Estimate under the head of "Royal Palaces." The Committee were told that certain illustrious personages were provided with residences in them, some in one Palace and some in another. He would suggest that in future the grants to these various Royal personages should be so placed in the Votes, that they would appear side by side with the expenses incurred in keeping up the apartments occupied, and the nation would then be able to see how much was expended upon each of these Royal personages. At present the amount of salaries and pensions awarded to Royal personages appeared in the Votes, but everything else was put down to the credit of Her Majesty, whereas, in point of fact, Her Majesty had nothing whatever to do with the matter. He certainly failed to see what on earth they wanted a special rat-catcher for. How was it that a turncock was required for Buckingham Palace? Was he engaged in turning the cock all day long? He saw there was another turncock for St. James's Palace. Surely St. James's Palace was not so far off that the same turncock might not be made to perform the duty for the two places. Then, again, there were items included in the account for two bell-ringers, vergers, &c. He thought the matter was extremely ludicrous from one point of view, but altogether monstrous from another. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) had been taken to task and scolded by the First Commissioner of Works for using the word "monstrous." He did not know whether the noble Lord felt inclined to withdraw that word, but if he did, he (Mr. Waddy) would certainly borrow it from him. He saw an item in the Vote for "military knights' houses at Windsor Castle," and he wished to know if there were really any military knights living there at all? If so, the same observation would apply to them as to the residents of Hampton Court Palace. He should certainly support the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) for the reduction of the Vote if the Amendment went to a division; and he lamented, in common with his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) and others, that the Amendment did not go a great deal further and knock off not £1,000 only, but a good many thousands which were included in the Vote.

Mr. SALT wished to know whether any expenses were put down in the Vote for the loss occasioned by the fire at Hampton Court Palace, or whether the loss was covered by insurance?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, it had not been possible to ascertain the cost of the repairs rendered necessary by the fire at Hampton Court Palace in time to insert it in this year's Estimates. He believed it would turn out that it would amount to about £6,000, and probably a Supplementary Vote would be asked for later in the Session in order to meet that expenditure. If it had been possible to ascertain the amount of the damage done, an item would have been inserted in the present Vote; but at the time the Estimates were made out it was not possible to give definitely an account of the expenditure that would be required. In regard to what his hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Waddy) had said, his hon. Friend seemed to be unaware that the salaries of the various officers mentioned in page 6 were also included in sub-head A, in page 4 of the Vote. The sum of £1,100 odd represented the wages of various warders, and so forth, at Hampton Court Palace, and it was really required in order to pay the wages and salaries of the men employed in looking after the pictures and providing for the comfort and the convenience of the general public who visited the Palace. The item was in no way connected with what might be called the residential value of the Palace. As a matter of fact, there was no Palace more frequented by the public, or which gave greater pleasure to a considerable portion of Her Majesty's subjects, than Hampton Court Palace. He was quite sure that his hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Waddy) did not at all wish to reduce this expenditure; but what his hon. Friend did naturally take objection to was the expenditure on that portion of the Palace which was occupied as private residences. At the same time, it must be recollected that the sum asked for included the repairs of the Palace over the whole extent of the building, and applied to a very large portion of the building that was thrown open to the public. In the case of private residences, the ordinary cost of maintenance was borne by the residents themselves. When a change took place, and an apartment became vacant, it was put in proper condition and order, and no further internal expenditure was incurred so long as the same person remained in residence. Under these circumstances, he did not think that the Vote was quite open to the exception which had been taken by his hon. Friend. As he had already stated, Hampton Court Palace covered such an enormous extent of ground, and was in every way so costly a building to keep up, that he did not think the House ought to complain of the sum asked for for repairs in connection with it. His hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) was under a mistake in regard to one of the items to which he had referred. His hon. Friend said the sum asked for was required in order to keep a house in repair which was occupied by one of the Royal Princes; but if his hon. Friend would look at the item he would find that it included no less than three separate houses, one of which was set apart by Her Majesty for the use of one of the French Princes. And he wished to remind the hon. Member that, although Her Majesty did not occupy these Palaces herself, the way in which they were disposed of was a matter entirely within Her Majesty's own discretion. And whatever hon. Members might think about it, it was not for him (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), in the position he occupied, to question what Her Majesty did; especially in a matter which, at all events, was entirely in her own discretion. Bushy Park was also given up to the use of persons nominated by Her Majesty, and Her Majesty was fully entitled, by virtue of the arrangement he had already referred to, to call upon Parliament to incur this expenditure.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF remarked, that his hon. Friend the worthy and loyal Alderman who represented the City of London (Mr. R. N. Fowler) would naturally take exception to any comment that was made in an unfriendly spirit upon the expenditure incurred in connection with the Royal Palaces; but what he (Sir Drummond Wolff) regarded as the feeling of the Committee was, that while they were quite ready to maintain the Royal Palaces, and spend any sums of money upon them that might be necessary for their repair, it was really a question whether they were not spending a good deal too much for what they got in return. For instance, they were perfectly willing to maintain the Royal Mews at Pimlico; but the question was whether that maintenance ought to cost £1,350.? His noble Friend had pointed out that if there were 40 or 50 stalls in the Royal Mews, £1,350 would be a very exorbitant sum to charge for the accommodation provided. They did not grudge Her Majesty every comfort and convenience; but what they did wish was that those who were intrusted with the administration of the public funds should take the same care as a private individual would in carrying out the repairs in his own private establishment. He really thought that the worthy Alderman and his noble Friend were at one in that respect. It was a question of amount, and not of principle. He thought the worthy Alderman had done a somewhat unkind turn to his right hon. Friend the First Commissioner of Works, because he had taken a very exceptional year in regard to the expenditure upon the Royal Windsor Kitchen Gardens to compare with the present year. Last year the expenditure was £5,107, whereas the sum asked for this year was only £908

MR. R. N. FOWLER said, he had only referred to that item by way of illustration.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he was taking the same illustration. His hon. Friend said—"Last year you spent on the Royal Windsor Kitchen Gardens a sum of £5,107, whereas this year you have only spent £908, and therefore there is a saving of more than £4,000." His hon. Friend claimed credit to the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works for having effected a saving of that amount. In reality, there had been no saving at all; the sum of £908 was a simple diminution of the extraordinary expenditure of last year, and it ought, in fairness, to be distributed, not over one, but several years. In regard to Hampton Court Palace, it was asked why there should be any expenditure at all by the State in respect of the repairs in connection with the residential part of the building? and, personally, he could not understand why the loss occasioned by the recent fire at Hampton Court should fall upon the public. Were not the Royal Palaces allowed to insure themselves as well as other property? Was it forbidden?

[Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: No.] Then, why was it not done? Why were not the same precautions taken in the case of fire at Hampton Court Palace as were taken in regard to every private house throughout the country? Then, again, with regard to St. James's Palace. The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works said that they were bound to furnish St. James's Palace. He did not grudge the furniture, and, no doubt, if they were bound to maintain the Palace they were bound to keep it in a proper condition; but what was the meaning of a Vote of £550 being asked for for furnishing the residence of the Assistant Keeper of the Privy Purse? Were these apartments that were now being furnished for the first time, or were they being refurnished, or were they new apartments for a new official? He thought the Committee was entitled to receive some answer to that question; because, if there were many officers to appoint, Parliament might be called upon to expend large sums of money in providing and furnishing their residences. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would answer the questions which had been put to him.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN said, he concurred with the observations which had been made by his hon. Friend the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), and he certainly should vote for his hon. Friend's Amendment. At the same time, he thought that what his hon. Friend had said only half represented the feeling entertained outside the House by the country in demanding a large reduction of the National Expenditure. Although he was prepared to support the proposal of his hon. Friend, he was disposed to think that it was useless to attempt to reduce the Estimates; and he regretted that they were discussing these items as general matters of detail, rather than as a question of principle. The only way in which they could accomplish a real reduction of the Estimate was by having all the items placed before a Committee, and going through them in a much more searching manner than in that fragmentary way. He had now been a Member of the House of Commons for several years, and he did not know that a single Resolution had ever been carried in Committee of Supply which had produced a permanent reduction. If they reduced an Estimate one year, it was certain to be increased in the next. His own opinion was that the proper question to discuss was the question of principle; and he thought they ought to alter entirely the principle upon which these Palaces were maintained. If they could do that, they might be able to effect a satisfactory alteration; but if they could not do it, then he was sure that these attempts to strike out £50 here and £50 there, with £1,000 or £2,000 on a special occasion, would produce no palpable effect. At the same time, if the officials in charge of these Departments were anxious to make substantial reductions, the mere fact that this discussion had taken place would strengthen their hands; and with that view, rather than in the expectation of obtaining much from the proposed Amendment, he should support the proposal of his hon. Friend.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH thought that his hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen) had rightly estimated the value of the discussions which took place in Committee of Supply upon the Estimates. They were not intended to effect directly any reduction in sums of money which had already been settled, and to which the good faith of the Government and of the House was pledged. The House of Commons, nevertheless, by that means showed its great interest in the questions which were raised by these Votes, and were not only desirous to put the Government on its defence as regards the Estimates, but looked with some anxiety to the time when the economical administration of the affairs of the country would bring about a reduction of the National Expenditure. He (Mr. Sclater-Booth) had risen for the purpose of making a few observations upon the matter which had been raised by his hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) in regard to the sum charged for the furnishing of the apartment of the Assistant Keeper of the Privy Purse. It did not appear to him that the explanation of his right hon. Friend the First Commissioner of Works was altogether satisfactory. He took it, from the language employed in the Estimates, that this item was charged for furnishing a new residence which had been assigned to the newly-appointed officer. Was that the fact? [Mr. Shaw Lefevre: Yes; that is so.] It did not appear that was so from the explanation given by his right hon. Friend. He was afraid that the Department brought down upon themselves an endless amount of criticism, and involved the entering into very small details in regard to the Estimates which were almost beneath the dignity of the House, in consequence of the meagre information which was supplied in the Votes themselves. The information was extremely vague upon some matters, although very full in regard to trifling items, such as the payment of £2 to a bell-ringer. There was one point upon which he wished to ask a question, and it had reference to the expenditure upon Holyrood Palace. Among the items of expenditure was one of £40 for an allowance to the Lord High Commissioner of the Church of Scotland, for expenses attending the occupation of certain rooms in the Palace. It seemed to him hardly reasonable that the allowance to the Lord High Commissioner should be entered in that peculiar form. He presumed that the High Commissioner occupied these apartments when discharging his duties in connection with the Church of Scotland every year; and, of course, it was only right that accommodation should be provided for the High Commissioner free of costs. But it seemed very invidious to place the Lord High Commissioner in the position of receiving a trumpery allowance from the State when, in point of fact, he only occupied the apartments in Holyrood Palace as the Representative of Her Majesty; and it was absolutely essential that he should be provided with the necessary accommodation for the transaction of the duties of his Office.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that he would first answer the inquiry of the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff). The Keeper of the Privy Purse was a new officer. There were formerly two principal officers attached to Her Majesty—namely, the Keeper of the Privy Purse and Her Majesty's Secretary. These offices had now been amalgamated, and General Ponsonby was attached to Her Majesty in both capacities. In the one capacity—namely, that of Keeper of the Privy Purse—he required an assistant, and this was, undoubtedly, a new office. The assistant had a residence in St. James's Palace, but the residence itself was not a new one. It was originally attached to another office; but when this new office was created, it was considered desirable that the Assistant Keeper of the Privy Purse should reside in St. James's Palace, and an arrangement was made by which a transfer of the residence was effected. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Sclater-Booth) had referred to the allowance to the Lord High Commissioner of the Church of Scotland, for expenditure attending the occupation of rooms in Holyrood Palace. The right hon. Gentleman would probably be aware that the Lord High Commissioner resided in the Palace every year for some 10 days, and the expenses attending his residence there were always charged in the Votes.

SIR ANDREW LUSK said, he thought the Committee had done very scant justice to the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works for the defence he had made of this Vote. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had, on the whole, held his position very well; and he (Sir Andrew Lusk) now rose, in the interests of truth and justice, to say one or two words in favour of the right hon. Gentleman. Complaint had been made of the expenditure entailed by the necessity of keeping the Royal Palaces in a proper state of repair. No doubt there were many Members in that House who possessed large houses, both in the country and in town; and he would like to know how much it cost them per annum to keep their own residences in proper repair? He thought it would be found that, in many instances, it took as much as £1,000 per annum to keep them all right, and sometimes even more was expended year after year. Yet these private residences were not half as big as the Royal Palaces now under discussion, and which it seemed to be expected ought to be kept in a decent state of repair for nothing. If hon. Members could not understand these things, they ought to be made to understand them. It was self-evident that the cost of keeping up a large Palace, covering many acres of ground, must be very considerable. It seemed to be forgotten that these Palaces were their own property, and that they belonged to the nation. It should also be recollected that the amount for the work of repair this year showed a reduction of some £4,000 in comparison with the sum granted last year. He was satisfied that the Committee would be quite ready to vote everything that was necessary; and it was obviously necessary that they should see to their own property, and keep it in a satisfactory condition, as long as it remained theirs. What else could they could do but keep it in order? His right hon. Friend the First Commissioner of Works had gone closely into the matter; and, as far as he (Sir Andrew Lusk) was a judge, there was not much fault to find with the right hon. Gentleman. He thought it would be much better for hon. Members to reserve their criticisms for some of the Votes which would come on for discussion after this, where it was possible to obtain a reduction of thousands of pounds, instead of a paltry reduction of a few shillings. They were now nibbling at a few pence in connection with the repair of their own property; and he thought that the sooner the advocates of economy had their attention drawn to something else the more useful their labours would be.

MR. WARTON said, that it amazed him to notice the singular manner in which the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) had set out upon his economical campaign. He presumed that the hon. Member was posing there as an economist upon some principle of action; but the principle adopted by the hon. Gentleman seemed to him (Mr. Warton) to be a most extraordinary one, and a very rough-and-ready way of criticizing the Estimates. The hon. Member appeared to have looked down one side of the page, and to have found in one column that there was an increase upon various items of Expenditure amounting to £1,068. He ignored altogether the fact that in the next column there was a decrease of £5,376; and the hon. Member said—"We ought to go against this increase, whatever it is." Now, the increase consisted of four items. The first was an increase of £91 in salaries, wages, and allowances. Secondly, there was an increase of £174 for ordinary repairs and maintenance; and there was also an increase of £81 on the items for fuel, gas, and water. Upon those items the hon. Member said never a word; but he proceeded to justify his rough-and-ready criticism by referring to the general result of the increase, which amounted, in the aggregate, to £1,068. He (Mr. Warton) could not imagine what was the object of the hon. Member in bringing forward the Motion in so captious a spirit. The hon. Member asked the Committee to strike off all the items on which there had been an increase; but to not one of those items did he raise a special objection, nor did he say a word in favour of the Department for the decrease of expenditure which had been effected. It seemed to him (Mr. Warton) that that was a most extraordinary way of conducting a campaign in the interest of economy in a rational and consistent manner. He failed to understand the reason why the hon. Member should select the sum of £1,068 as the sum to be struck off the Vote, because it had certainly nothing to do with the specific complaint which the hon. Member made. In point of fact, it was more like straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel. Comments had been made upon trifling items in connection with the employment of rat-catchers and bell-ringers; but nothing whatever had been said upon the items on the other side of the account, which went to make up the sum of upwards of £5,000. He was of opinion, himself, that before the Committee accepted the Motion of the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) they should carefully scrutinize the items on both sides of the account.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he thought that the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works should be more careful in regard to the information which he gave to the Committee. His hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) had asked a question about the new residence provided for the Assistant Keeper of the Privy Purse, and he had inquired if the office was a new one? The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works, in reply, stated that it was a new office which had been created, because Sir Henry Ponsonby was Private Secretary to Her Majesty and Keeper of the Privy Purse at the same time, and in his capacity as Keeper of the Privy Purse he required an assistant. That was the explanation which the First Commissioner gave; but on turning to a book of reference—*The Court Guide*—he (Lord Randolph Churchill) found that there were two Assistant Keepers of the Privy Purse—Captain Edwards and Captain Deacon—one of whom had been appointed for a considerable time. The First Commissioner had kept back the fact that when the new Assistant Keeper of the Privy Purse was appointed there was already an Assistant Keeper of the Privy Purse in existence, but of whose existence the Committee had not been made acquainted. He wished to point out to the First Commissioner that although the House was always ready to take a favourable view of the Estimates, if the Minister stated fairly and frankly what the meaning of a particular item was, yet there was nothing more fatal for a Government than to keep the Committee in the dark as to the real circumstances of the cases which they were called upon to defend. Now, in this particular case the Committee had been decidedly kept in the dark as to the fact that there was already an Assistant Keeper of the Privy Purse before the new office was created. So much for that point. He wished further to protest against the argument of his hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen) and his right hon. Friend the Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth), both of whom concurred in declaring that there was no use in criticizing in detail, as the House of Commons had no power to alter the details of the Votes. If they were to begin to discuss the Estimates animated by this kind of sentiment, they might give up all idea of opposing any Vote, however objectionable it might be. He agreed with the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) that, as long as they had the power of criticizing the Votes, the House of Commons should put its foot down absolutely, and reduce the Votes by lump sums. They might depend upon it that the officials would then be more careful in preparing the Estimates next year, and would give plenty of details. Further than that, care would be taken that the Estimates were not submitted at too high a figure. He contended that the Committee had no right whatever to agree to this Vote in the absence of all explanation from the First Commissioner of Works as to the cost of the ordinary repairs and maintenance of these Palaces. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had not attempted to deal with the statement which he (Lord Randolph Churchill) had made. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to be utterly unable to give the Committee the smallest explanation of the expenditure upon the Windsor stables, or upon the Royal Mews at Pimlico, or the expenditure upon St. James's Palace, especially in regard to that portion of the Palace occupied by Members of the Royal Family. He asked the Chief Commissioner to undertake to produce, as a specimen, a detailed account of three items—first, the item of £1,350 for the ordinary repairs and maintenance of the Royal Mews, Pimlico; secondly, the item of £1,480 for the Chapel Royal, St. James's Palace; and, lastly, the item of £1,560 in connection with the residence of Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cambridge, Clarence House, and other residences of Members of the Royal Family and their households. If the right hon. Gentleman would, in the course of the present Session, lay before the House a detailed account of all that had been spent, he had no doubt the Committee would feel inclined this year to allow the Vote to pass, and they would be able then to begin to know whether these were ordinary items of expenditure which required to be incurred by the State. He thought that was a very fair offer to make to the First Commissioner of Works. Such a detailed account would entail no great expenditure in its production, and it would afford a favourable test in regard to all the other items which had been criticized. He hoped that the Committee would insist on extracting this information from the Government, and that they would not allow the Vote to be passed, even if it became necessary to have recourse to dilatory Motions, until full explanation had been given by the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Vote.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH wished to explain. His noble Friend had not properly understood what it was that he had said. What he did say, in supporting the views of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen), was that he considered it perfectly impossible to make any serious impression upon the expenditure by proposing to cut down various items in detail.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that, in reply to the request of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), he had no objection whatever to give in detail the items of expenditure incurred under the head of repairs and maintenance. Of course, it could not be expected that he was able to carry in his own head the details of every single item of repairs. It was utterly impossible to do so; but if the Committee wished for a more detailed account he would endeavour to obtain it and lay it on the Table. With reference to the Vote for Marlborough House, as he had already stated to the Committee, he had obtained special information, and had gone through every item of expenditure personally. He had done so because he thought that would afford an illustration of the manner in which these matters were dealt with generally; but if the House considered it desirable to have a detailed account under the several heads, showing the nature of the repairs undertaken, he would be quite ready to give it. In regard to what the noble Lord had said about the Deputy Keeper of the Privy Purse, he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had not the slightest desire to keep the House in the dark. It was quite true that in addition to the Assistant Keeper, for whom the expenditure included in the Estimate was incurred, there was another officer who acted as Assistant Secretary; and now that the two offices of Keeper of the Privy Purse and Secretary to Her Majesty were amalgamated, there were two Assistants. One of these officers was a new Assistant, appointed specially in connection with the Privy Purse; and he believed that the two officers were now called Assistant Keeper of the Privy Purse and Assistant Secretary. The noble Lord was, therefore, quite accurate in his information. At the same time, he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) himself was not inaccurate in saying that the office specially mentioned in the Estimate was a new one.

MR. LABOUCHERE remarked, that the right hon. Gentleman had not given any explanation of the item of £946 for the Hampton Court Stud House, in addition to which there was a further charge for keeping up Bushey House gardens and stables. He was informed by an hon. Friend that about 14 or 15 yearlings were sold every year by auction from the Hampton Court Stud. They would probably produce about £1,400 or £1,500, against which, of course, was to be set the cost of keeping them and maintaining stablemen. He took it that, in all probability, the bargain was a very bad one, even putting aside the cost of maintaining the Royal stud-house, upon which they were required this year to spend £946, in addition to £800 spent last year. It really seemed to him that they were not investing their money in a speculation that was exceedingly remunerative; and he should like to know why they were to be called upon to embark into speculation in connection with the breeding of horses at all? Surely this was not a question of keeping up the Royal state and dignity of Her Majesty; but it was a pure question of pounds, shillings, and pence. He should like to be informed by his right hon. Friend the First Commissioner of Works what was the object of keeping up this stud. Was it merely for the purpose of breeding 14 or 15 horses, and selling them at a loss at the end of the year? Nor did he know what became of the money. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would be able to tell the Committee, because it was by no means clear, from anything that appeared in the Estimate, where the proceeds went to, or who got the money. He did not mean to impute anything in the shape of robbery or jobbery; but still it was evident that a certain sum of money did exist, and he should like to know where it went to. Somebody or other must get it; but if it came back to the country or not, there did not appear to him to be any earthly object in keeping up this stud-house, and he hoped the Committee would receive some intimation from his right hon. Friend that he would look into the matter, and see whether it was not desirable to put an end to the whole thing. There was only one other item in the Vote to which he wished to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman had defended the expenditure upon the Royal Palaces generally by asserting that it was part and parcel of the bargain made with Her Majesty at the commencement of her reign. He saw, however, a sum of £1,981 for fuel, gas, and water supplied to the different Royal Palaces. He could understand why a charge of this nature should be made in connection with Holyrood Palace, Hampton Court, and other places, which only nominally belonged to Her Majesty, and were used by other persons; but he did not understand the charges for Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle, which were residences of the Queen, and St. James's Palace, the residence of Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cambridge. He was not aware that it was any part and parcel of the bargain with Her Majesty at the time of her accession to the Throne that the Palaces should be supplied with water, gas, and fuel at the public expense. He wanted to know if it did form part of the bargain or not? It should be clearly understood whether the nation was really required to pay for the water, fuel, and light supplied to these different Palaces, and to others lent by Her Majesty to Royal personages, such as the Duc de Nemours.

Mr. GREGORY wished to point out to the Committee that the ordinary account for the repairs and maintenance of the Royal Palaces amounted to something under £24,000, and that it included within it three or four of the largest buildings in the country. Some of these buildings were of considerable age, and, consequently, were more costly to maintain in a state of repair than more modern buildings. Now, it happened that he had had considerable experience as to the maintenance of buildings for many years past, owing to the position which he occupied as Treasurer of the Foundling Hospital —a large building about 130 years old. From 300 to 400 persons, including children, resided in that building, and he was acquainted with the annual expenditure incurred for repairs. He was fully within the mark when he said that it was found impossible to keep the cost of the repairs within £400 a-year, taking one year with another. There was always some thing in the wood-work, or in the brickwork, or roofing, of these old buildings that was giving way and required to be looked after. The result was that it was necessary to enter into a very considerable outlay year by year in order to keep any buildings of this kind in a satisfactory state. In regard to Hampton Court Palace, it was a building which, to all intents and purposes, was dedicated to the public, who had the full enjoyment of it. It contained old carvings, picture galleries, and other things of great historical interest. At the same time, the building itself was one of great antiquity, and must require the constant expenditure of money to keep it in order and in a proper condition. The remarks he had made applied to the general scope of the Vote; and, taking it on the whole, he did not think the sum of £24,000 was an extravagant sum for the repair and maintenance of the Royal Palaces. There was, however, one item contained in the Vote which he thought certainly needed explanation; and that was the item of £1,350 for the ordinary repairs and maintenance of the Royal Mews at Pimlico. This was, comparatively speaking, a modern building, and he could hardly imagine why so large a sum as £1,350 should be required for keeping it in repair. The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works had undertaken to lay before the House a statement in detail of the repairs which had been executed; and he (Mr. Gregory) could only hope that that statement would be satisfactory. He certainly thought that the last item to which he had referred required explanation. If it was found necessary to incur so large an expenditure it might be worth while to consider whether the building should not be reconstructed altogether, so that it might not involve so large a sum year by year for its repair and maintenance.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he thought that no discussion which had taken place in the House of Commons since the commencement of the Session would be received by the general public out-of-doors with more surprise and interest than the discussion which had taken place that night upon the Vote for the Royal Palaces. He imagined that some of the Metropolitan constituencies would be exceedingly interested to find that the most ardent advocates of this extravagant Vote were two Aldermen of the City of London representing Metropolitan constituencies. He did not like to venture upon the proposition that there was any necessary connection between Aldermen and extravagance, or the Corporation of London and servility; but he could not help calling attention to the fact that the two sturdiest supporters of extravagant expenditure on the Royal Palaces were both of them Metropolitan Members and Representatives of the Corporation of London. He had certainly been very much surprised to hear the remarks which fell from the hon. Member for Finsbury (Sir Andrew Lusk) a short time ago. He had always understood that gentlemen of the nationality of the hon. Member were rather of an economic turn of mind. No doubt it was the fact that in this case the hon. Member was not dealing with his own money; but, nevertheless, the worthy Alderman had posed before the House almost as an inspired apostle of extravagance. The hon. Alderman said—"These Palaces are your own property;" but he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) would like to know which of them was to be considered the property of the nation, and which of them the people were allowed to enter into freely? Did the general public ever find their way into St. James's Palace? Windsor Castle was the only Palace thrown open to visitors, who came principally from America. His own opinion was that the general public would be very much surprised when the items comprised in the Vote under discussion were placed before them. In point of fact, if there was any Member of the Government who still adhered to Republican principles, the very best thing he could do would be to print and circulate throughout the country a copy of the first Vote in the Civil Service Estimates. He was satisfied that any hon. or right hon. Gentleman who took that course would gain a large number of converts to his views. What was it, he would ask the Committee, that this Estimate revealed? He remembered, not long ago, when it was proposed to give an annuity to one of the Royal Princes—he referred to the last occasion on which the proposal was made—there was a division in the House. The proposal gave rise to a little excitement, although it was only a proposal to give an annuity, he believed, of £6,000 to one of the Royal Princes. But if the public in the country were surprised at a proposition of that nature, how much more surprised would they be to learn that the repairs and maintenance of Windsor Castle cost every year between £4,000 and £5,000—nearly as much as was conferred upon a Royal Prince in the shape of an annuity? He had no intention of accusing the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works of any want of candour. He was satisfied that the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly incapable of intentionally misleading the House; but he thought the Committee had been, to some extent, led astray by the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman at the beginning of the discussion—that he had reduced this Vote by the sum of £4,000 since last year. As had been pointed out by the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), there had been, practically, no reduction at all, because last year there was an extraordinary expenditure of £5,107 upon the Windsor Royal Kitchen Gardens, whereas this year there had been a reduction in that item from more than £5,000 to £908. Therefore, as a matter of fact, the general expenditure upon the Royal Palaces this year was very much the same as it was last. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth), speaking for the Front Opposition Bench, was very much in favour of leaving the Vote as it was. Now, he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) always observed that whenever the occupants of the Ministerial Bench found it necessary to defend extravagant expenditure, they always obtained strong support from the Front Opposition Bench. He did not like to apply to the two Front Benches the very old, although not very flattering, saying that "when rogues fell out honest men came to their own;" but it was certainly one of the least hopeful signs of administrative reform to find that, whenever the Public Accounts were under discussion in that House, Ministers on the Treasury Bench and ex-Ministers on the Front Opposition Bench never felt inclined to fall out in regard to the items. The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works objected to enter into all the items contained in the Vote and give a detailed explanation of them. Nevertheless, in regard to one of the items, the Committee were informed that a Royal ratcatcher got £8 a-year, and a bell-ringer £2. The fault of the present Estimates was that they entered into minute details, where such details were altogether unnecessary; and that there was a total absence of details where large and important items of expenditure were dealt with. The details of the expenditure of £4,000 were muddled together; while, in the same Vote, the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works could not ask the Committee to give £10 or £20 to a charwoman without entering into details of the most minute character. Nothing could be more anomalous than the way in which details were given in regard to small and unimportant items, while all large items were given in the lump with a total absence of details. He was satisfied that the discussion which had taken place that night would excite a considerable amount of attention in the country, and that it would be one more item, tending to fill up the heavy bill of indictment against the Government for having preached economy when out of Office, and having practised extravagance when in the full possession of power.

Mr. RITCHIE asked upon what principle the tradesmen who were employed to do the work at the Royal Palaces were engaged? Was there a schedule made out of the particular duties they were required to perform, and an estimate sent in? Was the work put up to competition, or was it placed in the hands of some particular builder, who was allowed to charge what he liked for it?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that an estimate was got out and a tender asked for, generally accompanied by a schedule of prices.

Mr. CALLAN asked how many horses the Royal Mews at Pimlico were capable of accommodating, and the number actually kept there? This portion of the Vote could only be considered with advantage when the Committee were in possession of the cost per head of each horse, and this information he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would supply.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he was unable to state the cost per head of the horses at the Royal Mews, and could only repeat the promise made to the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), that he would ascertain the expenditure under the three heads to which he had called attention.

Mr. WADDY said, he hoped a reply would be given to the question as to the Stud House at Hampton Court. The Committee were very desirous of knowing something about this, and had tried very hard to get information upon the subject from the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. BIGGAR said, if the horses bred at Hampton Court were of a kind that would improve the breed of horses generally, there would be some excuse for the charge in the Estimates. But this was not the case. Some years ago he used to read the Returns of Hampton Court Palace; and he found that the horses bred there were, as a rule, half-milers, who could not stay, and generally ended their days in hansom cabs. He thought the question that had been raised should be fully ventilated for the benefit of the public, who knew little or nothing about the objects on which the money was spent; although they were told it was not of much use to discuss the Estimate even if a division took place, because matters of the kind were generally settled as the Government Whips decided. Nevertheless, the public ought to be enlightened on the subject of expenditure, especially on the part of a Liberal Government, and some steps should be taken in the direction of economy. This charge for breeding stock was one which the Government ought to be prepared either to defend on its merits or to withdraw from the Estimates in future. For his own part, he had long regarded this Vote as an anomaly; and in the entire absence of any defence of it on the part of the Minister in charge he should vote for the Amendment.

MR. O'SHEA drew attention to the charge for keeping up sheds and stables for stallions at Hampton Court. There was no doubt, as had been pointed out by the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar), that the horses reared there had deteriorated greatly—the paddocks were, he believed, all used up, and the horses always got lumps in the throat, which was an obstacle to their success. However, he could say, from his own knowledge of the place, that £946 was a great deal too much for repairs to the stables for stallions.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:* — Ayes 23; Noes 64: Majority 41. — (Div. List, No. 44.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £1,953, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Maintenance and Repair of Marlborough House."

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, this was a Vote concerning which the Committee would probably get more information than on the last, because the First Commissioner of Works had told them he had himself gone through the items of the Estimate. Marlborough House — the annual repairs to which were represented by the sum of £2,953 now asked for—was not a very large building. There were many private residences in London much larger; and it would be obvious to anyone who had experience of such establishments that the amount of the Vote was excessive. For his own part, he regarded the annual charge of £2,953, for what was called the repair and maintenance of Marlborough House, as altogether ludicrous, and beyond credit. Marlborough House, only 70 years ago, belonged to a private individual; and if he were to look into the records it would be easy for him to show that one-fifth of the sum now asked for was all that was necessary to keep it in repair. The First Commissioner, having himself gone through the Estimates, he would ask him if he had noticed in them anything beyond the ordinary items of bricks, mortar, and carpentering? Of course, if such things as furniture were included he would say that the Vote was moderate; but if only the items he had alluded to were provided for, it would be impossible for the Committee to pass the Vote without comment. Were the repairs executed by tender and contract every year, or were they done from year to year by the same builder who worked under a general contract? The Commissioner should have some information on this point; because if the repairs were done under a general contract, there was no difficulty in understanding why the cost of them was so large. Hon. Members would perceive that it was impossible to go on expending £3,000 year after year in repairing Marlborough House; and he was certain it was not good policy for the Members of the Conservative Party to encourage extravagant expenditure upon Royal Palaces. Every Member of that Party was willing and anxious that what was necessary for the maintenance of the Royal Palaces should be provided by the country; and he was sure that neither he nor his hon. Friends would ever give a vote that would endanger this principle. Still, he was bound to say that the House of Commons ought not to be the last to detect extravagance in matters of the kind.

Mr. RYLANDS said, he entirely concurred with the remarks they had just listened to, and he had expected that the noble Lord would have concluded his speech by moving a reduction of the Vote; but, as he had not done so, he would himself move that it be reduced by the sum of £1,000. He would put a question to the First Commissioner of Works, with whose great experience, ability, and public spirit they were all acquainted—Did he, in his judgment, believe that the same amount of money would have been spent, if those who enjoyed the benefit of this Vote had to pay for the repairs out of their own pockets? The truth was that, as Representatives of the taxpayers of the country, the House was in this unfortunate position. When they placed at the disposal of Royal and distinguished personages these Palaces and houses, instead of saying to them at the time—"You must do all that is necessary to maintain the building in a proper condition. You must do, in fact, all the tenants' repairs," these Royal and distinguished personages were told they might order whatever they thought necessary in the way of improvements; that the Commissioners of Works would have it done, and that the taxpayers of the country would bear the cost of it. He remembered that when Mr. Ayrton was First Commissioner of Works proposals for enlarging Marlborough House were laid before him, on the ground that the family of the Prince of Wales was likely to be large; but Mr. Ayrton resisted the pressure put upon him at the time, and cut down to a much smaller amount the original Estimate, the plans in connection with which would have entailed an enormous expenditure. He (Mr. Rylands) had no doubt that if his own house were maintained at the public charge, many things would appear to him necessary for his comfort which he now regarded in a different light; and, therefore, he was of opinion that expenditure of the kind now under consideration should be paid out of the pockets of those who desired to have the improvements effected. He believed the hands of his right hon. Friend would be strengthened by cutting down the Vote by the sum proposed, and in that case the Committee would still think that a very large sum was being paid. In his opinion, the reduced sum would be amply sufficient for thoroughly repairing Marlborough House; and he trusted his right hon. Friend would see his way to accept the Amendment which he now begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £953, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Maintenance and Repair of Marlborough House."—(*Mr. Rylands.*)

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he was not surprised that the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock should have raised a question with regard to the present Vote. When he was asked to sanction a small increase in the Vote he had himself thought it necessary to go fully into the subject, because he considered the amount a large one to be expended on repairs at Marlborough House. Having carefully examined the actual expenditure year by year, he had, however, arrived at the conclusion that the amount of the Vote was necessary for the repairs at Marlborough House, which was a much larger house than the noble Lord appeared to recognize. The stabling was very extensive, and it should be borne in mind that His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales received a large number of guests. His Royal Highness, moreover, spent a large portion of the year at Marlborough House, and it was this continuous occupation which necessitated considerable expenditure. He had himself analyzed the expenditure for three or four years, and he was, therefore, in a position to give the Committee and the noble Lord some idea of the way in which the money was spent. In the first place, he would state that the repairs were executed on contract, according to a schedule of prices, and put up to competition every third year, the only arrangement that was practicable, owing to the great detail of the contract and the minuteness of the calculations requisite. The average charge of £2,000 for repairs during the last four years was made up of a very large number of items, which included lime whitings, gas fittings, repairs to floors, taking down, repairing, and re-hanging doors, repairs to wood-work, repairs to waste-pipes sinks, whitewashing ceilings and walls, varnishing and painting, sweeping chimneys, cleaning windows, wood-work, and glass, repairs to stoves, maintenance of water mains, repairs to roofs, &c. He had gone through the items with one of the most competent surveyors in the Public Service, and was satisfied that the expenditure of the last three or four years had been properly incurred.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he was rather surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman stating that His Royal Highness and his guests spent their time in destroying the furniture; but he would show, from the right hon. Gentleman's own Estimates, that all this cost was excessive. He would take the British Embassies at Paris and Vienna as half the size of Marlborough House—though he did not admit that they were not about the same size—and he found that the casual cost of repairs at the Paris Embassy was £500, and at the Vienna Embassy £300. From this it was evident that the maximum expense at Marlborough House ought to be £1,000.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked whether there had ever been a contract; and, if so, upon what terms?

MR. RITCHIE said, he wished to know how it was possible to have what the right hon. Gentleman called a schedule of prices for repairs? He thought it would be better to have the matter dealt with once a year, to have a schedule made out of the repairs necessary, and then accept the lowest tender. It was not possible to take that course when it was not known what repairs were necessary. The right hon. Gentleman had made one remark which seemed very significant—that his attention had only been called to this matter because his sanction was asked for a small increase. Was the Committee to understand that a Gentleman in his position only paid attention to expenses of this kind when there was an increase on the previous year's amount? It seemed to him that the duty of the right hon. Gentleman was to see whether the expenditure, which he had to ask the Committee to sanction, was necessary, whether it was more or less; and he could quite understand items creeping in when the matter was dealt with in the manner indicated by the right hon. Gentleman. He only made the amount of the items mentioned £1,500, whereas the right hon. Gentleman made it £2,000; and with regard to the difference between last year and this year, he found that, although the expenditure this year was not much larger than last year, there was a sum spent last year which could not be expected to recur this year — namely, the cost of re-arranging the hot-water pipes and of supplying gas to the external lamps.

MR. ONSLOW said, he was very sorry the hon. Member had made these remarks, for he should have thought that Gentlemen on his side of the House would be only too glad to consider the comfort of His Royal Highness, and would not cavil at these small sums of a few pounds. The hon. Member had mentioned two items which appeared last year and not this year; but, as the right hon. Gentleman had pointed out, last year no Vote was taken for painting the exterior. That was done only once in three years, and therefore the Vote was taken this year. He himself would have been glad if this Vote had been larger; and he considered that the Prince of Wales had a perfect right to come to the House for any legitimate expenditure for his personal comfort and for the comfort of the Princess of Wales and the family. There had been no Prince of Wales who had entertained more largely than His Royal Highness. If His Royal Highness was in any way stingy—as everyone knew he was not—this Vote might not be so extensive; but, for himself, he hoped it would be larger next year than it was this year. The Prince of Wales had always entertained sumptuously; and this somewhat large expenditure was, no doubt, partly owing to that. The hon. Member had said that these repairs should be put out to the lowest tender; but he did not think it would be a dignified thing that the repairs of Marlborough House should be put out to tender. The Committee might rely on the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and those who in future held his Office, to see that the money of the country was not wasted. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that he had gone carefully into these matters, and had assured the Committee that the money was not wasted; and he, for one, placed implicit confidence in what the right hon. Gentleman had told the Committee, and should be perfectly prepared to vote for this sum of money. At the same time, he hoped next year the Vote would be somewhat larger.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he thought the hon. Member (Mr. Onslow), in the well-intentioned and loyal speech he had made, had somewhat mistaken the point before the Committee. No one on either side of the House wished to interfere with the comfort of the Prince of Wales, or with his entertainments; but the question under discussion was not whether his Royal Highness had too much given him—that nobody supposed—but whether or not more than their proper cost had been spent for glass and for the mending of drains; and whether or not the Department in charge of this expenditure were watching these matters with that close scrutiny which it was the duty of the House to require of them. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman how it was possible to have a triennial Estimate for repairs of which the exact nature could not be foreseen? He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that he could not have an Estimate every year, because the items were of too complicated a character; but how was that got over by having a triennial Estimate? How could the Government think it the best plan to secure economy to have a triennial Estimate, when it was impossible to foresee the precise nature of the things required? Was it not certain that any tradesman giving in an estimate for things he could not know of in advance would be sure to allow a large margin? There could not be a more certain way of increasing the expenditure than this system of triennial Estimates. Marlborough House was not larger than an ordinary good-sized country house; and could the right hon. Gentleman suppose that any country squire having a house of this kind would spend £2,900 a-year for keeping it in repair?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE stated, in regard to the schedule of prices, that tradesmen were asked to compete for particular classes of work under different heads. The schedule extended over three years; but the specific repair was only required for every year. It was a peculiar form of contract; but, on the whole, it was economical, and convenient. It would not be well to have a competition every year, but was better to spread the competition over three years. The hon. Member had somewhat mistaken his remark about the expensiveness of Marlborough House. What he said was that the ordinary wear and tear by the extensive use by the Prince of Wales, his large family, and his guests, made the repairs expensive; but he was sure there were many private residences in the country of a large character which did not cost proportionately any less. The Department of which he had charge had no possible interest in spending more money than was necessary; and when it became necessary to increase the expenditure this year, he went very closely into the expenditure of the past three years, and he could assure the Committee that this expenditure was necessary.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he had no doubt the right hon. Gentleman fully believed the expenditure had been incurred; but what proof had he of that? It was impossible to have a scale of prices for some of the items—for instance, the re-arrangement of hot water only occurred in three or five years. Was that on the three-year principle, or was it a special contract? [Mr. Shaw Lefevre: Special contract.] Then, why not have a special contract for everything? Then, again, why was there no item for the external lamps this year, as there was last year? He was afraid this Estimate had been diminished by £125, only that at the end of the Session, when nobody was looking after the matter, there might be a Supplementary Estimate. He considered the three-years' system bad; and he was not speaking without some knowledge of the subject, because he had had a great deal to do with building, and knew how builders were inclined to add to their bills. Nobody objected to the comfort of the Prince of Wales being secured; everyone was anxious that His Royal Highness should have everything he required; but they had a perfect right, when asked to pay nearly £3,000, to inquire whether full value for the expenditure had been obtained. He did not believe that a private individual would not have got the work done for a far less sum.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE explained that he had not meant to imply that the system of schedules of prices applied to everything. Occasionally there were special contracts, and the re-arrangement of hot water was a special contract, which could not come under the schedule of prices. The external painting, however, was under the schedule of prices, which was submitted every third year.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked whether there was any real competition or not?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE replied, that there was, and that a considerable number of firms tendered for.

MR. RYLANDS said, that after the right hon. Gentleman's explanation, he would not press his Motion to a division. He only wanted this assurance—that the First Commissioner of Works would revise the expenditure of Marlborough House. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think it was not in excess; but he was quite sure that no country gentleman living in a house of this size, and no nobleman having a house of this size in London, would spend anything like this amount. His impression was that the system was bad, and that the country did not get value for this expenditure. He hoped, therefore, some assurance would be given that the Estimate would, in future, be reduced.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £93,322, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he proposed upon this Vote to raise a question of principle, which he should, if he had the opportunity, raise upon every Vote in these Estimates in which it was involved. The principle was that the local expenditure, which, in all other towns in England, was defrayed from the municipal funds, ought, in London, to be borne by the municipal income of London, and not by the Consolidated Fund. He invited Members for boroughs in the country and for counties, who complained of the burden of taxation, to look at the question—Why London, the wealthiest city in the world, and proportionately the least taxed city in the Kingdom, should escape expenditure which, in all other large towns, fell upon the local funds? He very much deplored the absence, on this occasion, of several hon. Members who, under the late Administration, took a prominent part in assailing this anomaly. He thought hon. Gentlemen who took this view in Opposition ought to take the same view when in Office; and that, if it was wrong for the Parks in London to be maintained by Imperial taxation when the Conservatives were in power, it was equally wrong when the Liberals were in Office. Upon this matter he pledged himself to take a division on every possible occasion. He was not going to raise any question about what were called Royal Parks. He knew there was a great deal to be said on both sides as to Hyde Park, and St. James's Park, and Regent's Park; they were places which the great bulk of the people were interested in maintaining; and equally so in regard to Hampton Court Grounds, which was also a place of national interest and enjoyment. But he could not see why Battersea Park, Kennington Park, and Victoria Park, should be maintained out of the Consolidated Fund, when Liverpool, Birmingham, Manchester, and other large towns defrayed the cost of exactly similar undertakings out of their own funds. Originally such Parks were confined to London, and almost to what he would call Royal residences; but they had in modern times developed in all the large towns, and a heavy taxation was required to establish and keep up these Parks. That he considered a wise taxation. In the borough he represented (Wolverhampton) there was a beautiful Park which required a considerable rate; but he objected to the artizan population of Wolverhampton being taxed to keep up Battersea Park for the West End of London and Victoria Park for the East End. It might be argued in regard to Victoria Park that it was a poor-people's Park; but so were all these Parks. The entire Vote for these Parks was £113,000; but a 1*d.* rate in the Metropolitan district would produce over £100,000. He proposed to raise this question of principle by moving to reduce the Vote by £22,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum not exceeding £71,322, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he would not go into the question raised by the hon. Member (Mr. Fowler), except to say that he thought the hon. Gentleman's arguments would be extremely difficult to meet. He should go into the same Lobby as the hon. Member; but he should support the Motion for a reduction of this Vote on other grounds, and other but equally intelligible principles, which he hoped would command the support of the hon. Member. His point was that this Vote had not been framed in that spirit of economy which, considering the increase of general expenditure, and the failure of general revenue, ought to have animated the Office of Works. He wished, first, to draw the First Commissioner's attention to an increase of £947 for salaries and wages, for he held that the Department had no right in these times to consent to any increase, on any grounds, of salaries and wages in the establishment of the Royal Parks of London. This was not a moment at which to increase the expenditure in this direction; it was not essential to have this increase; and if the Department had gone on the principle of not increasing expenditure, and of seeing how it could be decreased, there would have been a considerable saving in this Estimate. If the Government were in possession of a Revenue advancing by leaps and bounds, and the country were in a state of extraordinary prosperity, the Committee, perhaps, would not scan too closely this increase; but when the Revenue was the reverse of prosperous, and the country was suffering from hard times, the Government was the only body which, instead of setting an example of economy, was setting an example of extravagance. There was not a man or a Corporation in the country who had not in the last few years tried to reduce expenses; but the Government was increasing expenditure. There was one item of £147 for increase in wages, and another of £143 for work; and, on looking at the details of works, what did he find? Why, he found these sums—£200 for a building in Battersea Park, £400 for a new house for the keeper in Bushey Park—obviously an unnecessary thing—and an extra expenditure of £565 at Kew. Last year—1882-3—again, they spent a considerable sum of money on works which might very well have been postponed. Hon. Members opposite seemed in so excellent a frame of mind on the subject of all this unnecessary expenditure that it was needless to make an appeal to them. Had it not been so, he should have called on them to insist upon the Government ruthlessly cutting down the Estimate. If these expenses were thoroughly overhauled, and the Government were pressed into cutting down all those which were unnecessary, he was confident they would be able to save from £150,000 to £200,000 on the Civil Service Estimates alone. He was sure of it; and though the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works would be able to give very excellent reasons why these Votes should not be changed, still the broad, hard fact remained, that they had not got the money for such extravagance, and must, therefore, do without it. He very heartily supported the Motion of the hon. Member (Mr. H. H. Fowler); and if there was not similar exception taken to almost every Vote in the Civil Service he would himself move reductions.

Mr. FIRTH said, he found the same difficulty in the way of supporting the Motion of the hon. Member this year that he had experienced last year. The Parks about which the hon. Member complained were Parks belonging to the State or to the Crown. ["No, no!"] [An hon. MEMBER: He has excluded those.] He (Mr. Firth) was not aware that Kennington, Battersea, and Victoria Parks belonged to the people of London. The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works, who was in possession of all the facts, supported his view, that the Parks complained of did not belong to the Metropolis. Neither Kennington, Battersea, nor Victoria Park belonged to London; and if they wished the people of London to take care of them they must be prepared to sell them to them—they must, at any rate, be prepared to offer them, and leave the people of London to decide whether or not they would make the purchase. The State dealt exceedingly hard with the Metropolis—it did extremely little for it in comparison with what it did for the Provinces. It made an enormous profit out of London, particularly—having regard to its enormous population—in the matter of telegraphic and postal charges; and they must bear in mind that amongst other burdens London bore was the cost of maintaining the Detective Force. The ratepayers of the Metropolis bore, for instance, the whole cost of taking care of the Queen at Osborne, or wherever else she might happen to be—["No, no!"]—yes; that was so—the whole cost, except so far as there was a contribution from the State. The Metropolis paid the whole of the staff at Scotland Yard. In these matters the First Commissioner of Works was the Court of Final Appeal, although in this particular case the arguments of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton were met by the simple fact that the Parks referred to did not belong to the people of London. When they were offered to them they would consider whether they would take them over and pay these charges to keep them up.

MR. WADDY said, he wished to ask one question, the answer to which, he thought, would probably throw a good deal of light upon this whole question. He did not see any mention made of certain large open spaces in London, which, though not enclosed like the Parks, answered in their respective neighbourhoods the same purpose as Parks, and on which there was, at all events, some little expenditure. He referred to such open spaces as Wandsworth Common and Clapham Common. He did not see Finsbury Park mentioned in the Estimate; and yet all these places must be the subject of expenditure; therefore, the argument just addressed to them was erroneous. The Parks he referred to were on the same footing as those to which the attention of the Committee had just been drawn. ["No, no!"] Well, they would hear about it in a moment from the right hon. Gentleman, the "Court of Final Appeal." On whom did the cost of maintaining Finsbury Park fall? On the people who lived in the neighbourhood; and, if so, why should they be called upon to bear such an expenditure?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the point raised by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton was a very important and interesting one, and one on which, since he had held his present Office, he had frequently had occasion to address the House. He had frequently intimated his private opinion that at some future time the Metropolis should bear some portion of the expense now borne by the State in support of these Parks. His hon. Friend, he thought, had drawn a very right and proper distinction between what were called "Royal Parks" and those other Parks—Battersea, Victoria, and Kennington. As to the Royal Parks, there was a great deal to be said in favour of their being maintained out of money voted by Parliament. They had been dedicated to the public by the Crown; they still remained "Royal" Parks; they were adjuncts to the Royal Palaces; and it was only reasonable, having regard to the general position of London, and the number of people coming to it as visitors from all parts of the country and enjoying these special Parks, that the expense of maintaining them should be borne by the State. But between these Parks and those the hon. Member for Wolverhampton had referred to he owned there was a great distinction to be drawn. The hon. Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth) was right in saying that these Parks were not the property of the Municipality of London. They were paid for by money voted by Parliament for the purpose; they, therefore, belonged to the State, and not to the people of London, and the State had been to considerable expense in keeping them in their present condition. Finsbury Park had been bought by the Metropolitan Board of Works; therefore, the expense of maintaining it fell on the ratepayers at large; and commons, such as Wandsworth and Clapham, had been taken over by the Metropolitan Board under the Commons Act, and the cost of their maintenance had also fallen on the Metropolitan ratepayers. On the other hand, the Parks referred to had been bought by the Government; and, therefore, their maintenance had hitherto been borne out of the Votes provided by Parliament. It was, of course, an important question whether that should continue; and he owned he thought that whenever London was provided with a Municipality, this was one of the questions which would have to be considered in the relations between the Government and the Metropolis. It certainly did appear to him that Parliament should not be called upon to vote for the maintenance of Parks which were not enjoyed by the people of the whole of the country—Parks which were bought for the people of London and solely enjoyed by them. Whenever the proper time came this would form part of the general reconsideration of the relations between London and the Government. He would tell the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, however, that the account was one on which the credit was not all on one side, and that there was a great deal to be said from the other point of view. It so happened that London contributed much more largely to the maintenance of the police than other parts of the country. The City of London, for reasons best known to itself, had never called on the Government to contribute its share to the maintenance of the police of the City; but, whenever the whole of London became a Municipality, no doubt it would not be content with the position assumed by the City in this matter; and he was afraid that whenever the Government was called upon to pay one-half the cost of the City Police it would more than swallow up the whole saving that might be effected by throwing on the Municipality the cost of the maintenance of these Parks. These two matters, however, and many other questions between London and the Government, would have to be considered as a whole; and the Committee would, no doubt, agree with him that it would not be wise on the present occasion, by a Vote in Committee, to deal permanently with one part of the problem, leaving others unsettled. They should leave these matters until the Municipality of London was thoroughly taken in hand. The account would have to be carefully made up; and he would not at present say how he believed it would work out, although he would assure the Committee he did not think the interests of the general taxpayers of the country would be neglected. He trusted the Committee would be satisfied with this statement, and would not now think it right to go to a vote on the subject, as he did not think a vote would represent the feeling of the Committee with regard to it. It was clear they could not take it out of its present position at the present moment; and he, therefore, hoped that hon. Members would be satisfied with the discussion which had taken place, and would relegate its resumption to a later period. He would now deal with one or two points raised by the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill). Complaint had been made of increase to certain salaries. Well, he did not think the noble Lord had taken the trouble to ascertain the details of the cases to which he had referred; therefore, he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) would enlighten him. The whole of the increase in the Vote had been caused by the increase which had been made in the salaries of the Director and Assistant Director of Kew Gardens. The Director had been paid a salary which the Government, after careful consideration, came to the conclusion was very inadequate, either to that gentleman's position as one of the most eminent scientific men in the country, or to the services he had rendered to the State. He (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) really thought that there was no more eminent scientific man in the service of the country than this gentleman; and his salary was, until lately, only £800 a-year, for which inadequate amount he performed services of an important character, not only in relation to Kew, but also in connection with the Colonial Office, the Foreign Office, and many other Offices. On considering the matter, as he had said, the Government came to the conclusion that the salary was an inadequate one, and they had determined to increase it to the sum of £1,200. At the same time, the salary of the Assistant Director was raised. With regard to works, there was an item for additional works at Kew; but it was only a small one, and he did not think it would be possible to reduce it. The cost of the operations now going on at Hyde Park Corner should be taken into account.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: What I said was that the two Estimates—last year's and this year's—balance each other.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that, but for the exceptional expenditure in connection with Hyde Park Corner, which, he trusted, would not occur again, the two Estimates would balance each other. The sum for Hyde Park Corner was £3,500, by which sum, of course, the aggregate of the Vote was increased.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that with regard to the right hon. Gentleman's last statement, if there had been no expense on Hyde Park Corner last year, there would not have been a balance of accounts. The right hon. Gentleman had not attempted to answer the principle on which he (Lord Randolph Churchill) had advocated a reduction of the Vote—namely, that as every individual in the country had had to reduce his expenditure on account of the bad times, so the Government ought to do the same thing.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that if the hon. Member for Wolverhampton carried his Amendment to a division he should vote with him, because it was one of those cases in which, evidently, some hon. Members took the view of the hon. Member, whilst others took the view of the right hon. Gentleman; and it was, therefore, necessary to do what they could to strengthen the hands of the hon. Member. There were one or two points on which he (Mr. Labouchere) should like to have some explanation. They had, in connection with these Parks, Rangers and Deputy Rangers — those they were accustomed to; but what was the "Bailiff" of the Royal Parks? They had an item of £700, "equivalent to the civil and military pay of the officer holding the office." Who was this "Bailiff," and what did he do? So far as one could see, all he did was to travel; because, besides the salary of £700, there was an item of £80 for travelling. It appeared to him that this was one of the officials who ought to be moved off the face of the Estimate. He (Mr. Labouchere) did not know what he did, and assumed his office was one of those abominable sinecures which was given to someone for doing nothing, and taking a salary. When the right hon. Gentleman had explained that matter, perhaps he would give them some explanation in regard to Richmond Park. This matter was very curious—and he would ask the Committee to follow him here, because these Estimates were given to them in order, he supposed, that they might understand them. He would ask them how they could possibly understand this. "Salaries and Wages of Establishment, £91;" "Maintenance, £2,250." They might assume that the salary of someone was £91, and that the maintenance of the Park was £2,250; but what were the next items? "Ditto, Department of Ranger, Salaries, £711;" "Maintenance, £1,659?" He could understand the maintenance of the Ranger; but what on earth was the maintenance of his Department? He happened to know that Richmond Park was largely stocked with game, and it was the custom of the Duke of Cambridge, the "Ranger," to shoot that game. Where the game went to—whether it was sold or not—he could not say. There was some vague idea that some of it went to a hospital; but, twisted into this "Department of Ranger," and so on, there were a considerable number of gamekeepers. He was sometimes in the neighbourhood of the Park himself, and if he wished to go there and shoot a partridge, or pheasant, or something of that kind, no doubt he would at once be stopped by the keepers. No doubt, he would be prevented from doing that which he had a perfect right to do—namely, shoot on his own property, for the Park belonged to the country, and therefore to the taxpayers, of whom he was one. He asserted that the Park belonged to him, and that the only persons to whom it did not belong were those who received salaries in regard to it. What was done with the game which was shot? In the next item—namely, St. James's Park, Green Park, and Hyde Park—he found "Salaries of the Department of Ranger, £200;" and "Maintenance of the Department of Ranger, £175." Everybody knew that there must be more officials under the Ranger in these three Parks in London than in Richmond Park, unless in the latter there were kept a number of men to prevent the inhabitants—the proprietors of the Park, as he took it—from shooting the game, and to preserve it for the "Ranger."

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR wished to know under what Department the charge for keeping the game in Richmond Park came?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he could only explain that the Bailiff was an official who was appointed, four or five years ago, to have the management of all the economic arrangements of the Park. He was appointed because it was believed that there was a good deal of expenditure taking place of an unnecessary character; and he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) was informed that since the appointment of this official there had been considerable economy in the management of the Parks, and many thousands of pounds had been saved. This economy had been shown, not in a decrease in the Vote itself, but in a better expenditure on the Parks. The Parks themselves had shown a very great improvement, especially in the matter of flowers, and this improvement had been effected out of the savings resulting from the management of the gentleman in question. He (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) could only say that if the salary of this gentleman were reduced, or a change were made in this matter, it would be a bad thing for the economic management of the Parks. As to the charges made in connection with Richmond Park, no portion of the money voted went towards the maintenance of game. The Ranger had the right of shooting game in the Park. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had stated that the Park belonged to him as one of the public; but, in point of law, that was not an accurate statement. The Parks were handed over to the public under an Act of Parliament, which specially reserved any beneficial rights that the Crown had in them; and amongst the beneficial rights that the Crown possessed, and which were reserved, was the right of sporting. Therefore, as a matter of law, the right of sporting had certainly been reserved, and had never been handed over to the public. The right vested in the Crown, and her Majesty the Queen had given it to His Royal Highness the Ranger. His Royal Highness had as much right to sport and shoot in Richmond and the other Royal Parks of which he was Ranger as any gentleman had to shoot in his own private park. His Royal Highness himself undertook all the expenses in connection with the keeping of the game, and no part of them came on the Votes.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: There is a charge made for keepers.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that was not in regard to the game His Royal Highness had the right of shooting, but in regard to the deer with which the Park was stocked, which was a totally different matter. The deer were maintained for the sake of adding to the beauty of the Park, and their flesh was given away to certain functionaries of the State. He had no doubt the Corporation of the City of London received a part of it; and a part of it went, as he had said, to certain high functionaries and certain minor officials—of who he himself was one—of the State. He did not suppose the hon. Member would wish to see the deer in Richmond Park exterminated; and if he did not, he would admit the necessity of retaining the services of keepers to look after them. All he could say was that no part of the expense of maintaining the game, in the sense of pheasants, partridges, and rabbits, was borne by these Votes. It was borne exclusively by His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge. He (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) trusted the explanation he had given on this point would be satisfactory to the Committee, and had convinced them that the money spent on Richmond Park was spent in the interests of the public.

Mr. RITCHIE said, the hon. Member for Northampton had expressed satisfaction at the statement made by the First Commissioner of Works; but he ventured to doubt whether that statement would be received with the same satisfaction by the people of London. For his own part, however, he was glad the right hon. Gentleman had expressed his views on the subject so clearly, for the people in the poorer districts of the Metropolis would now know that the policy of the Government was that while the Parks enjoyed by the rich at the West End of London were to be maintained out of the Consolidated Fund, the maintenance of those in the other parts of London that were for the use of the poor would hereafter fall upon the ratepayers. [Mr. Shaw Lefevre: I expressed my own opinion only.] He was aware that the right hon. Gentleman had given that as the expression of his own opinion; but knowing his powerful influence with the other Members of the Government, with whom he had no doubt had conversations upon this subject, he was justified in assuming that they agreed with him, and that the right hon. Gentleman had stated, with perfect clearness, what was the policy of the Government in this matter. It would result from this that while the people whom he (Mr. Ritchie) represented at the East End would have to pay for the maintenance of Victoria Park, they would also be called upon to contribute their share of the cost of improvements at the West End, such as those in progress at Hyde Park Corner. He wished to call the attention of the Committee to the charge of £500 for regilding the railings around the Albert Memorial. The amount appeared to him unnecessarily large, and he considered that much better taste would be displayed if there were no gilding about the railings at all. He asked whether tenders had been solicited for this work?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets had misapprehended his statement; he had said nothing about the rich and poor in the Metropolis. It was not because Victoria, Kennington, and Battersea Parks were Parks for the poor, that he said they should be maintained at the expense of the ratepayer; nor did he say that the Royal Parks should be maintained out of the Consolidated Fund, because they were the Parks of the rich. He thought the hon. Member must by this time be aware of the individual exertions made by him in the interest of the people of the Metropolis, and that he was not likely to use such arguments as he had attributed to him.

Mr. RITCHIE had not said the right hon. Gentleman used the argument that some of the Parks were for the rich and others for the poor. His statement was that this was the effect of his argument, and in that way it would undoubtedly be regarded by the people. The right hon. Gentleman had not said this in so many words, but he had implied it.

Mr. RYLANDS said, he thought the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets had given a very curious twist to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, that, in his private opinion, at a future time the Metropolis should bear some portion of the expense now borne by the State in support of the Parks; but that, considering the large number of people who came to London from all parts of the country as visitors and enjoyed the Parks, it was only fair that they should be, at least, partly supported by the State. That was the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, who added that when the Metropolitan Reform Bill was brought forward it might contain some provisions under which a certain number of the Parks, if not all of them, would be chargeable on the rates. He (Mr. Rylands) regarded it as a positive boon to the people of London that a number of Parks were maintained as Royal Parks out of the taxes of the country. The right hon. Gentleman had, on a previous occasion, admitted that the expenditure in connection with them was very large; and, looking at the Estimates now before the Committee, he had a strong impression that it was excessive as compared with the expenditure upon Parks in other parts of the country. In every Department there seemed to be a disposition to spend more than was necessary for the due maintenance of the Parks in London, and his right hon. Friend had promised to see whether a reduction of expenditure could not be effected. He (Mr. Rylands) felt that if the Motion to reduce the Vote were carried, it would be found that, without closing the Parks, a very great diminution would take place in the expenditure.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked if the First Commissioner of Works could furnish a Return of the expenditure on the great Parks at Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, and other towns, for the purpose of comparison?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the Returns would be interesting and useful, and he would inquire as to the possibility of obtaining them.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that the cost of some of the Parks would be thrown upon the revenues of the Metropolis, but that the question should not be raised at present, because it was to be considered when the Municipal Corporation Bill was brought forward. The right hon. Gentleman also said he had made a representation on the subject to the Secretary of State for the Home Department. Now, as this Bill had been mentioned in the Queen's Speech, he thought it would be better if the right hon. Gentleman agreed to the postponement of the present Vote until the Committee were acquainted with the nature of the Government proposal. Perhaps the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary would inform the Committee when he intended to bring forward the Bill referred to.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he was unable to gratify the curiosity of the hon. Member for Portsmouth as to the exact date at which the Bill would be brought forward; but he might observe that the less protracted these discussions were, the sooner would the Bill be brought forward.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, no one could say that these Estimates had not been fairly discussed. But the right hon. Gentleman implied that if they continued to be discussed the Bill would not be brought forward. The question raised on this Vote was a very serious one, so far as the ratepayers of London were concerned; and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Bill referred to was really coming forward this year or not?

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL pointed out to the Home Secretary that there was no difficulty in laying the Bill on the Table of the House, if the Government were so disposed. It was an extraordinary position to take up, that a measure named in the Royal Speech was not to be produced until Supply had been hurried through the House of Commons; but that was the position taken up by the right hon. Gentleman. He thought the Committee had a right to refer to the Metropolitan Reform Bill, in consequence of the remarks made by the First Commissioner of Works, who said the question raised by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton was very important and commanded his sympathy; that he had made a representation on the subject to the Home Secretary, as the head of the Department, and that the question must be considered in the Bill for the arrangement of the Municipal Government of London. That being so, he did not think the Committee would be justified in agreeing to the Vote until the Bill was in the hands of hon. Members. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary seemed to think it ridiculous that the Bill should be asked for; but hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House were somewhat incredulous with regard to the professions of the Government, and considered it a good joke when they made promises to arrange the Water Supply, and to reform the Municipal Government of the Metropolis, but took good care never to introduce the shadow of a Bill for the purpose. He thought the Committee should not tolerate this mockery on the part of the Government. They had seen in *The Standard* newspaper, which was notoriously under the influence of Members of the Government, the authoritative announcement that the Bill which had been so often spoken of would not be introduced; but if it was the intention of the Government to bring in the Bill, then he thought the First Commissioner should withdraw this Vote, on account of the question which had been raised by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK said, as far as he could see, there was no chance of the Estimates being hurried through the House that Session. He understood the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. Fowler) to advocate the transfer of the expenditure for maintaining the Parks from the Consolidated Fund to the Metropolitan rates. But he pointed out that the Motion of the hon. Member would not have that effect; if it were carried, it would only have the effect of suspending the maintenance of the Parks at the present time. He could understand, therefore, the object of raising this discussion; but he could not understand the object of reducing the Vote, which would only result in the Parks not being maintained in the manner they all desired. Under the circumstances, having raised this discussion, he hoped the hon. Member would not press his Motion to a division.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he hoped his hon. Friend would not rest satisfied with having raised this discussion. He also trusted that the Home Secretary would not be led away by the herring which had been dragged across his path; but, at the same time, he could hold out no hope that any promise which might be made would cause hon. Gentlemen on those Benches to abate their watchfulness in the smallest degree. Returning to the question of the expenditure for Richmond Park, he would put it to the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the reply of the First Commissioner of Works was satisfactory or not? He had complained of certain expenditure in connection with Richmond Park, showing that the charge for the Ranger's Department there was more than the total charge for the same Department in connection with the Green Park, Hyde Park, and St. James's Park, this charge being in addition to the cost of maintaining the Park. He had complained that the great increase of expenditure on Richmond Park was owing to the fact of there being game preserved there. The right hon. Gentleman, in reply, said there were deer in the Park; but hon. Members knew well that it was absolutely necessary to have people in the Park to see that the game was not poached; and he (Mr. Labouchere), in repeating his complaint, asserted that the excessive expenditure was not due to the deer in the Park, but to the fact that other game was preserved there. They were told that some detailed items of expenditure would be laid on the Table. But this question had been discussed year after year; the same things had been said by others as he was now saying, and the same kind of replies had been given; and, therefore, he asked the right hon. Gentleman whether, when they presented the promised details, he would also furnish a list of the persons who received salaries, and let the Committee know what this enormous item for the Department of Ranger at Richmond Park was composed of?

Mr. GREGORY said, there was great force in the observations of the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir John Lubbock), that, if the Motion before the Committee were carried, there would be no one charged with the maintenance of the Parks. The responsibility rested with no one, and the consequence would be that the Parks would be ruined, there being no power to make rates for their maintenance and improvement. There was, however, much truth in what had been urged by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) in advocating a reduction of the Vote. He (Mr. Gregory) understood that the State had paid for the Parks at Battersea, Kennington, and Bow, and that their maintenance constituted a *damnosa hereditas.* The question was whether this was to be borne by the State, and he confessed that he did not see the reason why it should be. It appeared to him that, as in the case of some other Parks, they should be maintained by the Metropolitan Board of Works; but at present there was no liability on that Department to undertake their maintenance, nor was it known that they were likely to assume that responsibility if the Parks should be thrown upon their hands. Therefore, until they had assurance of an arrangement under which some authority or Department would take over the Parks, he thought it would be inexpedient to alter the existing arrangements; and he suggested to the hon. Member for Wolverhampton that, having raised this discussion, and obtained a considerable expression of opinion in favour of throwing the cost of maintenance upon localities, he should allow the Vote to pass, on the understanding that next year some arrangement would be made to transfer the maintenance of the Parks to some authority or other. It would be most unfortunate if the Parks were left without anyone to take care of them, while, at the same time, the object which the hon. Member had in view was not attained.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER reminded the Committee that one of the strongest arguments used by the Government in the course of the discussions during the Autumn Session was that, in future, there would be a most effective control of expenditure by the Committee of Supply. Whatever Bills might be awaiting the disposal of these Estimates, he would only say that they would not have the slightest effect with him in criticizing the unnecessary and costly burdens upon the taxpayers of the country. With regard to the argument of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), if London had no governing power, and was in a state of anarchy, there would be some force in the statement that the Parks would be left without anyone to take care of them. But it was not so. London had a Board of Works with ample powers and means of raising funds for its purposes; and he had no fear that anything would happen of the kind suggested by the hon. Baronet if the Motion before the Committee were carried. Assuming that the Government Bill was not brought forward, or that it was brought forward but not passed, they would be in the same position next year; the same amount would have to be borne by the community, and those who proposed a reduction of the expenditure would be met with the same arguments as they were met with now. He thought the First Commissioner of Works had rather led the Committee into a mistake by his argument with regard to the police, because the inference would be that the State did not contribute anything at all in respect of this force, so far as the London Police were concerned, and that at some future day a balance would have to be struck, and a large burden thrown upon the taxpayers, in order to place the

London Police on the same footing as the police of other towns. But he would point out that the proportion of the cost of the City Police Force, to which the State did not now contribute, was insignificant; and when the time arrived he was prepared to run the risk of making that payment. That question, however, did not touch the principle of the Motion on which he intended to divide the Committee. He entirely dissented from the view taken by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) that the London Parks should be paid for out of the taxation of the country; on the contrary, he said that the Parks, in many large towns throughout the country, were paid for out of the local rates, and that the Parks in London ought also to be maintained out of the rates of the Metropolis.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF believed that, so far from there being no funds to maintain the Parks, a certain sum of money, about £100,000, had been voted on account, out of which they could be maintained for this year. In other parts of the country wealthy citizens came forward to keep up great public institutions of this kind; and surely in London, where there were so many wealthy noblemen, like the Dukes of Bedford, Devonshire, and Westminster, who drew large revenues from the Metropolis, men might be found with sufficient public spirit to contribute to the support of these Parks, especially as, under the Attorney General's Bill, they would in future save considerable expense in elections.

Colonel MAKINS said, there were two sides to this matter, and he could not agree with the view of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton. There was a great difference between the Parks of London and those of other towns, like Birmingham; for, where one person from London went to see the Park at Birmingham, 50 went from Birmingham to the London Parks. These Parks were part of the embellishment of the national capital; and if they were to be put upon the public rates, so must the British Museum and all the public monuments. It seemed to him that these Parks, being an embellishment of the national capital, were properly charged to the National Revenue.

Sir EDWARD WATKIN said, that in past times the House voted sums of money in aid of the provision of "Public Parks and play-grounds for the people." These Votes of money were originally made upon the proposition of Mr. R. A. Slaney, then Member for Shrewsbury. These Votes initiated many movements in the Provinces, and private subscriptions and local grants were stimulated by this kind of assistance. For instance, he might mention, as one of the pioneers of the Public Park movement, that at Manchester, where, 40 years ago, three public Parks were provided for the hard-working people, a grant, out of the Votes he had mentioned, was given by the late Sir Robert Peel, who, at the same time, gave his own personal subscription of £1,000.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 28; Noes 76: Majority 48.—(Div. List, No. 45.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he did not wish to detain the Committee by another division; but no satisfactory explanation had been obtained respecting Richmond Park. His intention was to move the reduction of the Vote by £1,000; but if he could receive an assurance that the right hon. Gentleman would lay before the House details upon this subject he would not make the Motion.

Mr. RITCHIE said, that when the Vote for the Royal Parks was before the Committee last year a question was asked as to whether it was possible to give the public greater facilities for crossing Kensington Gardens after sunset, and the right hon. Gentleman promised to consider the matter, and said he hoped to be able to give the facilities asked for. The present state of things was that after about 4 o'clock in the winter there was no means of crossing to the other side of the Gardens except by going about half-a-mile round. Kensington Gardens were the only pleasure grounds in the West End of London in which such restrictions were considered necessary. In Hyde Park free traffic was allowed up to 12 at night, and in St. James's Park up to 10; whereas Kensington Gardens were closed at sundown. He wished to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman had considered the question, and could give some hope of further facilities in Kensington Gardens? He was well aware of the objections raised to this proposal; but they would hold with equal force in the case of Hyde Park and St. James's Park. At present people could cross Hyde Park up to 12 o'clock; but when they got to the division between that and Kensington Gardens they were stopped.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK wished to know what was going to be done with reference to the Wellington Statue? He found an item of £400 put down for a new railing and gate, and he wished to take this opportunity of asking what was the final determination with regard to the position of the statue; and whether there was any probability of the Committee, to which the question had been referred, coming to a speedy decision, and at such a time that the House would have an opportunity of considering their decision? That question led to another—namely, whether or not, as there had been a great alteration at Hyde Park Corner, facilities might not be given to use the road down Constitution Hill? Some years ago he took an active part in obtaining the use by the public of the road between Buckingham Palace and Storey's Gate. Great opposition was raised to that by the inhabitants of Carlton House Terrace, and other residents in the neighbourhood, but that was overcome; and it was found that the use of that road was no inconvenience to either the inhabitants of Carlton House Terrace or the occupants of the Royal Palace. Shortly afterwards he obtained the opening of Queen Anne Square; and it seemed to him that the time had now arrived when the right hon. Gentleman might consider whether or not the road from Piccadilly to Buckingham Palace might be partially thrown open to the public. He also wished to ask a question with regard to the Vote for St. James's Park. He believed the right hon. Gentleman had granted the use of the Park to foot-passengers during the whole night; but a strong iron railing had been erected on either side of the footway, and he did not find in the Vote any item for the cost of these railings. Therefore, he apprehended that the cost would come into some future Estimate. What he wished to know was, whether the right hon. Gentleman would consider the propriety of making a carriage-way across the bridge in the Park? When he raised this point some years ago the First Commissioner of Works (Lord Mount-Temple) said that a carriage-way across the bridge would interfere with the right of way of persons who used the Park during the day time; but the erection of this new palisade had destroyed that argument, and he wished to point out that a road across the bridge would save 500 yards between the bottom of St. James's Street and Bridge Street.

MR. MONTAGUE GUEST said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take into consideration this point with regard to St. James's Park, especially as, a few days ago, he had stated distinctly that he would take the matter into consideration. A road across the bridge would be a great boon to the public, and would provide a much shorter way between St. James's Street and the House. The point had, he believed, been under the consideration of the authorities before, and he also believed that plans had been submitted. He did not urge this being done now, because he knew it would be an expensive matter; but he certainly thought it ought to be done. He had heard from many quarters how great a convenience it would be, especially at night, to be able to get across the Park in this way; and now that the Park was open at night to foot passengers, it would be only a small stretch to open it also to carriages.

MR. SIDNEY HERBERT said, the space now referred to was very small; and there was to be seen, either from the bridge itself or from the Buckingham Palace end of the water, one of the finest bits of landscape gardening in the Metropolis. He should be sorry to see a carriage-way made across the bridge, simply for the benefit of a few people. He hoped a proposal of this kind would not be hastily adopted. How many people were there who wanted to drive across the Park to Queen Anne Gate or Mansions? Very few people had houses there; and he would suggest to those who found it difficult to get home to the Mansions that very little physical exertion would be required to overcome this difficulty.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he could only repeat on this point what he had stated a few nights ago. He had recently made arrangements for opening the Park to foot passengers, and that, he believed, would be a considerable advantage; but the opening of the Park to carriages was a totally different matter. The bridge was at present totally inadequate, and it would be necessary to build a new bridge and construct a new roadway at great cost. He thought the balance of opinion was that a carriage-way would not create advantages commensurate with the disadvantages; and, on the whole, he was opposed to the proposition. With regard to Constitution Hill, that was a matter not within his power. It had always been considered as an approach to Buckingham Palace, and therefore in the hands of the Royal Family. He could not, therefore, be expected to give any assurance. In respect to the Wellington Statue, that was not yet so far deposed from its original position as to have made a further decision possible; but as soon as the Committee made their Report on the subject he would present their Report, so that the House should have a fair opportunity of expressing an opinion upon it. He hoped the improvements would shortly be completed, and, at all events, that the new road would be opened by the 1st of May. The Archway would be completely pulled down, and, of course, the re-building of the Arch would take considerable time; and until that was done it would not be possible to make experiments with the monument. As to the opening of Kensington Gardens, he would consider whether in future they could be kept open till dusk; but there were objections to keeping the Gardens open late, and it had been found necessary to close the Garden part of St. James's Park earlier in consequence of representations which had been made as to scenes in that part of the Park at night. That showed how necessary it was to be very careful, and he was not sure that it would be for the benefit of the Metropolis to keep Kensington Gardens open all night. He would, however, see whether they might be kept open somewhat later.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he did not suggest that the Gardens should be kept open all night, but till, say, 10 o'clock; and he did not see why the objections referred to would not equally apply to Hyde Park, which was open till 12, and was only separated from Kensington Gardens by a barrier. They were practically the same place. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would go a little further, and consider the desirability of keeping one path open up to 10 o'clock at night.

Mr. W. H. SMITH expressed satisfaction at the answer the right hon. Gentleman had given in regard to a roadway across St. James's Park. He could not help thinking it would be a great misfortune if it were attempted to construct a roadway to Queen Anne Gate, as it would interfere materially with the enjoyment of a great many people who used the Park for the purposes of recreation and health. St. James's Park was a pleasure ground for that part of London; and in order to give the thoroughfare suggested, they would either have to cut the Park in two or carry a most unsightly viaduct across it, either of which alternatives would be a great misfortune. He was extremely glad to find that the right hon. Gentleman did not see his way to carry out the proposed alteration.

Mr. MONTAGUE GUEST said, he did not see how, under present circumstances, the Park was so much used as a pleasure ground. There was a roadway already made with spikes on the railings. It was a long way round for Members of Parliament to have to go through the Horse Guards and down Parliament Street to get to the neighbourhood of the House; but to persons who were not Members of Parliament it was infinitely worse. They had to go a tremendous way round by Birdcage Walk. A medical gentleman of his acquaintance had complained to him of the great inconvenience he experienced in this matter when on his rounds visiting his patients. The Board of Works had had under consideration a scheme for making a thoroughfare through the Park; and he really thought if the right hon. Gentleman would go into it and find out what a bridge would cost it might result in something being done which would be a great convenience to the public.

Mr. PULESTON asked whether there was any reason why the privilege afforded to Members of Parliament during the Session of driving through the Horse Guards should not be extended to them during the Recess?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: The road through St. James's Park to Storey's

Gate is open to Members during the Recess.

MR. PULESTON: Always?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Yes.

MR. DILLWYN asked whether there were any duties attaching to the office of Ranger and Deputy Ranger in Hyde Park?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: They have, among other duties, the supervision of the Lodge Keepers, whose functions, obviously, are important.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK denied that St. James's Park was used as a pleasure ground, for the reason that the public were locked out of it by spiked iron railings.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (UNREFORMED) [EXPENSES].

RESOLUTION.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the Expenses of any inquiries which may become payable under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to make provision respecting certain Municipal Corporations, and other Local Authorities not subject to the Municipal Corporation Act."—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he hoped the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) would inform the House what this Resolution was for. He did not wish to oppose, unnecessarily, the progress of the Municipal Corporations Bill; but, at the same time, they had had no discussion upon it.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the Resolution was merely one of a formal preliminary character.

MR. SIDNEY HERBERT: Has the Bill been laid upon the Table of the House?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Yes; a month ago. It passed the House of Lords last Session.

Resolution *agreed to;* to be reported *To-morrow.*

BANKRUPTCY [COMPENSATION FOR ABOLITION OF OFFICE].

RESOLUTION.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of compensation to persons whose office may be abolished, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to amend and consolidate the Law of Bankruptcy."

Resolution *agreed to;* to be reported *To-morrow.*

PAYMENT OF WAGES IN PUBLIC-HOUSES PROHIBITION BILL [*Lords*].

(*Mr. Samuel Morley.*)

[BILL 126.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. SAMUEL MORLEY: I move that this Bill be now read a second time.

MR. WARTON: I object.

MR. SPEAKER: The Question is, "That this Bill be now read a second time."

MR. CALLAN said, he thought a quarter to 1 in the morning was not a proper time at which to bring on this discussion; therefore, he begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Callan.*)

MR. ONSLOW said, that, as he had given Notice of opposition to the Bill, he was in Order in speaking to the Question of Adjournment. The measure was a very important one as regarded the labourers throughout the country; but the Bill had only been printed and circulated during the Easter Recess. He, in common with many hon. Members who sat around him, had had no idea that it would be taken to-day. It might be said that it had been printed some time before the second reading was proposed; but he appealed to hon. Members opposite whether, when a Bill was only printed and circulated during the Recess, when Members were not at home to receive their Papers, there was not a very valid reason, indeed, why they should ask the House to defer the second reading? He could assure the House there was a very strong feeling on both sides of the House—at any rate, on the Opposition side—with regard to the Bill. He could quite imagine that some hon. Members were very anxious indeed that the measure should pass; but he was right, he thought, in saying that when the second reading was moved the hon. Member who had charge of the Bill was not in his place in the House. ["No, no!"] Some other hon. Member moved it—not the hon. Member for Bristol. ["No, no!"] He believed it was the hon. Member for Monmouthshire (Mr. Carbutt). On all these grounds, he put it to the House whether it would not be in accordance with the ordinary practice of the House—Members not having had time to see the Bill—to defer the second reading to another day? He had much pleasure in supporting the Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. WARTON said, he rose to a point of Order. He wished to know whether or not the course which had been adopted in regard to this Bill was regular? On the day before the Easter Recess the Bill was brought in by the Clerk at the Table. He (Mr. Warton), at the time, went up to the Table and asked the Clerk whether the Bill was one from the Lords, and, receiving a reply in the affirmative, asked whether there was anyone to move its introduction. At that moment he held in his hand a Notice of opposition to it. He was told that the Bill could not be read a first time unless someone moved that it be so read. Well, he had watched the thing until the last moment, remaining in the House for the purpose, and no one had moved the first reading. His second objection to the Bill being proceeded with was that he stated his desire to block it; and as this was the first time the Order for Second Reading appeared on the Paper under the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule the block was a valid one.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Rule the hon. and learned Member refers to does not apply in the present case. The Bill has come down from the House of Lords, and stands for second reading, unopposed, on the Paper.

Mr. SAMUEL MORLEY said, that, in reply to the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow), he wished to point out that the Bill had been two Sessions before the House. He ventured to say that no measure had been introduced which met with more general acceptance on both sides of the House.

Mr. Onslow

An hon. Member: This is not the old Bill.

Mr. SAMUEL MORLEY said, it was the old Bill. They were only seeking to secure for the working men of England rights and protection which had existed for 60 years in Ireland, and in all iron and coal mines. Working men were entitled to this protection.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he would remind the hon. Member for Guildford that this measure was moved in the House of Lords by a noble Lord a friend of his (Mr. R. N. Fowler's), and—he had no doubt—of the hon. Member. Moreover, it was supported by the late Lord Chancellor Cairns.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. WARTON claimed the indulgence of the House to ask what was the Rule—apart from the present Bill—as to the introduction of measures? Was it necessary for a Bill to be brought in from the House of Lords? He had seen the Clerk at the Table bringing in—physically bringing in—this Bill, and he had asked him——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, Order! The hon. and learned Member is not speaking to the Question before the House. The Question before the House is "That this Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. WARTON: I can say no more now. I will call the attention of the House to the matter some other time.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time.

Mr. SAMUEL MORLEY: I move, Sir, that you do now leave the Chair. ["No, no!"]

Mr. MONK: You cannot move it now.

Bill *committed* for *To-morrow.*

Mr. ONSLOW: I beg to give Notice that on going into Committee on this Bill I shall move—"That this House do, on this day six months, consider this Bill."

LIQUOR TRAFFIC VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, that leave be given to bring in a Bill to enable owners and occupiers of property in Burghs, Parishes, and districts in Scotland to prevent the common sale of Intoxicating Liquors within such areas.

Resolution *reported:* — Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. M'Lagan, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Waddy, Mr. James Stewart, Mr. Dick Peddie, Mr. Mackintosh, and Mr. Ernest Noel.

House adjourned at One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 30th March, 1883.

MINUTES.]—Public Bill—*First Reading*—Liquor Traffic Veto (Scotland) * [129].

QUESTIONS.

MADAGASCAR—ALLEGED TREATY CONCESSIONS ESTABLISHING A FRENCH PROTECTORATE ON THE NORTH-WEST COAST.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, in view of the following statements contained in a Despatch of Lord Granville to the British Ambassador at Paris, dated October 7th, 1882:—

> "Her Majesty's Government would be glad to ascertain what were the Treaties to which M. Duclerc alluded in his note of the 14th August as ceding to France the Protectorate of certain territories on the North West of Madagascar. Her Majesty's Government is anxious to receive at as early a date as possible a definite statement on this point from the French Government. Her Majesty's Government recognize the Queen of Madagascar as absolute Monarch of the whole Island, excepting Magotte and Nossé Bé on the West Coast (really small islands North West of Madagascar), and as at present advised they are unaware of any Treaty stipulations in virtue of which the French Government could properly claim territorial jurisdiction over any part of the mainland of Madagascar,"

it is a fact that Her Majesty's Government have been long aware of the nature of the French claims upon the Government of Madagascar; and, whether the alleged Treaties referred to above, have yet been communicated to Her Majesty's Government? He would also ask, whether any information has reached the Government with regard to any acts of hostility against the Government of Madagascar?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, If the hon. Member will refer to the Papers from which he has quoted, he will see that, as I stated the other day, Her Majesty's Government had long been acquainted with the stipulations of the Treaty of 1868 between France and Madagascar. They were not, however, acquainted with the other claims to which the hon. Member refers; and the reply of the French Government to the inquiries addressed to them by Her Majesty's Government, which the hon. Member quotes, will be found at page 22 of the Papers presented to Parliament. As to the other Question of the hon. Member, I think he will see it is one of which Notice ought to be given.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—PURCHASE OF MULES.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Surveyor General of Ordnance, Respecting the mules purchased for the Egyptian Expedition by Major Carré at Smyrna the fitness of which when purchased for service Veterinary Surgeon Mostyn refused to certify; what was the number of animals purchased; what was the number declared fit for service by the board of officers ordered to report upon them when landed at Ismailia; and, whether Major Carré during his stay at Smyrna was the guest of the contractor from whom he purchased the said mules?

Mr. BRAND, in reply, said, that the number of animals purchased was 700. The Board of Officers found 198 fit for immediate service out of the first consignment of 612; but the majority of the balance—that was, 414 mules—were fit for work after periods ranging from five to 14 days.

EGYPT—OUTBREAK OF CATTLE PLAGUE.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that two outbreaks of cattle plague occurred among the oxen sent from India for the use of the troops in Egypt; whether in one of those outbreaks the affected animals, instead of being destroyed and buried, were simply driven forth to die; and, whether the result was that the road to Kassassin having been thus infected cattle for the use of the troops were subsequently obliged to be sent up by train?

Sir ARTHUR HAYTER: Yes, Sir; it is true that two outbreaks of cattle plague occurred among the Indian cattle. We have definite information as to the cattle first affected, 36 in number. Of these 10 died and 26 were destroyed and buried. We have no details as to the second outbreak among the Indian cattle, as to the numbers affected, or as to their disposal. It is not the fact that the road to Kassassin ever became infected; and the cattle were sent through by rail to Cairo, not on that account, but to insure their arriving in good condition for issue to the troops. There was not a single case of rinderpest or cattle plague throughout the campaign among the cattle destined for the use of the English troops.

SPAIN—EXPULSION OF CERTAIN CUBAN REFUGEES FROM GIBRALTAR.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that two of the Cuban officers surrendered by the Gibraltar police to the Spanish Government are still confined in Chafarinas; and, whether, since this penal settlement is noted for its insalubrity, he will undertake to make representations to the Spanish Government with a view to the removal of Messrs. Castillo and Rodriquez to Spain pending the final decision of their case?

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the noble Lord, in reference to the same subject, Whether any steps have been taken by the Government to secure the release of all the Cuban refugees; and, if he can state the exact position in which the matter now actually stands; and, whether Papers can be immediately laid before Parliament?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government are informed that it is the intention of the Spanish Government to include the two officers referred to in the Question of the hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. O'Kelly) in a category of other Cuban prisoners about to be released. Maceo himself will not, for the present, be released, but will be treated as a prisoner of war of the rank of officer, his wife and children being allowed to live with him, and his friends having free access to him. Her Majesty's Minister at Madrid has been instructed to express to the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs the gratification of Her Majesty's Government at the spirit of conciliation which has thus been shown, in response to the appeals to the generosity of the Spanish Government which Sir Robert Morier was at the outset of this affair instructed to make. Further Papers will be laid before Parliament as soon as possible.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I do not quite understand, Sir, in the first place, whether these officers are to be released altogether out of Spain, or merely out of prison. In any case, whatever the answer to that question may be, so far as Maceo is concerned, I think that, after the most unsatisfactory answer of Her Majesty's Government, it will be absolutely necessary for me to proceed with the Motion which I have on the Paper; and, in accordance with the pledge which the Prime Minister gave just before the Easter Recess, I shall ask him for a day for the discussion of that Motion, if I fail to obtain one at the ballot.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE—THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS.

Mr. GREGORY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the lamented death of the late Master of the Rolls will involve any alteration in legal patronage—and the appointment of the officers of the several Courts of Law?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): Sir, my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department has asked me to answer this Question; but, before doing so, I hope the House will not consider me obtrusive if I take advantage of the opportunity to express my opinion, that I am sure that there is no Member of the Judicial Bench, no member of the Legal Profession, and no one among that portion of the public which is acquainted with the administration of justice, who does not most fully reciprocate the application by my hon. Friend of the word "lamented" to the death of Sir George Jessel. I believe no Judge has ever sat upon the Bench who combined great knowledge, ability, mental power, and an earnest desire to administer justice to every suitor to a greater extent than the late Master of the Rolls, Of late years he has been the very centre of the Judicial Bench. The public always sought his judgments and were content with them; and although the word "irreparable" in connection with the loss of any man ought not to be lightly used, yet I am sure this loss to the public service cannot be over-estimated or easily repaired. I know that this is not the occasion on which the full eulogy of Sir George Jessel can be spoken, nor am I, perhaps, the person who ought to utter it; but I could not bring myself to pass unheeded by even this incidental reference to his name in my hon. Friend's Question without endeavouring to express something of that which so many are feeling. In answer to the Question put to me, I have to refer my hon. Friend to the Statute of 1881, c. 68, by which he will see that the Master of the Rolls appointed in succession to Sir George Jessel will retain exactly the same position as the late Judge, excepting that he will have to go on Circuit.

MR. M'COAN asked, if there was any truth in the statement which had been published, that the office had been offered to Mr. Horace Davey, the Member for Christchurch?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I am not at all in a position to answer that Question. I have not the slightest information to give on the subject.

INDIA (NATIVE STATES)—INNAGHUR—THE MASSACRE OF MAIYAS.

MR. R. T. REID asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If the following paragraph from the Times of 26th March is correct:—

> "The report by Colonel Watson and Major Hancock on the recent massacre of Maiyas in Innaghur has been published. The Maiyas are acquitted of the charges of robbery and looting villages; and it is stated that the tax imposed on them was of a most oppressive character. The hill on which they took refuge is beyond the limits of Innaghur State, and was selected by them, for that reason, as a safe place during the proposed negotiations with the Durbar. The orders given to the soldiers are not forthcoming. A very suspicious circumstance which was proved is that the Maiyas did not begin the fight, and that, in fact, it was not a fight but a massacre. The number of the victims is 70. Their heads were sent in carts to Innaghur, but before their arrival there the British Resident interfered and caused them to be buried. Why he did not interfere sooner does not appear;"

and, what steps the Government of India propose to take in the matter?

MR. J. K. CROSS: Sir, the subject has received the careful attention of the Government of India; but sufficient time has not yet elapsed for the receipt in this country of the Report which the Political Agent, Kalhiawar, was directed personally to conduct; and until it is received, I am unable to say what steps the Government of India propose to take. From the preliminary Reports at present received it appears that the facts connected with the attack itself, stated in *The Times* telegram, are substantially correct.

INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT—GRIEVANCES OF CLERKS—RIGHT OF PETITION.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether clerks in the Inland Revenue Office who might seek to approach Members of Parliament, either collectively or individually, with reference to the Motion on the Notice Paper of the House, calling in question the Circular of the Inland Revenue Board, would be liable to censure or dismissal by the Board; and, whether a movement among the clerks of the Department to petition Parliament in favour of the Motion would be either censured or prohibited by the Board?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Sir, the noble Lord in the first portion of his Question repeats, if not in words, in identical sense, a Question put to me before the Recess by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). I must, with great respect, decline to give any answer other than that I gave to the hon. and learned Member. However, I may add that the noble Lord's Question, although nominally relating to certain officers of Inland Revenue, really covers the whole of the servants of the Crown—soldiers, sailors, policemen, clerks in public offices, and others, numbering several hundred thousand individuals — and opens questions which could only be dealt with most carefully in debate, as I informed the hon. and learned Member for Chatham.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I wish to put a Question to you, Sir, as a matter of Privilege. As I am unable to get an answer from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and as the parties alluded to in my Question are extremely anxious to give to Members of Parliament the information which is necessary to enable them to discuss this matter properly, I wish, Sir, to ask you whether any interference by heads of Departments prohibiting clerks in the Department from petitioning Parliament on the subject of their grievances would not be a gross breach of the Privileges of this House?

MR. SPEAKER: I am not prepared to say that the case contemplated by the noble Lord has arisen. Whenever a case may arise, it will then be my duty to give an opinion upon it.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I beg to inform you, Sir, that I have been requested to present a Petition to this House by a servant of the Inland Revenue, and I do not present that Petition for fear that the person signing it should be punished by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I, therefore, ask you, Sir, whether or not I am entitled to present that Petition; and, whether the person signing it will be exempt from any punishment on account of the connection of the Petition with the House—in point of fact, whether he will be protected by the House from punishment by the Department?

MR. SPEAKER: It is for the hon. Member to exercise his own discretion in regard to the presentation of the Petition.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I wish most respectfully to ask you, Sir, whether the petitioner will or will not be under the protection of the House?

MR. SPEAKER: I am really totally unable to answer the Question. I have not seen the Petition, and I can give no opinion upon it at all.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I am quite ready to show it to you, Sir.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether there is any Treasury Minute authorizing or sanctioning the recent Circular of the Inland Revenue Board prohibiting clerks in that Department from approaching Members of Parliament; if so, why such Minute has not been published with the other Papers laid before Parliament; and, if he will without delay cause such Minute to be laid upon the Table?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Sir, in reply to this Question, I have to say that the Inland Revenue Board were entirely within their competence in issuing the General Order to which the noble Lord refers. The Chairman, however, consulted my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury, who informed him that he approved of that Order. No Treasury Minute was necessary, either constitutionally or in accordance with custom.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Has the matter been before the Lords of the Treasury at all?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): That is a Question which I decline to answer.

POST OFFICE (CONTRACTS)—THE IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Postmaster General, Whether he can now state when the contract for the Irish Mail Service, and Papers in connection therewith, would be laid upon the Table; if the figure, £76,000, for which it has been stated the London and North Western Railway Company have proposed to do the whole service, is inclusive of the sum of £30,000 now paid to the Chester and Holyhead Company, or its representatives; and, if not so included, whether this sum, or any part thereof, will continue to be paid to the representatives of the Chester and Holyhead Company, or to the London and North Western Company, in addition to the £76,000?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Sir, in the unavoidable absence of my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General, I have to say, in reply to the hon. Member, that the draft contract is still with the solicitors to the London and North-Western Company, as I stated a few days ago. As soon as the details are finally settled, and the contract sealed, it will, in accordance with the rule, be laid with other Papers on the Table. The £30,000 referred to, as being now paid to the London and North-Western Company, as representatives of the Chester and Holyhead Company, is not included in the £76,000 referred to by the hon. Member. The £30,000 will continue to be paid to the London and North-Western Company, as it would have been whether the tender of the City of Dublin Company, or that of the North-Western Company for the sea service, had been accepted.

Mr. TOTTENHAM: Then the contract will amount to £106,000, instead of £76,000?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): That is a technical Question, which I could not well answer until the Papers are laid on the Table.

PARLIAMENT—CORRUPT PRACTICES AT ELECTIONS—THE SCHEDULED BOROUGHS.

Captain AYLMER asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he intends bringing in a Bill suspending the election of Members to serve in Parliament for the boroughs scheduled in the statutes of 1880, 1881, and 1882?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): Sir, I presume there is some inaccuracy in the framing of the hon. and gallant Gentleman's Question. The boroughs scheduled in the statutes he refers to were those which retained a Member, and did not include all those reported to the House, and which were left without any Representatives. I presume the hon. and gallant Gentleman's Question is intended to refer to all those constituencies. [Captain Aylmer: Yes; to all.] Then, as to them, I have to say that the Government do intend to introduce a Bill dealing both with the constituencies as a whole, and with the individual voters scheduled as guilty of corrupt practices. Such a Bill was introduced in the last Session, and I regret that the urgent demands upon the time of Parliament prevented that Bill being properly proceeded with. But, on the other hand, I have always felt that some advantage may be derived from dealing with the general question of corrupt practices by the Bill now before the House, before proceeding with the punitive legislation affecting those reported constituencies. It may well be that the judgment of the House as to the extent of the punishment to be inflicted will be affected by the consideration of the probability of these corrupt practices being repeated; and, if general legislation rendered such repetition improbable, such a fact might not be without its materiality. Having said this, I can assure the House that the Government are fully aware of the importance of the subject referred to in the hon. and gallant Gentleman's Question.

Captain AYLMER gave Notice that in consequence of the reply of the hon. and learned Gentleman he would, on an early day, call attention to the subject.

THE REGISTRAR GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT—THE CENSUS REPORTS.

Mr. MONTAGUE GUEST asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is true that in the year 1874 the salaries of the staff in the Registrar General's Department were increased to cover the extra work involved by the issuing of Census Reports; whether he can give any estimate of the total amount which will be received by each permanent official in the Registrar General's Office, in addition to the sums already given in the Appropriation Act; Civil Service, 1881-2, page 129; whether it is true that the remainder of the temporary staff in the Census Office is shortly to be dismissed, and the work transferred to Somerset House; and, if so, whether such a course is likely to conduce either to economy or to the issuing of the Census Report at an earlier date than it otherwise would be; and, whether there is any foundation for the report that extra remuneration will be paid to the permanent staff in the Registrar General's Department on completion of the Census Reports?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE, in reply, said, the first, second, and fourth paragraphs of the Question concerned the Treasury more than the Local Government Board; and, therefore, they should be addressed to some Representative of that Department. With regard to the third and main paragraph of the Question, a selected number of clerks from the staff at Somerset House would continue to be employed for a time, preparing the details necessary for the final Report. That system was found to be conducive both to economy and efficiency.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF A GUARDIAN FOR THE CLONAKILTY UNION, COUNTY CORK—MR. HENRY HUNGERFORD, J.P.

Mr. PARNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that an election of a Poor Law Guardian for the Castleventry division of Clonakilty Union, county Cork, was lately pending; if he has heard that a Mr. Hungerford, son of Mr. Henry Hungerford, J.P., was nominated for the vacancy; whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that a few days previous to the election Mr. Henry Hungerford sent a letter by his coachman to Mr. J. Hurley, one of his tenants in the electoral division, as follows:—"I ask you to vote for my son. Unless you act as a friend should, I shall know how to act against an enemy;" and if, as this letter has been given into the hands of the local police authorities, he will state what action the Government propose taking in reference to the matter?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have been made aware of the circumstances mentioned in the Question. The matter was submitted by the Constabulary for instructions to the Lord Lieutenant, who was advised by his Legal Advisers that the case was not one in which they should undertake to prosecute, but that if Mr. Hurley, or any other person, thinks proper so to do, it is open to him to proceed against Mr. Hungerford before the magistrates. The letter, or rather the postcript of it, which is quoted in the Question is perfectly scandalous, especially as written by a magistrate; but it does not directly threaten the peace of the country, to preserve which the Prevention of Crimes Act was passed. The conduct of Mr. Hungerford, however, was so improper that I have brought the matter before the Lord Chancellor. I have written to him to-day, and expect a reply by Monday.

MR. PARNELL: Under what Act can the tenant prosecute Mr. Hungerford before the magistrates?

MR. TREVELYAN: I do not wish to seem ironical. I referred to the Prevention of Crimes Act; and, therefore, there might be some irony in asking the tenant to prosecute under an act within which the case does not lie.

MR. PARNELL: Am I to understand it is the opinion of the Irish Law Officers that this case does not come under the section of the Prevention of Crimes Act which constitutes intimidation (any act putting any person in fear of injury)?

MR. TREVELYAN: Yes, Sir; that is the view of the Law Officers.

ARTERIAL DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—EXTENSION OF THE POWERS OF THE ACT OF 1864 TO TENANT OCCUPIERS.

MR. SEXTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If, having regard to the complete failure since recent legislation of the Arterial Drainage Act of 1864, which requires the initiative to be taken by the landlords to promote the formation of arterial drainage districts, the Government are prepared to bring in a measure extending to tenant occupiers the powers conferred by that Act?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) (for Mr. GLADSTONE) said, that the Arterial Drainage Act of 1863-4 had by no means been a failure, as would be seen by reference to the Reports of the Irish Board of Works. The cases of 61 districts had been brought forward; 49 Provisional Orders had been issued, and in 32 districts the work had commenced. Between £60,000 and £70,000 was advanced under the Act in 1881, and the total advanced up to this time had been £461,000. Any modification of existing legislation in the direction indicated in the Question would require very careful consideration, and the Government were not at this moment prepared to undertake it.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE BECHUANA CHIEFS.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he is now able to state in what way Her Majesty's Government propose to render adequate provision for the Bechuana Chiefs?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Sir, I am not yet in a position to make the statement asked for by the right hon. Gentleman. To begin with, we are not yet in possession of information as to how far the two Chiefs in question—namely, Montsioa and Mankoroane may desire to avail themselves of any offer that might be made to them.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he would repeat the Question another day.

PARLIAMENT — PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS—THE BOROUGH OF SOUTHAMPTON.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the noble Lord the Member for Flintshire, Whether it is the case that a vacancy has been created in the borough of Southampton, by the acceptance of office of Judge by Mr. Butt, Q.C.; if so, why the Writ for Southampton has not been moved; and, whether the delay is owing to the fact that there is no Liberal candidate in the field?

Lord RICHARD GROSVENOR: In reply, Sir, to the Question of the noble Lord, I have simply to say that I have not been officially informed of the fact that Mr. Butt has accepted that office. When it has been brought to my knowledge officially that such is the case, I shall at once move the Writ, without waiting for any such contingency as that indicated by the noble Lord.

Mr. GORST asked whether the noble Lord would take steps between now and Monday to obtain official information on the subject?

Lord RICHARD GROSVENOR, in reply, said, he would have pleasure in meeting the wish of the hon. and learned Gentleman, by doing his best to obtain that information.

PARLIAMENT—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—THE GRAND COMMITTEES—ACCOMMODATION FOR REPORTERS.

Mr. WARTON asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether any further provisions have been made for the accommodation of the Press in the Grand Committee Rooms, where at present only four seats are provided?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I shall be very glad to consider the question when it is brought before me.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

RESOLUTION.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD rose to call attention to the Representation of the People; and to move—

> "1. That, in the opinion of this House, it would be desirable, so soon as the state of public business shall permit, to establish Uniformity of Franchise throughout the whole of the United Kingdom by a Franchise similar in principle to that established in the English boroughs. 2. That it would be desirable so to redistribute political power as to obtain a more equitable representation of the opinion of the electoral body."

He said, that when he introduced these Resolutions 12 months ago the Prime Minister accepted the principles of Parliamentary Reform which they embodied, and recommended the House to proceed to a vote. But the Conservative Opposition was unready or unwilling, and he had been unable to reproduce the opportunity until that evening. He thought it was a matter of some importance that the House should, without further delay, by accepting these Resolutions, rescind the decision of 1879. The last resolve of Parliament upon the question of Parliamentary Reform was that, in the opinion of the House, it was not desirable that the subject should be reopened. That Resolution was accepted under the guidance of the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). The subsequent decision of the country had been that the question should be reopened; and he felt it would be satisfactory to the people at large if the House of Commons were now to ratify that verdict by a significant vote. To those who entered the present Parliament with a zeal for Reform, its course had brought much disappointment, but no disunion. It was this fact which the people found it so difficult to reconcile with the failure to accomplish Reform. They who were placed in closest contact with the people knew that many of them regarded the extension of the franchise as a very simple matter, whereas in truth it was one of great complexity, and he apprehended that no greater advantage could accrue to a Government pledged to legislation than that the subject should be discussed in the manner in which it was his privilege to invite the House that evening. He had always done his best to mark the essential difference which, in his opinion, divided "uniformity" from the older expression, "equality" of franchise; and now that they were approaching a time when the promises of the Government must be redeemed, it was well that they should speak with precision and candour, for this, he hoped, was the last occasion upon which the House of Commons would engage in debate upon this great and momentous topic, before they would be called upon to consider the responsible proposals of the Government. He ventured to hope that the Government would be placed that evening much nearer to the realization of Parliamentary Reform than it was in the speech of the Prime Minister 12 months ago, and that they would not adopt that far-away tone which last year seemed to place so great a distance between the desires of the country and their satisfaction. He trusted the Government would propose "uniformity," not "equality" of franchise. Equality was the leading feature of Mr. Disraeli's Reform Bill of 1859. The £10 householder in the county equally with the £10 householder in the borough was to be enfranchised. There was to be none of the difference which now existed between one side of a street and the other side of a street; and though much had happened since then he thought he saw a survival of the ideas of Mr. Disraeli in the counter proposals of the right hon. and gallant Member for Wigtown (Sir John Hay), upon whom the "education" of his Party, in the sense which Mr. Disraeli communicated to Scotland, seemed to have devolved. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had withdrawn the 12 Resolutions he had placed upon the Paper. No light had been shed upon the views of the Leader of the Opposition, who was not a Member of the Tory Government in 1859, which recognized identity of suffrage between county and town as a valuable principle, and which, in Mr. Disraeli's words, declared—

> "That a man should vote for the place where he resides, or for the locality in which he is really and substantially interested."

By uniformity, he meant singleness of franchise; that there should be, throughout the United Kingdom, but one and the same qualification, that of residence, whether as occupier and inhabitant-householder or lodger. When Mr. Disraeli proposed equality of franchise in 1859 he knew where he was going, and he saw that equality could not exist if those who held a property qualification in Parliamentary boroughs continued to vote for the county. He grasped the principle of equality, and proposed that the property vote in boroughs should be for the borough and not for the county. That proposal was unimpeachable in its equity if they were to retain the property qualification; but it involved to the Government of Lord Derby, first, the secession of Mr. Walpole and Mr. Henley, and next a crushing defeat in the House of Commons, followed by decisive condemnation of the Tory Government in the General Election of 1859. He believed it was not in the power of any Minister or Government to carry a Bill through that House establishing a property qualification for boroughs; and if that were so, then if we retained the property qualification we could neither have uniformity nor equality of franchise. If the counties were to have residential suffrage, *plus* the property qualification, while the boroughs had none but the former, there could be no settlement, even for an hour, of the question of Parliamentary Reform. From the North Sea to the Land's End the Liberal Party in the boroughs would repel any attempt to introduce an absentee franchise or any property qualification upon their list of electors. The project was tried in 1859 under circumstances far more favourable than any which might recur, and the manner of its rejection marked its impossibility. Equity and necessity alike demanded the abolition of the property qualification. Unless you could do that which was impossible—namely, admit a property vote as well as a residential vote—you had no choice: you must abolish the property qualification for counties if your aim were equality or uniformity. He would never accept a separate representation of property, because he did not know how to separate the interests of the people from those of property. He could not conceive a people reckless of the interests of property, nor could he conceive the idea of property apart from people. Moreover, he would say that our existing property qualification was as inequitable, when regarded as a special representation of property, as it was in its association with a representation of the people. He had in his thoughts a tumbledown cottage in a filthy alley of a Southern town, a haunt of vice and uncleanness, upon which were cumulated the qualifications, by way of rent-charge, of four brothers, two of whom were Liberals and two Conservatives, and who in respect of that wretched hovel were in voting power equally the representatives of property with the four largest landowners, who were commoners, in that county. Such a misrepresentation must do harm to the interests of property. The iniquities of faggot voting had been so often exposed that he need not dwell upon them. As long as household franchise did not exist in counties, it was not only excusable but laudable in residents to acquire a responsible share in the government of their country by obtaining a vote by purchase of property; but when residential franchise was universal, the property vote could only be that of the plural voter or the non-resident, the absentee or the foreigner who had really no interested connection with the locality. When household suffrage became universal the only plea for the 40*s.* franchise disappeared. It was abolished in Ireland in 1829, because it was made use of by Catholic landlords, and it should be abolished now in England and Scotland because it was a denial of the just principle of residence. Not only did he disclaim all Party spirit in this great question, but he said he was acting as a Conservative in advocating the abolition of this qualification. He wanted to go back in principle to the law of Henry VI., which enacted that Members should be chosen in every county "by people dwelling and resident therein." It would not be correct to describe the necessary change as one of disfranchisement. He showed last year, from a comparison of the inhabited houses in boroughs and counties, that the extension of a uniform franchise over the whole of the United Kingdom, together with a rational reform of the rules of registration, would add about 2,000,000 voters to the electorate. The limitation to a single qualification would involve disuse of the system of purchasing votes. They could not re-open the question of Reform in order to extend the franchise, and retain the provision which now permitted a man for £300 to buy five votes in any five counties. What was the number of these foreign voters—the voters of whom many entered the county at a contested election and at no other time? He had made careful inquiry of the best authorities, and he believed it might be stated with confidence that the outvoters in English and Welsh counties numbered about 105,000, the average in each constituency being about 10½ per cent; the smaller percentage being in the maritime counties and the larger among the inland counties, which these non-residents—these return-ticket voters—could most easily approach by railway. If it were maintained that there should be a special representation of property, then he said that the present system was worse than the denial. Nor could he suggest any representation of property so equitable as the simple residential franchise. Property in land, like other possessions, had influence; but if they admitted its claim to special representation, where were they to stop? His hon. Friend the Member for East Cornwall (Mr. Acland), writing lately on this subject, said most truly that "owners of large properties invariably possess, or can if they chose gain, great influence in their districts." If we went further than that, we should fall into that delusion, the representation of interests. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) said lately in that county that we were going upon a representation of interests. He could not agree to that. It was a flat contradiction to the Preamble of the Reform Act of 1832 and to that of 1867, to which the right hon. Gentleman was a party. If they acknowledged the representation of interests in that House they must give extra votes to railway shareholders, to shipowners, and to all who were connected with the intoxicating liquor interest. He should, perhaps, admit that under another name there was one representation of interest in that House, and from an inquiry he had made into the recent Cambridge University Election, it would appear to be that of the clergy. He found that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Raikes) received the support of 2,226 clergymen, which gave him a majority of 924 over the total poll of Professor Stuart. He had met with one argument in favour of the retention of this peculiar privilege. It was used by Mr. Disraeli, and it was clearly obsolete. A University seat, Mr.

Disraeli suggested, was a means for introducing to that House a clever man whom no other constituency would accept. That plea was repealed in Mr. Low's patent of Peerage; and now the outvoters of Universities eschewed learning, and preferred the well-tried borough Member. The interests of land and of learning belonged to the whole community, and any attempt at separate representation must lead to failure and injustice. He should not ask enfranchisement for the Manchester University nor for the Royal University of Ireland, but their claims would in time be irresistible, unless Parliament now took its stand upon uniformity of franchise. He hoped it would not be forgotten that there was no practical connection between disfranchisement and the vast majority of the county voters who were now registered as possessing the property qualification. Those who were not outvoters would be in possession of the occupying qualification, and would simply be transferred from one qualification to another; and in the case of those who were outvoters, it might be assumed that they possessed another vote. It would certainly be suggested that the 40,000 freemen and the 105,000 non-resident voters in counties should be permitted to retain their franchise when there could be no addition or transfer. The strongest objection to such an act of grace would be the consequent complication of the register for many years to come. He was very desirous that in the reform of our electoral system we should make such provision that the elections throughout the Kingdom should be held on one and the same day. That would greatly reduce corrupt expenditure; it would bring much economic advantage to the labour and business of the country; and the expression of opinion would be more genuine, because free from the influence of preceding elections. Even if he were not disfranchised, this would be fatal to the return-ticket elector; and those who favoured a shorter duration of Parliaments should advocate the holding of elections on the same day as of extreme importance to the realization of their desire. The present system of registration was provocative of expenditure and of disfranchisement by delay. He estimated at no less than £150,000 a-year the charge incurred by rival Parties in contesting claims with which they should have no right of interference. The period of residence should be reduced to six months, and the preparation of the register should be a purely official undertaking. He regretted that his right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goshen) was not in his place; but, however, he was more free in his absence to express his admiration for his ability, and he might note in passing that an incidental advantage of a speedy settlement of this question would be that we should then regain more fully the political co-operation of his right hon. Friend. He was obliged, however, to allude to his objections, very recently expressed to his constituents, because they were the most candid, far more candid than those of Lord Salisbury at Birmingham. His right hon Friend was afraid of the class "the largest in numbers;" he uttered a paraphrase of Mr. Disraeli's, saying that "democracy like death, gives back nothing." He (Mr. Arthur Arnold) hoped that when there were neither liverymen nor Ripons to be represented in that House, his right hon. Friend might become better acquainted with the most numerous class. The most numerous class had a more paramount voting power in our constituencies than it would have in the counties if his proposals were enacted. He should despair of the future of the country if he did not see that the increase in the power of the working class was inseparable from that future. Our agriculture was perishing for need of economic reform of the laws relating to the tenure and transfer of land. Were we to leave the direction of that reform to be settled by landlords and tenants with every electoral advantage on the side of the tenants under the existing system? Landlords as well as other people might well object. He asked them to look at National Expenditure. What hope had we of reducing it except through the influence of the most numerous class? He asked them to look at the mountain of ineffective expenditure which went to feed the middle and upper classes in this country, the millions spent upon sinecures and pensions, upon needless offices and unnecessary wars. They could not call a meeting of working men in this country who would vote for a candidate who advocated a perilous reduction of the Army or of the Navy below the strength necessary to defend the Dominions of the Crown. What a poor hope would be ours of a policy of peace and of progress in national education and prosperity, were it not for the rising influence of the largest class; not because it was the most virtuous, but the least interested in the policy of aggression, the most concerned in that which benefited the commonwealth. From whom came the only murmur and doubt as to expenditure in Egypt? By whom was France prevented from jeopardizing European peace by a dual intervention, but by this class, the largest in number? By whom were we at that moment best secured against another South African War of incalculable cost and dimensions but by the well-known opinions of the most numerous class in our great towns, soon, he trusted, to be reinforced by that of the same class throughout the counties? His right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon said that this was an absolutely fatal step. Where was the proof? They who sat there were living arguments to the contrary. The most numerous class had a more paramount voting power in our constituencies than it would have in the counties if his proposals were enacted. "Ignorant, drunken, venal, violent," their electors were said to be before they were enfranchised. Those were the words which were hurled at the Reform Bill of the Prime Minister in 1866. Now it was said that the most numerous class were the best promoters of education, economy, and temperance. What evidence in the shape of vicious projects of legislation had his hon. Friends the Members for Morpeth and Stoke given of the fatality which attended the intrusting of political power to all classes of the community? The Member for Ripon was instrumental in giving to the peasants of Thessaly a wider suffrage than was asked for the peasantry of the United Kingdom. The operation of the Act of 1867 had demonstrated that the most numerous class in the great towns had not demanded revolutionary measures, but moderate Constitutional reforms. He passed to the subject of redistribution. He had no desire to separate the subjects. As a matter of good administration with a view that the Suffrage Bill should be thorough and should deal with registration, he thought it better that there should be separate Bills. He admitted that if that course were adopted it was impossible to give an absolute guarantee that those two Bills would be disposed of in the same Session or even by the same Parliament. Regarding uniformity of franchise as an absolute benefit, he did not fear this possible interval. But, acknowledging the existence of a great body of contrary opinion, he doubted if any Government could escape the Parliamentary necessity of a combined treatment of the whole matter of Parliamentary Reform. There was no difference of opinion upon the advantage of discussing this great subject, in order that the Government might be informed of the views of those who represented the people. He was glad to observe that the opinion of his right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford was in this direction; confessing to have no settled view upon redistribution, he had advised that "the country should be considering and debating it." That was the best way to avoid either another ten-minutes' Bill or a repetition of the waste of years in effecting a settlement. Last year he (Mr. Arnold) offered as a basis for such discussion a definite scheme which had met with more approval than he could have expected. He suggested that with certain exceptions, such as the county of Rutland, there should be no constituency with a population less than 50,000, that as a general rule no constituency containing a greater population should be sub-divided, and that the inequality of representation under which the counties had long suffered should be redressed. It was evidence of the practical advantage of debate when they found the 50,000 population basis echoed by a great Conservative Leader at Birmingham. He opposed the plan of grouping, and suggested that in future county divisions should bear the names of interesting or historic towns forming part of those divisions, so that there would be a process of enlargement rather than of disfranchisement. They would then retain in that House the names of cities and boroughs which were household words, while by enlargement they would purify those names from a certain taint of corruption. They would, no doubt, hear much about the representation of mere numbers. Even the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War lately displayed the contagion of this phrase. The literature of Parliamentary Reform made one familiar with every turn of that argument; but the language of Reform Acts had invariably done homage to the principle of population. Perhaps there never was a Member of that House who could drape the naked truth with more success than Mr. Disraeli, and he turned much to the opinions of Mr. Disraeli, because he was sure that his precepts of 1859 would ultimately be adopted by the Conservative Party of today. When Mr. Hume in 1848 proposed "that the apportionment of Members to population should be made more equal," Mr. Disraeli ridiculed the tendency of the Resolution, and condescended to utter such nonsense by way of argument as that "the rights of Englishmen were better than the rights of men." In 1859 Mr. Disraeli dealt in the same way with the naked truth, dressing it in a gossamer which charmed without concealing. But alike in 1859 and 1867, when he came to the hard matter of proposal, he named, first, 6,000, and, secondly, 7,000 as the limit of population which should suffer the pangs of partial disfranchisement. No other principle than that of population had been adopted. Let them act on the old lines, but with no mystification. He took the limit of 50,000 population for two reasons; first, because it was approximate to the number of population naturally belonging, in each Kingdom, to each Member of that House, and, secondly, because experience had shown that it was the lowest limit at which they could expect freedom from corrupt practices. They knew that in large constituencies—

> "Corruption wins not more than honesty,"

and that in no constituency possessing more than 6,000 electors had extensive corrupt practices been reported as prevailing; and, they knew further, that in English and Scotch boroughs only one in 10 of the people were enfranchised. For these reasons he would not be willing to accept a lower limit than 50,000. He did not agree with Mr. Cobden's idea of subdivision of large constituencies. Since Mr. Cobden put forward that proposal there had been great changes in the country, and in no respect had these been greater than in the Provincial Press. The excellence and extension of the Press enabled a Member for a great concentrated population to address the whole body without expense and without fatigue, provided only that he had something to say which was worthy of their attention. If they broke up those constituencies into wards, they would get more representation of what he might call local accidents and less of local opinion and policy. Did anybody think that the London School Board would be improved by a subdivision of the boroughs into wards? But even that would not be a fair test, because the concerns of the School Board were purely local, whereas in the House of Commons they wanted in Representatives of the people that large spirit of action which was displayed only by minds of a high order of independence, or by the representatives of great bodies of the people. In the days of the late Lord Grey there was a section called "the Waverers," against whom Lord Russell had bequeathed a useful warning when he said that—

> "The danger was, that with a view of satisfying the demands of those who required an extension of the franchise some apparent concession might be made accompanied by drawbacks and securities, as they would be called."

Now, he wanted no drawbacks, and as for security, they had enough in the intelligence and patriotism of the people. He avowed himself an opponent of any special representation of minorities. His right hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham lately took an example from Manchester and Salford. Both had a Liberal majority, and was it equitable that in a division the Liberals of Manchester should have but half the voting power of those of Salford? Such representations of minorities was the disfranchisement of the majority. He spoke in this matter without any reference to Party concern, and he was glad to gather from the recent speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham that the system had no friend in the Cabinet. It had admirers outside the Cabinet on the Treasury Bench; but they knew from recent observation that as the Cabinet did not partake of their opinions they were at liberty to flavour them with any juice they pleased. Mr. Hare's plan would give a thoretically perfect representation of minorities; but in practice it would produce a House of fixed stars and a milky way of Members labelled with some particular cause or crotchet, the whole moving in space without attachment to locality, and with no acceptable provision for the recruiting of the House in case of death or resignation. He himself could find no scheme for the representation of minorities which was tolerable either in results or practicability. He could not admit that the minority in any constituency was unrepresented. It was represented by the ever present knowledge that the political conduct of the Member or of the Party to which he was attached, or the accidents of national policy, might always, and in certain cases would infallibly, convert that minority into a majority. A prudent Member of Parliament thought as much of his foes as of his friends. He did not hesitate to say that in this country the seat of no Liberal Member would be secure who had no proper respect for Conservative feeling, nor could any Conservative long hold an unpurchaseable seat who was rigorously hostile to all Liberal sentiment. That was the sufficient, the legitimate representation of minorities, and it was one which he ventured to say dwelt in the conscience of every Member of the House. If they subdivided constituencies into wards, he thought they would have a House of Commons more extreme and less tolerant in opinion; that they would find that crude methods of reform would be hastily adopted in certain wards, and they would probably find that the demand for the payment of Members would become irresistible. If the provisions of the Corrupt Practices Bill were accepted and followed by the people, and if the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stoke to the Ballot Bill was accepted, no candidate's expenses in a constituency, even of 200,000 people, ought to exceed £500. He would look to a system by which the largest constituencies would each return, say, half-a-dozen Members, as one of their best hopes, by the diversity of class and of claims and by the energy which it would insure, for the future reputation of that House with regard to the diligent and efficient discharge of Public Business. He did not believe that, in regard to redistribution, Parliament would approve the retention, much less the extension, of the system of grouping boroughs. Some of those now grouped were 40, 50, and even in one case more than 100 miles apart. Why should such fantastic tricks be played with the common life of the country? If this great business were undertaken promptly and boldly, they might so settle the question of Parliamentary Reform that any further change would be self-acting. Every constituency which did not closely approach, or did not exceed, 50,000 population, should be re-made in the process of redistribution. There were 139 boroughs in England and Wales with a population under 50,000, which would have to be dealt with in connection with the counties. In American politics the process of framing constituencies with a view to Party advantage was known as "jerrymandering." He hoped they would have none of that. The country would regret to see towns like Salisbury, Lancaster, Canterbury, and Guildford disappear from the roll of Parliament; but the country knew them as county towns and would rejoice in a reform which would preserve their names in extended constituencies. The change would be great, but not revolutionary. Take away that confusing, misleading contrivance, the cumulative vote, and he did not see why Middlesex, including the greater part of London, should not return 40 Members to the House just in the same manner as 40 members were elected to the School Board. Lancashire, with a larger population, would return, he supposed, 50 Members. No one who studied a map or exposition, whether of railways or of geological wealth, of fixed capital, or of export and import trade, could regard that as an immoderate number. Suppose Manchester sent seven Representatives to that House. They would probably include one or two Members of the working class, and they would have a more complete representation of the social strata of that great industrial community. In the counties they had now south-easts and south-wests, until they knew not where they were. They could go no further, simply because they had exhausted the shallow formula of the compass. When the area was very wide, and there was a division like that of South-East Lancashire, containing a population exceeding 500,000, or like that of the Southern division of the West Riding of Yorkshire, with about the same number, they could divide them intelligibly when the divisions were named by towns. That 1,000,000 of people were now represented by four Members in that House, equal upon a division to the Members for Evesham, Eye, Knaresborough, and Woodstock, representing an aggregate population of 21,000, or less than a fiftieth part of that of the two divisions of those counties. What a long-suffering people were the English that they bore with patience such inequality! Under the present system he felt bound to admit that while he was proud of the unity and general character of the Party with which he was associated, it was not so truly representative of the wants and wishes of the great masses of the people as the Conservative Party was of the Conservative feeling of the country, and that must be so until there was an equitable redistribution of political power. How it would hasten the coming of reform if, in a division, that most legitimate form of the bad practice of plural voting were adopted, and a Member gave a vote in respect of every 1,000 electors who had sent him to that House. The shadow of this great business was already exercising a paralyzing influence upon legislation. They had lately heard a most distinguished Member of the Cabinet say that reforms in other directions must be deferred till the agricultural population were enfranchised. He did not concur in the view that it was necessary to postpone the reform of County Government, or of Licensing administration, until the passing of a Reform Bill, which he feared would not be accomplished in fewer than half-a-dozen years; but the argument had been raised and would be employed. But, at all events, that great economic question, the reform of the Land Laws, must be attendant upon the next Reform Act, and it was largely for that reason that he had engaged and would persevere in this service. He did not need to assure the right hon. Baronet the Leader of the Opposition of his personal respect; but he must be aware that these Resolutions expressed the minimum of popular desire. The proceedings of last year might be repeated to-night, but that could not be done with impunity. It was not only 2,000,000 of unenfranchised householders in whose name this demand was made upon Parliament; they had the interested, watchful support of nearly another 2,000,000, who were enfranchised, and who needed their help to rescue the Parliamentary system of government from a condition in which it seemed in danger of being regarded as burdensome rather than helpful to the progress and prosperity of the nation. It was admitted by the opinion of that side of the House, and by the doubtful attitude of the friends of monopoly, that this extension of the franchise was needful. He trusted this might be the last occasion on which its advocacy might be in the hands of any private Member. He would offer no quotations, except from memory; but he noticed the other day, in a translation of that which was, perhaps, the most ancient writing in the world, a lesson given in the art of government, which appeared to be imperfectly appreciated even in our day—

> "Should dissatisfaction," said the Chinese King, "be waited for? Before it is seen it should be guarded against. In my relation to the millions of the people I feel as much anxiety as if I were driving six horses with rotten reins."

In these days, though we did not legislate in advance of dissatisfaction, we had learnt that the safety of the State depended not so much upon the reins of government as upon the self-conduct of the people. No restraint that could be forged would bind the people of these Islands to injustice; nor would it be safe for any Government to introduce a Parliamentary Reform which lacked the principles of permanence. The course which the people would follow was marked out by that sense of duty to which the Prime Minister, in one of his finest writings, had rendered ennobling homage; and their claim was this—that better provision should be made for the security and the stability of power in the hearts and affections of the people, and that all should be united in promoting the happiness and welfare of the nation, and the proper discharge of the august functions of that House.

Amendment proposed,

> To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it would be desirable, so soon as the state of public business shall permit, to establish Uniformity of Franchise throughout the whole of the United Kingdom by a Franchise similar in principle to that established in the English boroughs,"—(*Mr. Arthur Arnold*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. A. ELLIOT said, he shared the hope of the hon. Member who had proposed the Resolutions that this would be the last occasion upon which this subject would be brought before the House by a private Member. He felt, as he had no doubt the hon. Member also did, that it was a disadvantage to any hon. Member who proposed Resolutions of this character to succeed to that duty which had been so often and so ably performed by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Trevelyan) and the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain). Those who had raised this question on former occasions had had to wrestle and struggle with an antagonistic Parliamentary opinion; but opinion on this matter had since changed, and they now knew that the greater number of the hon. Members who sat in that House were already pledged on the subject of Parliamentary Reform. But it was strange—it was to him very melancholy—to find that the zeal of hon. Members in this House was not so great as the zeal of hon. Members on platforms outside. He wished to do all he could to assist his hon. Friend in making this subject a real matter to be dealt with in the House of Commons. The present House of Commons could not last for ever, and he thought it would be almost a discreditable thing for the Liberal Members if, after the line they had taken at the General Election, this House should be dissolved without having given any opinion in favour of Parliamentary Reform. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther), a prominent Member of the late Government, and a Gentleman who would in all probability find a place in the next Conservative Cabinet, had, in a speech the other day, expressed his absolute hostility apparently to any extension of the franchise, and contended that the last extension, in 1867, had been a great mistake. It would be a melancholy thing if Conservative Members holding high positions were to go about the country uttering opinions like that, and that House was not to make any remonstrance, or put on record that they were not the opinions held by the general body of its Members. The anomalies and inequalities of the present system were too glaring, and had been too long exposed, for it to be necessary for him to go into them at any length. The Resolutions proposed what would, no doubt, be a considerable extension of the franchise, and they also proposed a redistribution of seats; but there was nothing at all in the proposals they made to deserve the name of a strong Radicalism. To give representations to places like Accrington and Furness would only be to grant what the statesmen of former Parliaments would have given. Those places would infallibly have been enfranchised in 1832, if they had been of the same importance as they were now. They were doing no more than following out the policy of Lord Grey and Lord John Russell, and of the present Prime Minister in previous years, in proposing that the large centres of population and activity should have adequate representation in the House of Commons. But they were going further. They were proposing to bring in a large portion of the rural element. They had no doubt they were proposing a considerable change. In that proposal there was considerable change involved; but he did not think the public was thoroughly well aware, even now, how entirely several of those constituencies were similar to what constituencies would be under the new state of things. He had been looking into the Return recently obtained by the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), which compared the size of the population of different districts, and he found that whereas one rural district contained an area of about 240 square miles, that area was something like twice the area of the county of Linlithgow, and he thought more than twice the area of the counties of Clackmannan and Kinross united. To all intents and purposes, some of those rural districts were, in fact, counties for Parliamentary purposes, with a franchise such as it was now wished to introduce. They had been told last year, when they brought this subject before the House, especially by his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), who opposed the Resolutions, that by such a franchise as this the better classes—the upper classes of constituents—would be swamped by the new element that would be introduced. Was that so with regard to the constituencies with which they were acquainted? Was it the case with regard to Stroud, Morpeth, or Christchurch? There had in those cases been no such terrible results from this swamping as was alleged. Who were the Members for those places? They were as different as Members could be. One (Mr. Brand) was a Member of the Government; another (Mr. Horace Davey) was an eminent member of the English Bar; and the last (Mr. Burt) was, no doubt, what was called a class representative, but it was acknowledged that he was of great use in that House, inasmuch as he was able to speak with authority on the views of persons who were not otherwise sufficiently well represented. It was quite true that if they wished to find a constituency in England where class was represented, they had to look at the University representation, which, unfortunately, was not what it professed to be, though there were some Universities—as that of London—where more true representation existed. Hon. Gentlemen opposite were not quite agreed in their opposition to this proposal. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) had a further objection to the Resolutions. He had formerly objected that if such a measure were given effect to, very possibly trade protection might be introduced. But the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther) had recently expressed an opinion diametrically opposed to the view taken by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire in opposing the Resolutions last year, holding that representation and taxation should proceed simultaneously. The right hon. Gentleman had said they wanted Protection, and that those whom he was addressing should alone have the power of dealing with the question. They knew that if the question was raised, whether or not a tax should be imposed upon bread for the benefit of the farming classes, no doubt it would be difficult to deal with such a question, from the point of view of the right hon. Gentleman, if an appeal was to be made to those chiefly interested in the bread question. The position, with regard to England, was slightly different from that concerning Scotland. In England there were very large urban populations without the town franchise; but in Scotland they had the representation of districts of burghs, so that there, to a considerable extent, second and even third-rate towns were represented already. Therefore, speaking as a Scottish Member, what he should like to lay before the House was really the enfranchisement of the village and rural populations. In regard to the rural population of Scotland, he did not know that there was a better village population anywhere. They were well educated; they were thoroughly law-abiding; they had already school boards in every parish; they took part in various public matters of local interest, and they elected their own minister, which was a very important fact indeed. Yet this rural population in Scotland was much worse treated even than the rural population in England. They had a higher franchise than in England, there being no 40*s.* freehold franchise. He had no doubt considerable attention would be given to a certain recent publication by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). One did not know whether to treat that publication seriously or not. But if these were his true sentiments, it was curious to observe how extremes met in the case of hon. Gentlemen opposite and the hon. Member for Northampton. Both attributed the same motives even to such Reformers as Lord Grey, showing an absolute disregard for the teachings of his life, and both seemed to think the constituents outside the present limits differed from the existing constituencies—that patriotism and intelligence were entirely limited to those who lived in towns. Those who supported these Resolutions did not say that those unenfranchised persons were in any respect superior to ordinary mortals. They said that, without being learned people, or philosophers, or angelic in point of character, they were sound-hearted and sound-headed people, who would agree on almost all points with those who were already enfranchised; and it seemed to him rather late in the day for hon. Members opposite and representatives of the Democracy to urge such worn-out arguments as that they wished to bring in a new set of people who would, in fact, overturn everything that the public had hitherto thought just and right. He regretted that the Prime Minister was not in his place. They knew that he was unavoidably absent. Still this matter was an important one, and he (Mr. A. Elliot) went strongly with his hon. Friend (Mr. Arthur Arnold) in urging upon the House the necessity of coming to a vote that evening. He should like to hear some undertaking from the Government, or some expression of hope, that the time was already fixed when this question would be really considered. He should like to have it indicated tolerably plainly that next Session, at all events, this subject would be thoroughly and strongly taken up. He hoped the Home Secretary, if he was about to speak on the part of the Government, would be able to give some hope of that kind, and that this subject, which had long passed beyond the point at which it was proper for private Members solely to deal with it, would really be taken up by a strong Government and a united Party.

COLONEL ALEXANDER said, that had the hon. Member for Salford brought forward a substantive Motion, he should have met it by the Previous Question. As, however, he was precluded by the Forms of the House from moving the Amendment which he placed on the Paper yesterday, he would endeavour to state, in a few words, his reasons for regarding the proposal of the hon. Member for Salford to amend the representation of the people at the present time as altogether mischievous and inopportune. He should begin by disposing of a popular error with regard to what the hon. Member had called the "identity" or "uniformity" of the franchise. It was popularly, though, as he thought, erroneously, supposed that when what was known as the Chandos Clause, giving the right of voting to £50 occupiers in counties, was inserted at the instance of the Conservative Party in the Reform Bill of 1832, that that Party originated the difference between the borough occupiers and the county occupiers which still subsisted. What, however, were the real facts of the case? Lord John Russell, on March 1, 1831, in introducing into the House of Commons the first Reform Bill, proposed a £10 occupation franchise in boroughs, and a £50 occupation franchise for leaseholders in counties. It was Lord John Russell, therefore, and not the Conservative Party, who was responsible for any want of uniformity in the franchise as it now existed. Lord John Russell, indeed, never concealed his dislike to the adoption of the principle of what was called uniformity in the franchise; for when it was proposed by Mr. Locke-King, in 1851, Lord John Russell said—

> "I have always considered that there should be various rights of voting, and I have come to the conclusion that we should be effecting no improvement by introducing uniformity of the franchise."

Again, on February 9, 1852, Lord John Russell, then Prime Minister, proposed a Reform Bill, the main feature of which was to reduce the borough occupation franchise from £10 to £5, and the county occupation franchise from £50 to £20. Lord John Russell stated distinctly on that occasion that he did not propose to make any alteration in the principle that the representation of counties should be placed on altogether a different footing from that of cities and boroughs. And, lastly, on the introduction of the Reform Bill of 1866, Lord John Russell, being again Prime Minister, but sitting in the House of Lords, his Lieutenant in the House of Commons, then the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but now Prime Minister, proposed a £7 franchise in boroughs, and a £14 franchise in counties. That reminded him that it was not so very long since the present Premier was himself converted to the doctrine of uniformity of franchise. The right hon. Gentleman had fallen into an extraordinary mistake last year when speaking on the question originated by the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold), because he said—

> "As to the merits of the question, from the time when it was first submitted to the House by my right hon. Friend the Member for the Border Burghs (Mr. Trevelyan), I have been a friend to the extension of the franchise to the rural districts."

But the Prime Minister must altogether have forgotten what he said in 1872, when the right hon. Member for the Border Burghs, then just released from the trammels of Office, brought that question before the House. The present Prime Ministor, so far from supporting it, then opposed it in the most energetic and uncompromising language, saying—

> "Parliament has ample work cut out for it, not only for the present year, but for years to come, of a character more distinctly practical and less tending to exasperate political differences, or to widen the breach that already exists. I, for one, will be very well contented to pursue that career of humble but useful legislation."

The Prime Minister soon became weary

of a career of humble but useful effort, for when, in the following year, the hon. Member for the Border Burghs renewed his Motion, the right hon. Gentleman, having suffered a great Party defeat on a certain Wednesday, sent down a message to the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), saying that he was prepared to support the Motion of the Member for the Border Burghs; but, mark, upon these extraordinary conditions—that he would support him, not in his capacity as Prime Minister, but as one of the Members for Greenwich. That, surely, was one of the most extraordinary and subtle distinctions ever drawn, even by such a master of casuistry as the right hon. Gentleman. In 1874, the question assumed another phase, for just before the General Election in that year, a deputation waited on the Prime Minister upon the subject, when he told them that the question was not ripe for settlement. In other words, the right hon. Gentleman was in Office, and intended, if possible, to remain there. But shortly afterwards, when he found himself in the cold shade of Opposition, the question rapidly matured, and the right hon. Gentleman lost no time in making it his own. Now, the wheel of fortune had again turned round. The Liberal Party were again in power; but there was a delay in fulfilling the obligations contracted by them when in Opposition, ostensibly because they wished to pass some useful measure, but really that they might enjoy the sweets of Office and power to the last possible moment, and then go with what they considered would be a capital cry to the country. Was not the Prime Minister rather rash to delay the production of his Reform Bill until the fifth Session of the present Parliament? He would remind the right hon. Gentleman that in 1852, at the beginning of the fifth Session of the then Parliament, Lord John Russell produced his Reform Bill, and within a month from that time the Government of Lord John Russell was numbered with the past. It was not for him to say *absit omen*, but his Friends were welcome to do so if they liked. He would further point out that the two great measures of Reform passed during the present century were initiated in the first Session of Parliament, and that it took three whole years to carry the last Reform Bill of 1867 into completion; but the present Government would not be able to take three whole years to complete their Reform Bill, because the Prime Minister had laid it down in the most authoritative manner in Mid Lothian and elsewhere that, though legal, it would be altogether unconstitutional for a Parliament to sit out its seventh Session. In the present circumstances, and having regard to the condition of Ireland, he submitted to the House that any proposal to reform the representation of the people in Parliament was altogether dangerous and inopportune. It was dangerous if Ireland was included in the scope of the Bill, because it would have the effect of returning more Members to that House of the complexion of the hon. Members who were now sitting below him, and of whom he thought the Government had already more on its hands than they could manage; and it would be inopportune if it was proposed to leave Ireland out in the cold, because then the different treatment of Ireland, as compared with the rest of the United Kingdom, would be accentuated. The Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had said it was necessary to extend the franchise to Ireland, because the Government had four times pledged themselves to that effect. He begged the Government not to be so thin-skinned. There was no real necessity for extending the franchise to Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues would, he thought, find considerable difficulty in fulfilling all their promises so rashly given when in Opposition. What about the re-distribution of seats, for instance? Did the Government propose to diminish the number of Irish Representatives? He would like to see them try it; they would not make the attempt with impunity, and if they did not make the attempt they would certainly displease both England and Scotland. But it was said that the county householders had an absolute right to the franchise. He denied altogether the existence of any such right, and he did so on the excellent authority of the present President of the Board of Trade. That right hon. Gentleman said the other day to a deputation respecting the enfranchisement of women, that he considered the franchise a privilege rather than a right. He would like to hear the right hon. Gentleman repeat that statement in the House. No doubt, the Prime Minister had said that it was the inherent right of any man not tainted by crime to exercise the franchise. But, if that view was correct, they could not stop at county householders; they must descend to manhood or even universal suffrage; and by what right would they exclude women who were householders? How did universal suffrage work in France? He took that country, because when the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) brought forward this question, he drew a contrast between the franchise as it existed there and as it existed in this country. What was the result of it there? In France they had had five Governments within a period of 18 months; and a Government which lasted six months might there be regarded as a stable Government. They had plenty of electors there, and it was said that every elector required two bayonets to keep him in order. Lord John Russell was quite right when he said that the franchise was not a right, but a trust, and was only to be conferred on electors for the purpose of promoting the better government of the country. The hon. Member for Scarborough (Mr. Caine) said the other day that the present Parliament did not work well, and that it would be better to have one elected on a broader basis; but he would remind him that the late Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had praised the constitution of this Parliament. The difficulty, however, as it seemed to him, lay not so much in the Parliament as in the legislative incapacity of Her Majesty's Ministers, who, he thought, had done very little, and had done that little badly. Her Majesty's Ministers wanted to pass a certain number of measures, merely in order to say that they had passed them, and they were, in consequence, under the necessity of scamping their work. For instance, the Employers' Liability Act and the Ground Game Act were both so badly drawn that that they would soon require extensive amendments. In the present critical condition and circumstances of Ireland, when she was being governed under the most stringent Coercion Act ever passed or devised by a Parliament of this country—when explosive materials more dangerous even than dynamite were being imported from Cork into Liverpool—when they were strengthening the Police Force and the guardians of order in the country — surely to tamper with the Constitution, under the pretence of extending the franchise to a class which, as a matter of fact, furnished criminals and enemies to order, was an undertaking from which any Minister ought to shrink.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, the hon. Member for Roxburgh (Mr. A. Elliot) has regretted the absence of the Prime Minister to-day; but I am sure no one will grudge him a holiday. My hon. Friend said that the Prime Minister was also absent last year. [Mr. A. ELLIOT: No.] I certainly understood him to say so. My right hon. Friend was present last year, and he had to deal with an identical Resolution to that which is now before the House. The Prime Minister on that occasion took the opportunity of making a declaration, that it was not necessary any Member of the present Administration should make —namely, that in point of principle the Government were entirely in favour of the Resolution which has been brought forward by the hon. Member for Salford. The hon. Member for Roxburgh said if this Resolution had not been brought forward, and was not voted upon, it would show that the Liberal Party were not in earnest in this matter. That certainly was not the view the Prime Minister took of the Motion last year. He laid down the disadvantage which attended the bringing forward of abstract Resolutions. No doubt, these Resolutions are necessary and useful sometimes, when there is any doubt as to the real feeling on the part of those who may be in power at the time, with reference to the subject-matter under consideration; and I am quite sure my hon. Friend the Member for Roxburgh does not doubt the sincerity of the determination of Her Majesty's present Government to deal with this question, and to deal with it in the present Parliament. And, therefore, whatever objection the Prime Minister took last year to this Motion being brought forward in this particular manner is stronger now, because, at least, we are one year nearer the time when that measure will be brought forward. I do not think my hon. Friend the Member for Roxburgh is likely to suppose that the Government will be terrified by the awful denunciation we have heard from the hon. and gallant Member opposite (Colonel Alexander). It is refreshing, I must say, in this House to hear such a fine specimen of fossilized Toryism using the arguments to which we have just listened. They are the arguments which were used in the time of Sir Charles Wetherall, 50 years ago—the old weapons, hardly with the rust rubbed off them, taken down from the shelf were they have remained so many years. The same arguments were employed against giving the franchise to the £10 householder in boroughs. It was said it was dangerous and inopportune. I doubt whether that is not the view of all hon. Members who sit opposite. But there are Gentlemen who think that to extend the franchise to the dwellers in the counties on the same footing as it is given to the dwellers in the towns is a thing which the Government and the Gentlemen who sit on this side of the House do not consider dangerous and inopportune, but which they think extremely expedient; which they think is a measure of urgent necessity, and one which ought to be accomplished in the present Parliament. That is a declaration which the Prime Minister has made more than once. It is entirely held by the Government, and it is perfectly well known as a declaration which they intend to fulfil. I have no hesitation in saying that the Government do consider that this measure, above all, is the measure of the greatest importance which this Parliament was elected to accomplish. That being so, I think my hon. Friend the Member for Roxburgh will consider that we are as earnest in favour of this measure as ever we were; but I think he must know what were the reasons why a measure of this character should not have been brought forward in the first year of the Parliament that was elected in 1880. They are sufficiently well known, however, and I shall not now dwell upon them. There is one point in this Resolution of which I ought to say a word. The hon. Member for Salford has this year emphasized the word "uniformity" in a way in which it was not emphasized last year. When the Prime Minister accepted the Resolution last year, he accepted it as a general declaration that the right of the householder, which is given in the borough, should not be denied to the dweller in the county. That is the meaning of a Resolution of this character; but the hon. Member for Salford has endeavoured to put upon it more particular gloss of his own. He says "uniformity" does not only mean that, but it means that you shall have no other qualification in the counties than that which you have in the boroughs. All I can say on that subject is, that it is not upon a general Resolution of this kind that the House can commit itself to the principles which will have to be discussed when a Bill is brought forward; and to endeavour to attach any such meaning to the Resolution would not, I think, be wise or politic. Therefore, in dealing with the Resolution, I must deal with it as the Government dealt with it last year—as a general declaration that the householder in the county is to be entitled to the franchise in the same manner as the householder in the borough is already entitled to the franchise. My hon. Friend says—

> "As soon as the state of public business shall permit, there shall be established uniformity of franchise throughout the whole of the United Kingdom."

There is nothing in that to which the Government dissent. The hon. and gallant Member opposite (Colonel Alexander) says—"You won't have time if you bring in this Reform Bill next Session." Upon that point Her Majesty's Government differ from the hon. and gallant Gentleman. I believe the great majority of this House are in favour of establishing the principle of the extension of the franchise to the counties; and I think there will be ample time within the limits of the present Parliament to carry out that which is, no doubt, one of its principal works. My hon. Friend has brought forward this Motion at the present time; but I do not know in what sense he thinks it will further the cause which he and I have at heart. It is plain, from the state of the House at the present moment, that it is not regarded as a serious battle on this question, either on the part of its supporters, or on the part of its opponents. The Government will not be more devoted to this cause than they were before. They are pledged to legislation upon it, and they mean to carry it out. Still, here we have this Resolution before us. It is a Resolution with the principle of which we entirely agree. We think it is a thing that can be done, and that ought to be done. I do not think there is any necessity for prolonging this discussion, which must be somewhat barren and somewhat unreal in the present position of things; but if the Motion goes to a division, Her Majesty's Government will feel it their duty to support a proposition in which they entirely agree.

MR. RAIKES said, that reference had been made by the hon. Member for Salford to the election for Cambridge University. It had been said that 2,226 clergymen recorded their votes for him at that election. He was very glad to hear that that was so, and he was extremely proud to have received the confidence of such a portion of the commuity, and he should do all he could to deserve it. He had, however, no means of obtaining the facts and figures relating to the matter; and he thought that the hon. Member must have rather had recourse to what Lord Salisbury described as the scientific use of the imagination in compiling the table to which he had referred. He would point out, however, that if he had polled 2,226 clerical votes, yet his lay vote was within 20 of the total number of votes polled by his opponent. If his opponent had 20 clergy in his favour, it was clear that the majority of lay votes remained with himself. With regard to the present debate, it would hardly be imagined by any stranger that they were engaged in discussing a most momentous problem. The hon. Member for Salford had told them, in a somewhat dogmatic fashion, that the country had decided that the question should be re-opened; but those who had heard the debate would be rather inclined to think that it was only the hon. Member for Salford who had determined that it should be re-opened, and that in doing so he had not conferred any great obligations upon either his Party Leaders or upon his Party. The feeling of the Liberal Party upon this question was evident by the state of the Liberal Benches during the harangue of the hon. Member. There were at no time more than 13 Members present on that side, and sometimes the audience was reduced to 11. The House was evidently of opinion that they were, to use a simile employed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) in the early days of the Reform crusade, "flogging a dead horse." The hon. Member for Salford had said—

> "We who are in the closest contact with the great masses of the population have been able to judge what their views upon this subject are."

No doubt, the hon. Member represented a populous borough; but it had been his privilege to stand a contested election last year in a Lancashire borough with scarcely less population. When asked his views upon the county franchise by his friends, he stated that he would put a paragraph in his address expressly condemning the mode of dealing with this question proposed by the hon. Member for Salford. Some of his supporters thought it would do him harm, but it did not; and in the great constituency of Preston, where he was brought in contact with the mass of the population, he polled more votes than his predecessor had done at the previous election, although he did not take the same positive line as he adopted. The same feeling on this question, he believed, prevailed in most of the other Lancashire boroughs. The hon. Member for Salford said that the tone of the speech of the Prime Minister upon this question last year had saddened him. But how much greater must the discouragement of the hon. Member be on that occasion when the Prime Minister was not even present at the discussion, thereby showing that he, like the Home Secretary, deprecated it as inopportune. The hon. Member had compared the merits of the proposal for "equality" in the franchise with the merits of the proposal for "uniformity." Here he saw signs of a division in the Liberal Party, for while the hon. Member for Salford was in favour of uniformity, the Home Secretary was in favour of equality. The question to be decided was not only whether they were to confer the franchise upon the rural ratepayer, but also whether, in order to effect that object, they were to disfranchise other persons who already enjoyed the franchise. The hon. Member claimed that the rural ratepayer was entitled to the franchise to the exclusion of all other classes. He proposed to disfranchise the freeholders, the old occupiers of £50 who, under the Chandos Clause, might not reside upon the land, and to make a clean sweep of the classes which carried the Reform Bills of 1832 and 1867. The hon. Member did not pretend that a freeholder was unfit to exercise the franchise; but he maintained that the mere fact of residence in a hovel gave the resident a greater claim to the franchise than was possessed by the owner. He would adduce an example of the manner in which the proposal of the hon. Member, if accepted, would swamp the electorate. In the division of South-West Lancashire, which contained the important towns of Liverpool, Warrington, and Wigan, 133,000 persons would be qualified to exercise the franchise on the basis of the hon. Member's proposal. The 62,000 persons in that district, who now lived in houses or occupied land of the value of £12, could, therefore, be outvoted by a majority of 71,000. Thus a present would be made to the poorest class in the community of the actual representation of the division. He did not wish to say anything derogatory of the class of rural labourers, for he believed there was no class more entitled to consideration and respect; but, before making that class the sole arbiters of the destinies of a great country, without any check, they ought to bear in mind that that class was about the poorest which could be found among the Western nations of Europe, and were consequently open to many temptations. Neither should they forget that if the proposal before the House were agreed to, those on whom it would confer power would be extremely accessible in quiet times to the influences of wealth, and in times of agitation equally open to the influence of the demagogue. But it was a mistake to suppose that the class in question was altogether excluded from the representation at the present moment. In the first place, there were certain rural boroughs for which provision had been made in the Reform Act. Among them were Aylesbury, Cricklade, Shoreham, Wenlock, and East Retford. It was, therefore, manifest that the rural ratepayers, in whom the hon. Member took such interest, were not without a voice in the House of Commons. There was another class of boroughs, such as Woodstock, Eye, and Wallingford, which included a very large body of rural ratepayers, and he asked whether these had represented that there was any special grievance which they wanted to get rid of? He pointed to those boroughs which had some 20 or 30 seats in the House, and asked whether they had shown any longing for the proposed change? The hon. Member, towards the close of his speech, urged, as a reason for transferring the balance of the State to a new electoral body, that the National Expenditure was likely to be reduced only by an electorate consisting of the most numerous class. Well, if all their experience of the extended electorate of the last 16 years was worth anything, it went to show that the more extended the electorate the larger was the Expenditure. They had now a Liberal Ministry, with a National Expenditure of some £10,000,000 beyond that which was stigmatized by the late Chancellor for the Duchy of Lancaster as evidence of supreme folly. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Salford said that it was by the influence of the working classes that this country was kept from entering upon another South African War. As far as he knew anything of the working classes, they were by far the most warlike part of the community; and if they were to have such an electorate as the hon. Member advocated, with such a re-adjustment of taxation as would enable government to be carried on without putting their hands into the pockets of the new electors, they would have a fresh South African War every year. With regard to redistribution, the hon. Member had fixed upon 50,000 as the electoral unit of the future. But what would be the consequence of applying the principle of electoral districts to the redistribution of seats? If the bold proposal now before them were adopted, it would be the practical extinction of the electoral privileges which now existed in the counties. If, on the other hand, they were to allow the county electors to retain the privileges so recently conferred, and which had been so well employed, and were also going to enfranchise the agricultural labourer, they would find it necessary to adopt a larger electoral unit than 50,000. He thought they could not put it at less than 75,000 for each extended borough, if they were going to distribute among 300 constituencies the new and the existing electorate. The hon. Member said that a unit of 50,000 would affect 139 borough seats. But if no borough of less than 75,000 was entitled to more than one Member, unless they added to it such an adjacent area as would bring the population up to twice that amount, a great many constituencies which were now expecting to receive enlarged representation, would have to give up that representation which they now possessed. According to the proposal of the hon. Member, Rochdale, Burnley, Southampton, York, Stockport, and even the most interesting borough of Northampton, Ipswich, Coventry, and many others, would not be entitled to one Member unless swollen by the addition of some adjoining district. In the same way, many of the larger towns, in order to retain their claim to two Members, would have to be aggrandized by an influx of rural inhabitants so as almost to lose their urban character. Such a consequence as that, when it was found that it was not little boroughs only that would be extinguished, might be enough to check the ardour of many an energetic Reformer. Speaking in 1850 in the House of Commons upon a somewhat analagous Motion to that at present before the House, and when an attempt was made to press the question of County Franchise upon the ground of abstract right, Mr. Disraeli said—

> "If, in the language of those who brought forward the Resolution, the House of Commons was the House of the people, and if it were intended to concentrate in it all the personal and material interests of the multitude, then they were bound to extend the suffrage to everyone. They hesitated to do that because they knew it was dangerous. The suffrage was a matter of convention and compact."

That was what should occupy the attention of the House. It was not a question of abstract rights and principles; but it was a question of how they could properly adjust the balance of the rights of all important classes.

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, that he would not have troubled the House, having spoken on this subject so many times before, but for the remarks of the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge, who seemed to suppose, from the absence of the Prime Minister, which was, however, unavoidable, and one or two other facts, that there was a want of interest shown in the question before the House. He did not believe there could be a greater mistake; and the right hon. Gentleman, notwithstanding his experience at Preston, was as much convinced as he (Mr. W. E. Forster) was that they were elected to prevent the great anomaly of the county householder not having a vote. He did not believe there was any question upon which there was such an unanimity of opinion in the country. To show that that was the case, he would assert that it was a rarity in the country to hear a speech expressing any doubt upon the subject. They had got beyond abstract Resolutions. The country expected that, before they were sent back to their constituents, the Government would bring in, and carry through, a measure giving to householders in the counties the franchise, and, no doubt, that must be accompanied by a very considerable redistribution of seats; and for these purposes they were actually waiting for a Bill to be brought forward by the Government, for they could not debate these questions with any advantage on the details of a Resolution like this. He was very glad at one result of the discussion that had taken place, and that was to hear his right hon. Friend point to next Session as the time when that measure might be brought forward, and he thought the country expected that no longer a time than next Session should elapse before it was thought of. Of course, this Session would be fully occupied with other Bills. The country would expect that the matter should not be delayed longer than next year. As to the debate of last Session, and the question of uniformity of electors in boroughs and counties, he would not now discuss whether there should be a disfranchisement of the 40*s*. freeholders, or whether the electors of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University should be disfranchised, as the House could not go into these details until they had a Bill before them. He supposed the hon. Member for Salford would go to a division, and he supposed, too, that the Government would support him. He did not, indeed, see how they could do otherwise. He should vote for the Resolution, though he did not think that they could usefully debate a Reform Bill until the responsible Government had brought it before them. The hon. Member for Roxburgh had referred to the grievance felt by the Scotch labourers in not having votes, and he was sorry to hear the argument of ignorance re-introduced by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Raikes), for that never had applied to Scotland. Many of the Scotch labourers were very well educated, and had been so for many years; but it was also the case that the grievance with regard to town voters was felt more in Scotland than elsewhere. He was lately in a district of Scotland where this anomaly existed in a most glaring manner. There was a suburb of Glasgow, which a stranger could not distinguish as not being a part of Glasgow itself, the population of which had increased in 10 years from 50,000 to 130,000, but where no ratepayer under £12 rental had a vote. He could not conceive any greater ground of political grievance than the case of that suburb. As to the question of swamping, he would ask where the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University (Mr. Raikes) was in 1869 ——

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at a quarter before Eight o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 2nd April, 1883.

MINUTES.]—New Writ Issued—*For* Southampton, *v.* Charles Parker Butt, esquire, one of the Justices of Her Majesty's High Court of Justice.

Supply—*considered in Committee — Resolutions* [29th March] *reported.*

Public Bills — *Second Reading* — Army (Annual) [123]; National Gallery (Loan)* [128]; Registration of Voters (Ireland) [24] [House counted out]; Court of Criminal Appeal [9], and *committed* to Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure.

Committee — Municipal Corporations (Unreformed) [6]—R.P.

QUESTIONS.

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND)—THE HERRING BRAND.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Fishery Board in Edinburgh will make public the proposed new regulations respecting the branding of herrings, before finally adopting them, in order that those interested may have an opportunity, if they see fit, of making representations to the Board in regard to any modifications on the existing system?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): The Fishery Board have under consideration the whole regulations regarding the branding of herrings; and in the event of their deeming it expedient to make any important alterations upon these regulations, the proposed changes will be made public before being adopted, so that persons interested in the fishery may have an opportunity of communicating their views to the Board.

POST OFFICE (CONTRACTS)—THE IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. PULESTON (for Mr. Lewis) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government, having regard to the strong feeling displayed by the representatives of all classes, political and commercial, in Ireland, to press the confirmation of the contract with the London and North Western Railway Company?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that it will be our duty to lay the contract on the Table when it is settled and sealed, together with the Parliamentary Papers which we have undertaken to produce in connection with the matter. It is not my duty to say more until these documents are on the Table.

Mr. GIBSON: Has any arrangement been made by the right hon. Gentleman or by the Prime Minister, on behalf of the Government, for receiving the deputation from both Houses of Parliament on this subject?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): Yes, Sir; I have conferred with the Prime Minister, who has consented to be present with myself when the deputations are received; but we can only receive one deputation, and I have so informed the parties to-day.

Mr. GIBSON: Have arrangements been made which will enable the deputation to be a sufficiently large one?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): The deputation may be as large as the numbers that can come into my room. I hope they will be moderate in this respect. Their importance depends not upon their numbers, but upon the interests they represent.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE LAW ADVISERS OF THE CROWN.

Mr. GIBSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether an appointment has as yet been made to the office of Law Adviser in succession to the present Solicitor General for Ireland; if not, what is the cause of the delay, and when will the appointment be made?

Mr. TREVELYAN: It has not yet been thought necessary to fill up the office of Law Adviser. The Government have been considering the arrangements connected with the legal assistance required at Dublin, and they are still considering the matter.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE RUSSIAN ADVANCE.

Mr. E. STANHOPE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any representations have been addressed to the Russian Government as to M. Lessar, who appears by the Proceedings of the Geographical Society at St. Petersburg to have undertaken several journeys in Persian and Afghan territory for the purpose of surveying the country on both sides of the Afghan frontier; and, whether the Government intend to lay any Papers upon the Table of the House relating to affairs in Central Asia?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No representations have been addressed on the subject to the Russian Government. The last Blue Book on Central Asia (No. 1, 1882) contained, among other Correspondence, a Report made by M. Lessar on the country traversed by him between Askabad and Sarakhs. There will be no objection to laying on the Table any further information in the possession of the Foreign Office respecting M. Lessar's later journeys.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: As to the latter part of my Question, are the Government going to lay Papers on the Table relating to the general subject?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Yes, Sir. I will communicate with my hon. Friend on the subject?

INDIA—THE AMEER OF AFGHANISTAN.

Mr. E. STANHOPE asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true that the Ameer of Afghanistan has lately been endeavouring to bring about an interview between himself and the Viceroy of India; and, whether the object of such an interview have been explained by him or by the British Envoy at Cabul; and what answer the Government of India has given to the request?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: The Ameer has expressed a wish to visit India for an interview with the Viceroy, and has been informed that he will be received in the autumn.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: Has the Ameer explained the objects of the interview he seeks?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: Yes, Sir; he has explained the objects of the interview.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: Will the hon. Gentleman state them to the House?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: I do not think it is desirable that they should be explained to the House. A question of this kind is a matter which requires negotiations; and it would be very unusual, as my hon. Friend must know, to state them to the House.

FIJI—THE LAND QUESTION.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is intended to present to the House any more Papers relating to the Fiji land questions; and, if so, when they will be presented?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY, in reply, said, Papers would very shortly be presented, which would give a complete view of the whole Land Question.

MADAGASCAR—CLAIMS OF FRANCE ON THE NORTH-WEST COAST—THE YELLOW BOOK.

Sir HARRY VERNEY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will have the French Yellow Book on the affairs of Madagascar translated into English, and, together with the replies of the Madagascar Government to the French statements and allegations, presented to the House of Commons?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I must refer my hon. Friend to the reply which I gave to a similar request made by the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) with regard to the Red Book published by the Spanish Government. Independently of the heavy expense, it is manifestly out of the power of the Foreign Office to translate and print the Parliamentary Papers which appear in foreign countries. Translations of all direct Correspondence with Foreign Governments are, in the usual course, laid before Parliament; but, for the reasons I have stated, it is not desirable to publish translations of those documents which relate to subjects which do not affect this country directly.

CRIMINAL LAW—CASE OF THOMAS PERRYMAN.

MR. MACFARLANE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If it is the case that Thomas Perryman, undergoing the commuted sentence of penal servitude for the murder of his mother, has been refused permission to sign a petition, prepared by his solicitor for presentation to Parliament, praying for a remission of his sentence on the ground of his innocence of the crime for which he was convicted; and, if he can state to the House the number of Petitions presented asking for pardon for this man on the ground that there was much doubt of his guilt, and the number of persons who signed those Petitions; and, further, if the evidence of Drs. Allen and Freeman, recently sent in, is not of such an important character as to warrant a reconsideration of the case?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he had no doubt leave had been refused to petition the House for a commutation of the sentence in question, because the commutation of a sentence rested with the Crown. As to the number of Petitions, he could not state exactly; but, no doubt, there was a considerable number. When Perryman was tried and sentenced to death in 1879, the matter was very carefully considered by his (Sir William Harcourt's) Predecessor, and the life sentence was commuted. He had considered it since, and had arrived at the same conclusion—namely, that there was no ground whatever for a fresh commutation of the sentence.

MR. MACFARLANE gave Notice that, in consequence of the answer he had just received, he would call attention to the case on going into Committee of Supply, and move a Resolution.

BURNLEY BOROUGH IMPROVEMENT BILL—SECTION 135.

MR. MARRIOTT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the 135th section of the Burnley Borough Improvement Bill, now before a Committee of this House, which, if passed, would give absolute power to the Corporation of Burnley to supervise and control all clubs, social or political, within the borough; whether he has considered how far such powers are consistent with "The Municipal Corporation Act, 1838;" and, whether the Government would support a Bill which confers such powers to a Municipal Corporation?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that he had received a communication from the promoters of this Bill, informing him that the clause in question had been withdrawn.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—THE GLENTIES GUARDIANS.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, on the 23rd of January last, 281 persons were approved of by the Glenties Board of Guardians as emigrants under the scheme of assisted emigration embodied in the Arrears Act; whether, on the faith of such approval, the intending emigrants disposed of the interest in their holdings and realised their other means and purchased their outfits; whether no further step was taken in the matter by the authorities until the 8th of March, when Mr. Redington, one of the Emigration Commissioners under the Act, met the intending emigrants at Dungloe; whether it was then for the first time intimated to them or to the Guardians that, before shipment, the emigrants must be provided with a written undertaking from some friend in America to take charge of them on landing; whether several of them, who happened to be in possession of such letters, submitted them to Mr. Redington, who informed them that they must wait until the rest should have received similar undertakings; whether any step has been taken since by the Government in the matter; and, whether these 281 persons are still left in uncertainty and idleness, living on the remnant of their means?

Mr. TREVELYAN: It is a fact that some time about the 23rd of January the Glenties Board of Guardians entertained the applications of over 600 intending emigrants; but they did not forward the list of such persons to the Local Government Board until the last day of the following month. The Emigration Committee could do nothing until the list was received. Within a week after its receipt Mr. Redington, one of the Committee, was able to go to the district, and he was at Dungloe on the 8th of March. All Boards of Guardians concerned had previously been informed by Circular, dated March 2nd, that persons who wished to go to the United States should be able to show that they had friends or relations there in a position to put them in the way of procuring employment, and to help them to maintain themselves in the meantime. The desirability of such a condition was abundantly proved to the Government, and will, I think, commend itself to the House. There is no such condition required if the place selected by the intending emigrant is Canada. The number of persons who were able to produce the requisite letters was 120; but it is not the case that they were told by Mr. Redington that they would have to wait until the others applying would have procured letters also. On the contrary, they were at once recommended for the grant, as were a number of other persons, conditionally on their subsequently producing the required undertaking. Mr. Redington left the lists of selected persons with the clerk of the Union on the 10th of March, in order to have necessary particulars filled in; but he did not receive them again until Friday last, and he is now proceeding to deal with them finally as quickly as possible. If any persons disposed of the interest in their holdings, and realized their other means on the faith of their original approval by the Board of Guardians, and without waiting to know whether they were selected for emigration, their action was premature, and I cannot think that many such cases occurred.

POST OFFICE—SIXPENNY TELEGRAMS —ACTION OF THE GOVERNMENT.

Mr. PULESTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What action Her Majesty's Government proposes to take, in view of the decision of the House on the question of cheaper telegrams?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): If the hon. Member will repeat his Question later on in the Session, I hope to be able to reply to it fully.

ARMY—CAVALRY OF THE LINE.

Mr. PULESTON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is contemplated to reorganise the Cavalry of the Line and abolish numerical distinctions; and, if so, whether it is convenient to give now to the House the particulars of the proposed change?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON, in reply, said, he referred to this question at some length when introducing the Army Estimates, and he did not think it necessary now to repeat those statements. Speaking generally, he then said it was not intended at present to enter into any large field of re-organization of the Cavalry of the Line; but he also stated some measures which would be at once taken, in order to meet the necessities caused by drafts for India.

PUBLIC DOCUMENTS — PREMATURE DISCLOSURE TO PROVINCIAL NEWSPAPERS.

Mr. DALRYMPLE asked the Lord Advocate, What is the result of his promised inquiry as to the means by which an announcement of the names of the Royal Commissioners on the Crofters' question appeared in the "Scotsman" newspaper of Saturday, March 17th, although the Secretary of State for the Home Department only on Monday, the 19th March, found himself able, by having received the sanction of the Crown, to announce to the House of Commons the names of the Royal Commissioners?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): Inquiry has established the fact that the names of the Commissioners were not communicated to the newspaper in question by any official person or from any public office.

THE CIVIL SERVICE—THE PLAYFAIR SCHEME.

MR. PULESTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the attention of the Government has been directed to the discontent existing amongst the clerks of the lower division, and in several other branches of the Civil Service, under the scheme known as the Playfair Scheme; and, whether it is the intention of the Government to make any investigation of the cause of such discontent, and with the view of ascertaining whether, under the working of this scheme, the Civil Service is being administered on a satisfactory basis?

MR. COURTNEY: The attention of the Government has not been recently directed to any discontent in reference to the Playfair Scheme; and there is no intention to investigate the cause of a discontent which, if it exists at all, is no more than the ordinary desire of all men to obtain better pay for their services. Even if there had been any serious evidence of dissatisfaction, the Government would not have thought it expedient to inquire into the operation of a system not yet in full working order, which must be fairly tried, in rest and quietness, before its merits can be properly tested.

MR. PULESTON gave Notice that he would take an early opportunity of moving the House for a Committee of Inquiry into this matter.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—SECTION 31—PRACTICE OF THE BOARD OF WORKS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has inquired into the practice of the Irish Board of Works in regard to loans to tenants under section thirty-one of the Land Act of 1881, and ascertained whether it has happened in numerous cases that the Board, after obtaining a fee of ten shillings from the applying tenant, and delaying for several months to deal with his application, have at length informed him that they would not proceed to take any steps in the case until the tenant forwarded to the office of the Board a receipt to prove that he had paid his rent up to the last customary gale day; if so, by virtue of what law or regulation this practice is adopted by the Board; and, having regard to the efforts made by many tenants to avail themselves of the Arrears Act by payment of the rent for 1881, the Treasury, in case they continue to insist on any evidence in regard to payment of rent as a condition precedent to allowing a loan to a tenant under section thirty-one, will consider whether it may not be expedient to regard the condition as satisfied on proof that the rent had been paid up to the last gale day of 1881?

MR. COURTNEY: I am assured that there has been no delay in replying to applications such as is implied in the Question; but applicants have often delayed their answers to the necessary queries. As regards the question of payment of rent, no inquiry is made when the landlord has consented to postpone the rent to the new charge; but when he has not, then the Board of Works are required, by the rules made under Section 31 of the Land Act, to be satisfied that rent has been paid up to the last customary gale day. This is obviously necessary in order to insure that the loan is properly secured.

THE LAND COMMISSION AND THE BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND)—LOANS FOR LABOURERS' COTTAGES.

MR. SEXTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What is the minimum limit of cost of a labourer's cottage fixed by the Board of Works in Ireland in loans granted for that purpose, having regard to stability of structure, health, and cleanliness; and, if that Board encourage the erection of the cheapest houses that can be built, having regard to the above mentioned requirements?

MR. COURTNEY: The minimum limit of loans for labourers' cottages, as arranged between the Land Commission and Board of Works, is £50. For less than that sum the minimum of accommodation considered necessary and stability could not be secured. The Board encouraged by every means in their power the erection of cottages possessing the necessary requirements in the cheapest way possible.

BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND)—LOANS FOR SANITARY PURPOSES.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If the following recommendation in the Crichton Report on the administration of the Board of Works in Ireland has been carried out:—

> "We think it worth consideration whether a concession in point of time might not be made to local authorities as regards the repayment of the principal of a loan for sanitary purposes, and whether they might not be required to pay the interest only on the loan until the works have been executed, and the ratepayers have derived a direct benefit;"

if he has consulted the Local Government Board and the Irish Board of Works on the feasibility of the proposal; and, if so, with what result; and, if not, will he be good enough now to do so?

Mr. COURTNEY: The two Boards have already conferred upon this point. The case has not yet arisen in a practical form; but, should it do so, it will be considered on its merits. Or, should the occasion arise of drawing new Rules, I would desire to provide for it in them.

THE CIVIL SERVICE—THE CENSUS DEPARTMENT.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether any young men employed on the Census work of 1882-3, whose services were dispensed with at an early date, were subsequently recognized as men copyists, without any further test of literary competency other than that prescribed for the Census; whether young men engaged on the Census attended, unsuccessfully, examinations for men copyists, and were subsequently recognized as such; and, whether young men retained in the Census Department to near the close of the work, on the ground of their efficiency, have applied to the Civil Service Commissioners for recognition as men copyists, and been refused; and, if so, the grounds for such refusal, seeing that they not only possess the literary qualifications of those already recognized, but also the practical qualifications of efficiency and experience?

Mr. COURTNEY: It appears that as the subjects of examination for clerks in the Census Office and for copyists are nearly identical, although the standards are somewhat different, the former examination has been recognized as qualifying persons to be men copyists when, and only when, it afforded evidence that such persons had reached the standard fixed for copyists. It has happened in a few instances that persons engaged on the Census attended unsuccessfully the examination for men copyists, but were subsequently registered as such, when the Commissioners had learnt that they had, in their Census examination, reached the requisite standard for copyists. Several clerks who had been employed in the Census Office have been refused recognition as copyists on the ground that they have not in any examination reached the standard of proficiency applied to copyists.

THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS—EXCISE AND CUSTOMS CLERKS.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether candidates for appointments to men clerkships, in the Lower Division, to the Excise and Customs, have to give their names to the Examiners instead of being known to the Examiners by numbers only, as in almost all other public examinations; whether any members of the Board of Examiners are Irishmen; whether, having regard to the dissatisfaction which exists among Irish candidates as to the results of recent examinations, he would take care that Ireland be fairly represented on the Examining Board, or else that candidates be known to the Examiners by numbers only; whether he is aware that, during the earlier years of the open competition, the number of successful candidates from Ireland for the above-mentioned appointments exceeded 50 per cent.; while, at recent examinations, not more than from 20 to 25 per cent. of the successful candidates are Irishmen; whether, at one examination for one hundred vacancies in the Customs, held on 17th November 1882, sixty-five of the successful candidates were Irishmen; whether his attention has been drawn to the January number of the "Competitor," a journal published by Messrs. Longmans and Co. which, commenting on this fact, observed—

> "It follows that, in a few years, the great majority of the officers in Her Majesty's Customs will be Irishmen."

The Examiners seem to have taken a hint from this remark, for, at the last Customs Examination for seventy vacancies, only 18½ per cent. of the successful candidates are Irishmen. The journal already quoted remarks—

> "This is a much fairer distribution of the successful candidates than was shown by the previous examination;"

and, whether Irish candidates, who have passed in all the obligatory subjects more than once, but did not obtain places, have, in many instances, received letters from the Civil Service Commissioners stating that they have failed in one or more of these same obligatory subjects at recent examinations?

Mr. COURTNEY: In these examinations, names, not numbers, are used. The Civil Service Commissioners consider that where examinations are held at many different centres the inconvenience of using numbers is greater than the convenience; and they are confident that, as a protection against unfairness, it is not needed. These examinations are conducted by gentlemen selected for each occasion by the Commissioners, and their names appear in the annual Reports of the Commission. No consideration is paid to nationality in their selection; but it is understood that some of them are Irishmen. The power of appointing Examiners is vested in the Commissioners by Order in Council; and the Government have, therefore, no authority in the matter. At the nine examinations held in 1876-7 for the three services referred to in the Question, about 41 per cent of the selected candidates had been examined in Ireland. In the last nine examinations 28 per cent of those selected were examined there. The decrease is partly explained by the fact that the proportionate number of Irish candidates was less in the latter than in the earlier period. At an examination held last August 62 out of 100 selected candidates were examined in Ireland; at that of the 17th of November last the proportion was 13 out of 70, or 18 per cent; while at the last competition it rose to 23 out of 60, or 38 per cent. If the selection were in proportion to population, Irish candidates would only receive 15 per cent of the appointments. It has happened to many candidates, both Irish and others, that after passing in all the obligatory subjects at one examination, they have, at a subsequent examination, failed in one or more of those subjects. I have not seen the magazine article referred to, and am informed that none of the Staff of the Commission had done so until this Question appeared on the Paper. But I may say that the suggestion that nationality is considered in such matters appears to me absurd, having regard to the nature of the posts competed for, and to the high character of the Examiners.

EGYPT—REFORMS—LORD DUFFERIN'S DESPATCH.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any steps are being taken to carry out the reforms proposed in Egypt by Lord Dufferin; and, if so, whether he can state what steps are being taken?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Egyptian Government is occupied in carrying out the reforms indicated by Lord Dufferin, according to the circumstances of time and place. In His Excellency's despatch, at page 77 of the Blue Book which has recently appeared (Egypt, No. 6), will be found a statement of the reforms which have been lately accomplished.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked whether the Khedive had promulgated, or was about to promulgate, the Decree, the draft of which is in the papers, for the institution of the different Councils?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Perhaps the hon. Member will give Notice of this Question.

Mr. BOURKE: May I ask whether Lord Dufferin's despatch of February 6 has been approved of by Her Majesty's Government?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Do I understand that the right hon. Member gives Notice of the Question?

Mr. BOURKE: I will give Notice for Thursday, if necessary.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE SUB-COMMISSIONERS—MR. PETER FITZPATRICK.

Mr. TOTTENHAM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been directed to a report in the "People's Advocate," (a newspaper published at Monaghan) of January 1st, 1881, of the proceedings at a Land League meeting at Aughamullen West, county Monaghan, which, among other statements, contained the following :—

> "On Tuesday a large and imposing demonstration of tenant farmers was held at the Five Crosses, Aughamullen West, to endorse the principles of the National Land League, and to establish a branch of the league in that part of the county Monaghan :
>
> "Among those on the platform we observed Peter Fitzpatrick, Cormeen (with others) :
>
> "Mr. Peter Fitzpatrick, who proposed the next resolution, was well received," "he was certain that they were all willing to co-operate with the Land League and obtain justice for themselves (cheers). This could only be obtained by combination, and it behoved them not in any way to fall back. Union was strength, and without it they could not go on with this great cause, or adhere to the principles of the Land League (cheers) ;"

and, whether he adheres to his statement that Mr. Peter Fitzpatrick, of Cormeen, who has been appointed a Sub-Commissioner under the Land Act, is not the same person as is here referred to?

MR. SEXTON inquired whether the meeting referred to was not held a considerable time prior to the date of the meeting at which a Cabinet Minister declared that the agitation of the Land League had led to the passing of the Land Act?

MR. TREVELYAN: I stated, in reply to the former Question, that the Government had received the assurance of Mr. Fitzpatrick that he never was an active, passive, or sleeping member of the Land League. I do not think he should be called upon to repeat that assurance. I have, however, just been informed by telegram from the Land Commissioners that they have this day received from Mr. Fitzpatrick affidavits sworn respectively by the Chairman and Secretary of the late Land League branch at Aughamullan West, the district named in this Question, and by the Rev. Mr. M'Kenna, the priest of the parish, all testifying that Mr. Fitzpatrick is personally well known to them, and that he never was a member of that branch of the League, or attended any of its meetings.

MR. TOTTENHAM: Am I given to understand that the report in the papers is absolutely inaccurate and untrue?

MR. TREVELYAN: I have put the matter before the House as I received it from the Land Commissioners. Mr. Fitzpatrick was appointed a Sub-Commissioner, and I presume that the Land Commissioners, in forwarding these affidavits, are satisfied on the point.

MR. TOTTENHAM: I wish to ask, further, whether it is not a fact that the appointment of this gentleman, and some others, was objected to by at least one member of the Land Commission?

MR. TREVELYAN: I will not positively say that every one of the Sub-Commissioners are agreed to by all the Chief Commissioners; but I can say that they are consulted on every appointment, and their advice taken before that of anyone else; and my own impression of these consultations is that a decided and supported objection on the part of a Land Commissioner was sufficient to erase the name of a candidate. With regard to this gentleman, the question of the Land League was discussed at the time, I think, and the Commissioners are satisfied that he had no connection with it.

MR. TOTTENHAM said, he would repeat the Question on a later day.

LAW AND POLICE—PROTECTION OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in consideration of the unprecedented addition to the local Police Forces for the protection of public servants and public buildings, rendered necessary by political and temporary circumstances, unconnected with local causes, the Government have any intention of relieving the ratepayers from the exceptional cost so entailed?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he was not aware of anything having been done to warrant any such course being proposed.

FACTORIES ACTS—SALARIES OF INSPECTORS.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Why no reply has yet been made by the Home Office to the Memorial of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Factories of the date of March 1881; if he will state the views of the Home Office with respect to the grievances set forth in that Memorial, and if he will lay upon the Table the communications between the Home Office and the Treasury with respect to that Memorial which the Government informed the House on December 2, 1882, were passing; and if he will explain further why the authors of that Memorial have never received an acknowledgment of the receipt of it by the Home Office?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: A reply, though not a written reply, has been made to this Memorial. There was more delay than I could have wished in consideration of the matter; but that was owing to the change in the Office of Under Secretary last year. The matter was very carefully considered by Mr. Redgrave, the head of the Factory Inspectors, and afterwards by myself; and we came to the conclusion that there was no sufficient ground for recommending the increase of the salaries which was sought for. A similar application was made to the late Government in 1878, and was declined.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked if the right hon. and learned Gentleman would lay on the Table the communications with the Treasury in connection with the Memorial?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: There were no regular communications to the Treasury.

MADAGASCAR—REPORTED BLOCKADE BY FRANCE.

Mr. MONTAGU SCOTT (for Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government have received any information as to the reported blockade of Madagascar by the French, or of any acts of hostility against the Government of Madagascar; and, whether Her Majesty's Government still adhere to the statements made by Lord Granville in his Despatch of October 7, 1882, to Lord Lyons, that—

> "Her Majesty's Government recognise the Queen of Madagascar absolute Monarch of the whole Island, and are unaware of any Treaty stipulations in virtue of which the French Government could properly claim territorial jurisdiction over any part of the mainland of Madagascar?"

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government have not received any information of the nature referred to by the hon. Member. The Papers already laid before Parliament fully show the position of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the French claims.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—APPEALS.

Mr. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to a Petition signed by the Very Rev. Dr. Dinan, P.P. Kilrush, and all the clergy of West Clare, and adopted unanimously by the Kilrush Board of Guardians at their meeting of March 24th; whether the Sub-Commissioners reduced the rents by fifty per cent; and, whether, considering the extreme poverty of the tenants on this property, their consequent inability to travel to Limerick, and the suitable character of Kilrush Court House for the Chief Commissioners to hear the appeals in, a recommendation accordingly will be made by the Government to have the appeals heard at Kilrush?

Mr. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, that the Land Commissioners informed him that they had received the Petition referred to, the prayer of which was that appeals from the west of Clare might be heard at Kilrush instead of Limerick or Ennis. It was the desire of the Commissioners to do everything in their power for the accommodation of persons who wished to have their cases re-heard, and they would carefully consider the Petition from Kilrush. There had been a few cases in which the Clare Sub-Commissioners reduced rents by 50 per cent.

SOUTH AFRICA—ZULULAND.

Mr. DILLWYN asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he will inform the House what steps Mr. John Shepstone has taken to establish a new Government in that portion of Zululand which is now known as "The Native Reserve;" and, when the arrangements he is making are likely to be completed?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: In reply to my hon. Friend, I will read an extract from one of the latest despatches from Sir Henry Bulwer. It is dated the 15th of February—

> "The Resident Commissioner has fixed upon the place of residence in the Reserved Territory. He is still engaged in the work of ascertaining the views and wishes of the Chiefs and Headmen in the territory, as to their future allegiance. Many of them have given in their

decision, but as yet not all, the work having been much retarded by Cetewayo's messages, and by the interference of others, tending to unsettle the minds of the people, and make them uncertain as to what really is to be the fate of the territory, whether it is to be under the Resident Commissioner or under Cetewayo."

I think it well here just to say, to all whom it may concern, that there is, and ought to be, no uncertainty in the matter, and that this Reserved Territory, as already announced, will in no way whatever be under Cetewayo. Sir Henry Bulwer goes on to say—

> "In the meantine, I am taking steps for the organization of a local force. I have also, with your Lordship's sanction, conveyed to the Resident Commissioner the necessary instructions about the raising of a hut tax for the purpose of meeting the expenses of the administration of the territory."

I may add to this statement of Sir Henry Bulwer that the assignment of permanent locations to the different tribes has been delayed by the uncertainty of how many have to be provided for. And as to other and less pressing details, they are awaiting the arrival of Mr. Osborn, the permanent Commissioner, Mr. John Shepstone acting in the Reserved Territory only temporarily.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—MICHAEL EGAN—THE WITNESS MARIA ROCHE.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the girl Maria Roche, who made a charge of intimidation against Michael Egan, and whose charge was proved before Mr. Keys, Divisional Magistrate, Dublin, to be utterly false, is the same person who was the chief witness against Thomas Behan, convicted of arson at last Winter Assizes before Mr. Justice O'Brien; and, if it is the intention of the Crown to institute a prosecution for perjury against Roche?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I am informed that when the charge against Michael Egan of intimidating Maria Roche was heard before Mr. Keys, it was clearly and satisfactorily proved that she had been intimidated by someone. This was not questioned. Egan's defence was an *alibi;* and the magistrate held that, in the face of the many witnesses deposing to the *alibi,* he could not convict on the testimony of the girl alone, and believed that she was mistaken as to Egan's identity. The object of the intimidation was to prevent her from giving evidence against Thomas Behan, who was charged with arson, and subsequently convicted. She did give evidence, but was not the chief witness in the case. Another little girl gave precisely the same evidence as her. No intention whatever is entertained of prosecuting her for perjury.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—PURCHASE OF THE ASHBURNHAM MSS.—THE IRISH MSS.

Mr. GIBSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in the event of the purchase by the State of the Ashburnham Manuscripts, Her Majesty's Government will consider the propriety of depositing some of those relating to Ireland in a public library or institution in Dublin, in order to render them of easy and inexpensive access to Irish scholars and students?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The right hon. and learned Gentleman has, I believe, been already informed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that there is a certain legal difficulty supposed to arise in the case of purchases made by the British Museum. I cannot give any pledge in answer to the Question at the present time; but we will certainly look further into the matter, and will see what can be done.

THE NATIONAL EXPENDITURE—MR. RYLANDS' MOTION.

Mr. RYLANDS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of the fact that a Resolution upon the National Expenditure occupied two full nights of debate in the Session of 1879, he will alter the arrangement for a Morning Sitting on Friday April 6, when a similar Resolution is to be brought forward, and which could only be discussed in an incomplete manner within the time afforded by an Evening Sitting?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Finding that there is great interest taken in, and that hon. Gentlemen are desirous of having a full evening on, the Motion of my hon. Friend, we have made inquiries in order to see what will be most convenient to the House; and we have arrived at the conclusion that it will be most for the convenience of the House if, instead of proposing to take the adjourned debate on the Transvaal next Friday at 2 o'clock, we propose to take it on the Friday after, at 2 o'clock. We therefore propose to go on with the Motion of my hon. Friend in the ordinary way.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: With reference to the announcement just made by the right hon. Gentleman, I cannot help thinking that, having regard to the changed position of the Motion on the Transvaal, especially since the Amendment was put down by the right hon. Gentleman himself, which is virtually a Vote of Confidence in the Government, there ought to be some better opportunity than a Morning Sitting for the discussion of that Motion.

Mr. ONSLOW said, he hoped that, before the resumption of the adjourned debate on the Transvaal, the Prime Minister would state the nature of the remonstrance sent by Her Majesty's Government to the Transvaal Government. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would also state what would be the policy of Her Majesty's Government in case that remonstrance was disregarded.

PARLIAMENT—RULES OF DEBATE—BLOCKING.

Mr. MONK asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that a Member of this House blocked thirty Orders of the Day on Thursday last; whether he has taken into his consideration such wholesale blocking of Bills; and, if so, whether the Government is prepared to recommend the adoption of some modification of Standing Order 77 A, which places it in the power of a single Member to impede and prevent legislation which may be anxiously expected by the Country?

Captain AYLMER asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he could state how many of the 30 Orders of the Day blocked by one hon. Member had also been blocked in duplicate by other hon. Members; and also, whether he was aware that the Waste Lands (Ireland) Bill was blocked last week by one of the Lords of the Treasury; and whether that Bill was so blocked by order of the Government?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am not prepared with the particulars, as I should have been, if I had been aware of the exact form that the hon. and gallant Member's inquiry would take. I am not yet prepared to admit that the blocking of a single Bill is necessarily or presumably done as an abuse, simply because it is done by a Member of the Government. With respect to the Question of my hon. Friend (Mr. Monk), no doubt great abuse is made by some hon. Members of the power of blocking beyond what was in contemplation when this matter was provided for, preventing the resumption or commencement of important debates at unseasonable hours; but it would be a very serious matter to devise a formal restriction of this power —[Mr. Warton: Hear, hear!]—and until we arrive at the conclusion, either that the evil is very serious, or that those who are supposed to be glanced at in this Question are quite incurable, I do not think it would be wise of us to open the question.

Mr. MONK subsequently gave Notice that if the hope expressed by his right hon. Friend at the head of the Government were not realized, he should take an early opportunity of moving an Amendment to the Standing Order with reference to the blocking of Bills.

KILMAINHAM PRISON (RELEASE OF MR. PARNELL, &c.)

The O'DONOGHUE: In reference to the Question of which I gave Notice on Friday, as I was prevented by the "Count out" from placing it on the Paper, and as I have made some additions to it, I may be allowed to read it in the form in which it now stands. It is to ask my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, Whether his attention has been called to the following remarks of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), as published in *The Standard* of the 24th ultimo on the authority of its Paris Correspondent:—

> "My friends and I, as you are aware" (the hon. Member was speaking to the Editor of *The Clairon*), "had been thrown into prison; risings had taken place in Ireland; the Government saw they were powerless to repress the disturbances. They came to us and asked us to intervene; they set us free. We said to them, 'You must take such and such measures—the good provisions of the Act of 1881 must not be neutralized by the tribunals intrusted with their application;' we were, so to say, the arbiters of the situation;"

whether this is a correct version of the Kilmainham transaction; whether it does not directly conflict with that given at the time by leading Members of the Government in both Houses, and, notably, with that given by Lord Carlingford, who, in the House of Lords, on June 5, 1882, used these words—

> "An intimation was first made by Mr. Parnell through a friend, and afterwards a letter was written by him, which he himself read in the House of Commons. The fact was that the communications from Kilmainham came absolutely uninvited—proffered voluntarily to the Government, and, therefore, suddenly?"

MR. O'KELLY: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, perhaps I may be permitted to offer some explanation of the paragraph. ["Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member has a Question to put arising out of the Question now raised, he will be in Order, but not otherwise.

MR. O'KELLY: Certainly I have. The quotation which the hon. Member for Tralee has made does not belong to the hon. Member for the City of Cork. There were two conversations in *The Clairon* office. The interview which was published was a composite interview. ["Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not putting a Question at all, but is raising matter of debate.

MR. O'KELLY: Sir, I am endeavouring to explain—["Order!"]—I am making an explanation in reference to a Question, if I may be permitted to proceed. It is a personal explanation. I will make it clear to you that the matter is pertinent to the Question. There were two conversations in the office of *The Clairon*. The hon. Member for the City of Cork did not make the statement.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is making a certain assertion. A Question has been put by the hon. Member for Tralee to the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government. The hon. Member may ask any Questions he thinks proper arising out of that Question; but he cannot enter into debate.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have to thank my hon. Friend for having called my attention, by a private communication, to this report in *The Standard*, from, I believe, its Paris Correspondent, which had escaped my attention. From the nature of it, I cannot but feel glad that my hon. Friend has now called my attention to it. It is—as I had supposed before hearing the interlocutory statement of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. O'Kelly), and, it must be necessarily—an unauthorized and inaccurate report. Of the degrees of that, I, of course, know nothing. I take the report as it is; and, taking it as it is, and not attempting to make the hon. Member for the City of Cork responsible for it, either in whole or in part—it is hardly for me to be responsible for it—I have not the least hesitation in answering my hon. Friend to the effect that, setting apart matters of opinion, as far as it refers to matters of fact, and as far as it bears upon and concerns the Government, it is wholly and absolutely without foundation; and that the statement of my noble Friend (Lord Carlingford), which he has quoted, was a perfectly accurate statement.

Subsequently,

MR. PARNELL: With reference to the reply of the Prime Minister to the Question of the hon. Member for Tralee, which appeared to suggest that my hon. Friend the Member for Roscommon had imputed some inaccuracy to the editors of *The Clairon* in reporting the conversation which is contained in that journal, I wish to say what my hon. Friend desired to say—and what I wish he might have been permitted to say—that the interview in question was reported with fairly sufficient accuracy, but that it was an interview arising out of two conversations, the one held with my hon. Friend the Member for Roscommon, and the other with myself. My hon. Friend informs me that the passage in question was given by him pretty much as it was reported by the editor of *The Clairon*, with whom he held the interview. With regard to the statement of Lord Carlingford referred to by the Prime Minister, and by the hon. Member for Tralee, I cannot hold myself bound in any way to admit the accuracy of that statement. I deny, Mr. Speaker, that I took the initiative in communicating with the Government on the occasion in question; and if Lord Carlingford made such a statement—I do not know whether he did or not—it was decidedly an inaccurate one.

MR. GLADSTONE: After what has been said, perhaps I may be permitted to say one word. I would ask the attention of the House to the exact words used by my noble Friend. The words imputed by the hon. Member for Tralee to Lord Carlingford are—

"An intimation was first made by Mr. Parnell through a friend, and afterwards a letter was written by him, which he himself read in the House of Commons."

The exception taken by the hon. Member for the City of Cork is, I presume, to the words—

"An intimation was first made by Mr. Parnell through a friend."

Mr. PARNELL: Hear, hear!

Mr. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir; but we know nothing of the communications which passed between Mr. Parnell and that friend. My meaning was that Lord Carlingford's statement was a perfectly accurate statement of the case, as it was represented through the friend to whom reference was made.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: With reference to the statement which has been made by the hon. Member for the City of Cork, and the further statement which we have just heard from the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, I would respectfully ask whether he is still disposed to adhere to his refusal to grant a Committee of Inquiry into the transactions connected with the release of the Irish Members from Kilmainham?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I see nothing in what has taken place to-day that ought in any degree to alter the intention of the Government.

The O'DONOGHUE: I copied Lord Carlingford's words from *Hansard*, and I may say, further, that I have no doubt of their entire accuracy.

DRAINAGE, &c. (IRELAND)—THE RATHANGAN DRAINAGE DISTRICT.

Mr. TOTTENHAM asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If his attention has been directed to a circular addressed by the Commissioners of Public Works to the proprietors interested in the Rathangan Drainage District, dated 19th March, 1883—viz.,

"Rathangan Drainage District,
Office of Public Works, Dublin,
19th March, 1883.

"Sir—I am desired by the Commissioners of Public Works to inform you, as one of the proprietors interested in the above-mentioned drainage district, that, their attention having been drawn to their powers under the Drainage Acts, in connection with the Land Law (Ireland) Act of 1881, to determine on the completion of the works in any drainage district the amount of increased rent which tenants shall pay in consequence of the improvement of their holdings effected by the drainage works, they are advised by the law officers of the Crown that if during the progress of the works a judicial rent has been fixed, or a new lease has been made, or a new rent amicably arranged with any tenants, the Commissioners cannot fix an increased rent on any such tenants, unless it be clearly established that when the rent was settled it was intended that an increased rent was to be fixed on the completion of the works.—I am, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,
E. Hornsby, Secretary."

And, if this embodies the views of Her Majesty's Government, what steps it is proposed to take in relief of those proprietors who are now saddled with a charge which they cannot levy from those who are deriving the benefit of it?

Mr. COURTNEY: My attention has been drawn by the Question of the hon. Member to the Circular he quotes, and I recognize its great importance to proprietors in drainage districts where works are in progress. I will take immediate steps to inquire both into the practical character of the injustice he apprehends and the means of remedying it.

PUBLIC HEALTH (IRELAND)—EPIDEMICS IN DONEGAL.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a report has been received of an outbreak of scarlatina and diphtheria at Bannaninver, in the parish of Gweedore, county Donegal; whether any Poor Law relief was available, or was in fact administered to the sufferers; whether sickness, attributable to a continuance of bad and insufficient food, prevails among children in a portion of the parish of Glencolumbkille; and, whether the families so afflicted are those of tenants who are living on charitable relief, and who paid a year's rent last winter in order to obtain the benefit of the Arrears Act?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board reported a week ago that, having heard it stated that there was an outbreak of diphtheria and scarlatina among the children in Gweedore parish, he went there on the 27th of March specially to make personal inquiry. He found there was no diphtheria, and that there was scarlatina in two families only. Only one of these families was poor. Medical attendance was not asked for in this case until two children had died, and it was given at once when asked for. Poor Law relief was available, and was, in fact, offered, but declined. With regard to Glencolumbkille, the Medical Inspector reported on Friday last as follows:—

> "I obtained yesterday particulars of all the children said to be ailing, and I visited nearly all of them. I will send a full Report to-night; but I may summarize by saying that there is not one of them dangerously ill at the present time, and there is not a single case of fever or other contagious disease."

The full Report subsequently received showed the prevailing affections to be bronchitis and pneumonia. Whether the families in which there are sick children are receiving relief from charitable sources, or whether they qualified by payment of a year's rent for the benefit of the Arrears Act, the Inspector was unable to say; but he states that of the two families attacked by scarlatina in Gweedore one would have no claim whatever on charitable relief, and that at Glencolumbkille only two families out of nine, whose children were ill, would have such a claim.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked, Whether it was intended to proceed with the Police Bill to-night? He should also like to know whether it was intended to proceed with the Motion as to the Channel Tunnel?

MR. HIBBERT said, he should take advantage of the first opportunity to proceed with the Bill.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, he proposed to take the Motion any time before half-past 12.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — THE COUNT OUT ON FRIDAY.

MR. GORST: I gave private Notice of a Question I intended to put to the Home Secretary; but as the right hon. and learned Gentleman is not present, perhaps I may put it to the Prime Minister. It is in regard to the "Count out" on Friday night—Whether it is true, as stated in the usual organs of Parliamentary intelligence, that the "Count out" was arranged by the two Front Benches; and why the Government did not take steps to keep a House for the purpose of enabling them to make progress with Supply?

MR. GLADSTONE: I was unfortunately, but I hope not culpably, absent on Friday night; but no communication has reached me to the effect described by the hon. and learned Gentleman.

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAY —VENTILATING SHAFTS ON THE THAMES EMBANKMENT.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I wish to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he can, in view of the great interest shown by the House in the question of the ventilators on the Thames Embankment, lay on the Table the Evidence on which the Committee decided in favour of the ventilators two years ago?

MR. COURTNEY: I am not aware how that comes in my Department.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Then I shall ask the First Lord of the Treasury. [Mr. GLADSTONE shook his head.] I do not know whom to ask.

MR. GLADSTONE: My hon. Friend and I are in the same Department.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Then I beg to give Notice that I shall to-morrow ask the First Lord of the Treasury to whom I must put the Question.

BANKRUPTCY [COMPENSATION FOR ABOLITION OF OFFICE] RESOLUTION.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the President of the Board of Trade, After what hour he meant to bring on his Bankruptcy [Compensation for Abolition of Office] Resolution?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, it was merely a formal Resolution, and he must take it at any time.

MR. CARBUTT asked if the right hon. Gentleman could state the sum annually paid as compensation for abolition of offices under the former Bankruptcy Act?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, it was impossible to answer the Question without Notice; but he would be happy to look up the information, and give an answer on Thursday. The Order to which reference had been made was merely to enable them to discuss that clause upon the Bankruptcy Bill, as it provided for compensation in case it should be necessary to abolish existing offices. It was not intended to abolish any such offices; but this Resolution was in anticipation of what might hereafter occur.

Mr. CARBUTT: Would this be discussed in the Whole House, or only in Committee?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Both.

Mr. LABOUCHERE protested against its being assumed that the Resolution was formal. Many hon. Members objected to compensation being given to officials, who, if their offices were abolished, could be employed in some different capacity.

Mr. PULESTON objected to the Bill being discussed piecemeal before it reached the Committee to which it was to be referred.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—PROCLAIMED DISTRICTS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state what are the grounds for the proclamation under the Crimes Act of the following districts, viz. Derrylea, Aughrim, Ballykelly, Millfarm, Quinsborough, and Clogheen, in the parish of Lackagh, county Kildare, Clogheen and Coolnafeeragh, in the parish of Monastereven, also in county Kildare, and Iliard and Inchacooly, in the parish of Lea, in Queen's County; and, whether he will state if any, and what, outrages were committed in these townlands since the 24th November 1882, the date from which they are assessed?

Mr. TREVELYAN: This district was proclaimed in consequence of the apprehension of outrage to the proprietors and their stewards, who have been threatened and systematically "Boycotted" for a long time, and have been under personal police protection since early in last year. Since the proclamation in November last one outrage has occurred — a malicious injury to property.

POST OFFICE (CONTRACTS)—THE IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. FRENCH-BREWSTER asked the Postmaster General, Whether the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company's tender for the sea journey was less by £6,000 than that of the London and North Western Railway Company; whether the Government were largely influenced by the statement of the London and North Western Railway Company that they would not carry on their present land service without an increased annual payment of £7,500; and, whether, yielding to the present demand of the London and North Western Railway Company renders its monopoly damaging or even fatal to the Irish Company, which was its sole competitor for the traffic between Ireland and Holyhead?

Mr. FAWCETT: In reply to a Question which was addressed to me before Easter it was stated that the tender of the Dublin Company for the sea service was less by £6,000 than the tender of the London and North-Western Company for the same service. As previously explained, the reasons which induced the Government to arrive at their decision will be given in a Treasury Minute, which will be laid on the Table with the other Papers. With regard to the third Question of the hon. Member, I do not think any advantage will result from my expressing any opinion upon it on the present occasion.

Mr. BRODRICK asked when the Treasury Minute would be laid on the Table?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): As soon as possible, after the contract is completed.

Mr. FAWCETT: I wish to correct a slight mistake for which I was responsible. My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer was kind enough to answer a Question for me on Friday. It was then stated that I said the contract was at that moment with the solicitor for the London and North-Western Railway Company. I find that the contract was then with the solicitor to the Post Office. To-day it is with the solicitor to the London and North-Western Railway Company.

Mr. GIBSON: Is to-day the first day the solicitor to the London and North-Western Railway Company has seen it?

Mr. FAWCETT: Oh, no. There have been frequent conferences.

Mr. GIBSON: The Government, I presume, have not finally settled with regard to the contract?

Mr. FAWCETT: I believe that, so far as the terms of the contract are concerned, they are not yet settled.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL.

(*Mr. Attorney General, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Solicitor General.*)

[BILL 9.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that, as that was the first time the Bill had been brought before Parliament, he would very briefly state the reasons the Government had for introducing it, and the reasons which he thought would induce the House to give it a second reading. There were two points of view from which the matter might be discussed. First, they might regard it from the theoretical point of view; and, secondly, from the practical point of view. As to the theoretical aspect, there was not much subject for discussion; but he would point out that in respect of appeals the law of England was extremely anomalous and strange. With respect to matters of small importance in civil cases, for instance, in all money claims involving as much as £20, no fewer than four appeals were possible; and it seemed strange that in criminal cases, when personal liberty, character, and sometimes even life itself was at stake, practically no power of appeal at all should be allowed. Again, it was equally strange and anomalous that whenever a light punishment was inflicted for offences which were partly civil and partly criminal, an appeal was given, and in criminal cases such as misdemeanours, which were removed to Civil Courts, there was power to move for a new trial; but if the offence was felony, and the punishment proportionally heavy, the first decision was final. He must say that it appeared to him most anomalous that, in cases where the consequences were grave, there was no power of reversing judgments by giving a power of appeal; while, in cases where the consequences were small and light in degree, ample and extensive powers of appeal were permitted to be used. That principle could hardly be maintained; and he presumed, therefore, that his hon. and learned Friend (Sir Hardinge Giffard), who opposed the Bill, would not base his opposition on theoretical grounds. The law, which had been the slow growth of centuries, ought to be tested rather by its practical results than by abstract arguments; and, that being so, the supporters of the Bill ought, in like manner, to found their arguments wholly on practical considerations. Setting aside, then, all that might be urged as to the theoretical merits of the proposed change, he would simply address himself to the actual results of our present criminal system. The annual number of convictions on indictment in this country might be put, in round numbers, at 12,000. In 1881, the latest year for which the Returns had been issued, the exact number was 11,353; but the average of the last six years, as he had said, was about 12,000. Besides these 12,000 convictions, there had been, during the last six years, an average of 3,400 acquittals; so that, of the total number of persons tried for criminal offences, 23 per cent were acquitted. He was willing to admit that, of the 3,400 persons acquitted, some were probably guilty; but, on the other hand, there could be no set-off in a matter of this kind. They could not, because they acquitted guilty people, take no note of innocent persons unjustly convicted; and the more pertinent consideration was, whether a certain proportion of innocent persons were not included in the 12,000 convictions. Looking at all the circumstances under which criminal trials were conducted, he should be surprised if, in a total of 12,000 cases, a really serious number of mistakes were not made; indeed, he could arrive at no other conclusion but that errors of judgment based upon false testimony, if not constant, were, at any rate, far too frequent. Everyone knew that wrong verdicts were often given in civil cases, and that first trials were constantly found to be incorrect. In such cases of a criminal or *quasi*-criminal character in which appeals were now permitted, he found that during the last six years 876 appeals had been heard; and, though a trained judgment had been brought to bear on all the cases, the result of the first trial had been reversed in 44 per cent of the number, while in 56 per cent it had been confirmed. If that happened in cases involving questions of fact, in which everyone concerned was anxious that justice should be done, he might fairly regard it as a very strong argument in favour of the Bill. What he suggested was the obvious probability that juries, however desirous of doing their duty justly and properly, sometimes, from circumstances, made grievous mistakes in their verdicts. It was, he knew, the habit of those who took part in trials, and even of Judges and counsel of great experience, to aver that they never knew cases of wrongful conviction where persons had been unjustly sentenced; but that was necessarily so, for if they did such sentences would not have been passed; and beyond that a Judge could only form his opinion of a case by facts elicited or apparent at the trial, and the appearance of guilt in such cases at once justified the assertion of the Judge, and caused the erroneous verdict of guilt to be found. His own experience of these matters was very indirect; but he had come to the conclusion that a greater number of innocent people suffered than was generally supposed. With every desire to do the fullest justice, the Judge was liable to be deceived, and therefore it was that power was given to interfere by the exercise of the Prerogative of Mercy with the carrying out of the sentence; but the protection thus given was injustice in the highest degree, for all that could be done was to pardon for an offence of which the man pardoned was not guilty. It had already been the duty of his right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department, during the three years he had been in Office, to set at liberty 12 different persons convicted of the gravest crimes, and that had been done, either because their innocence had been fully established, or because their guilt was so exceedingly doubtful that he dared not keep them in custody. In every one of these cases, facts long concealed had come almost miraculously to light; death bed confessions of the real criminals, or the statements of perjured witnesses had proved the error of the original convictions. And even when this occurred the Secretary of State was almost helpless, and had no means of making the necessary investigations. He had no machinery by which that could be done, no power to examine witnesses, or to compel persons to give evidence. All he could do was to listen to statements, without being able to test them, and so to surmise, but not to establish, the truth. Nor could the Judge who presided at the trial under review give the Secretary of State much real assistance, for his impressions and recollections of the case were necessarily derived from what took place at the trial, and might not lead to the right appreciation of the new circumstances which formed the ground of the appeal. The result was extreme injustice; and the "pardon" after, perhaps, years of suffering of an innocent man, for an offence he had never committed, whose former position could never be restored to him, was almost an insult. That was the only thing the Secretary of State could do, when, in his belief, an innocent man had been unjustly convicted. He could not even make the reparation of declaring him innocent of the offence, and thus restore him to the position of innocence which he occupied before; and such a pardon was rather an acknowledgment of the failure of justice than the exercise of the Prerogative of Mercy. He hoped the House would agree that if they could alter the present state of things, so as to prevent innocent persons suffering, they would. If that work could be accomplished, it was a work they ought to do, for it was worthy of any man's utmost efforts; and he hoped that, so far at least, he would receive the goodwill of the House, in relation to the result, if it could be brought about. He would next ask the House to let him place before them the intentions and provisions of the Bill; and, at the outset, he knew that those who opposed the Bill would say that it was not the practice of other countries; but there were few countries in which a criminal review of some kind or other was not given, and he thought they had better deal with the law of this country and their own experience of it. Another argument made use of was, that the great weight of judicial authority was against any such changes; but he thought, taking it all in all, it altogether showed a considerable weight of authority in favour of it. The late Sir Frederick Pollock gave a qualified acquiescence in favour of it, and an enthusiastic support was accorded to it by Sir Fitzroy Kelly. But he was not going to ask the House to determine the question on the high authority he had quoted. Speaking of the Judicial Bench with the greatest respect, he could not help saying that the learned Judges had not always been the best and first of legal reformers. One always recollected that argument of Lord Ellenborough, when he opposed the abolition of capital punishment—that if they abolished it in the case of a man stealing 5*s.* in the shop, they would be for abolishing it for stealing 5*s.* in a dwelling-house; and then where would they be? It was a characteristic, not only of Judges, but of distinguished lawyers generally, to be always opposed to reforms in the practice they had seen much of; and it was quite consistent with this practice that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin and the learned Member for Launceston should oppose this Bill. He would state at once that the Bill was not sufficient to meet the evil he had pointed out, and would not be sufficient to do all he would wish to see done. The hon. and learned Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Waddy) proposed to ask the House not to accept the Bill, because it was insufficient, and to accept no Bill but one which would give an appeal in every criminal case. But if he (the Attorney General) had proposed to follow that course, he would have failed. Other Bills had failed upon that ground. If he had proposed a Bill that went to that extent, it must have met with a conclusive defeat. He had told the House that in the year there were 12,000 convictions; and those who had to bear the responsibility of introducing this Bill had to look at the subject in a practical light. He could not, of course, tell how many of those who were convicted would be likely to appeal; but, in all probability, those who would do so might number a fourth of the whole, and, if that were the case, there would be 3,000 persons who would be appealing to the Court of Criminal Appeal. Taking an average of three appeals a-day, it would, if the House were to accept the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend, take 1,000 sittings of three Judges to hear a year's appeals. Again, taking 100 days as the average time during which the full Courts sat in London, it would take that 100 days, with every Judge on the Bench sitting in the Courts of Appeal, to dispose of the cases. This would amount to a total denial of justice to all other suitors. If an appeal, therefore, was granted in every case, the Bill would be shipwrecked at the outset. A limit consequently had to be defined, and having come to the conclusion that it was impossible to give an appeal in all criminal cases, some dividing line had to be found. It was difficult, under such circumstances, to define a better one than that laid down by Mr. Baron Alderson, in giving his evidence before the Committee in 1848, where, whilst he himself was objecting to the proposition of an appeal in all cases, he said—

> "If, however, the Legislature think fit to make any change, I suggest the experiment should be confined to capital cases, which are cases of the greatest importance."

If they were to find a line anywhere, certainly no line would be found so well as the line which divided punishments which could not be recalled from those which could, and as that was a step in the direction of future progress, the best line to draw was at cases of the gravest description. Taking, again, the year 1881, he had mentioned that the number of convictions was 11,353. Out of those convictions, it appeared that, including death sentences, which were 23 in number, those of penal servitude for life were 17, those above 15 years, 14, and those of 15 years and above 10, 54, all of which merely amounted to a little more than 100; and then came the large number of 1,440 sentences of 10 years and under. This measure was free from the objections which were raised to the Bills of 1844 and 1860, and, though he had admitted that it would not be sufficient to do all that he wished to see done, he placed it before the House as the first step in an important reform. He could not tell what the number of appeals would amount to; but he submitted it as a tentative measure, under which, by confining the appeal to capital cases in the first instance, they would have a stage, or halting-place, from which it would be easy to proceed progressively in the direction of enlarging the power of appeal which might be ultimately given if found necessary. He was even now perfectly prepared in theory to extend that power to the graver cases of penal servitude; but he thought it better to introduce an unambitious Bill in the first instance, and, in that view, he had confined the appeal, as of right, to capital cases. If, in the first instance, they commenced by dealing only with an appeal as a matter of right in such cases, they had stage after stage which might have to be hereafter extended; but as far as this measure went, unless he accepted the dangerous and impossible policy of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Waddy), he was bound to commence with the matter by degrees, and to deal with it tentatively. He thought that was a better line to adopt, and a safer one, in relation to the carrying of the Bill. So far as he had been able to gather the views held respecting the measure he desired to introduce, two objections only had been urged against it. The first was that the Bill would cast duties upon the Judicial Bench which it could only fulfil with great inconvenience, and, perhaps, not at all. But he did not believe that the House, or the Judges themselves, would allow that objection to be of any avail against the measure. Let them take the total number of capital convictions in 1881 at 23, and in 1882 at 22, and remembering that many of them were of a character which precluded any reasonable probability of an appeal, he thought there would remain not more than 12 cases to be dealt with every year. There were four Assizes in the course of the year—he was not taking the sittings of the Central Criminal Court into consideration—and, therefore, taking an average, three Judges would be called upon to sit for a short period, say, three days longer than at present, four times a-year. That was the whole addition of judicial labour which would be thrown upon the Bench, so far as questions of fact arose on appeal, and that addition, supposing this policy to be the right one, he was persuaded Judges would most readily undertake. The second objection was that the principle was a dangerous one—objectionable not only from the point of view of procedure, but in relation to capital punishment itself. It was said that the prolongation of a man's life, to allow of an appeal, would buoy him up with false hopes; and that they ought not to torture a man by allowing him to drag out many days after sentence of death, and afterwards inflicting that sentence upon him. But there need be no prolongation of a man's existence after he had been sentenced to death; for, in this Bill, he had taken as many safeguards as possible to secure that the hearing of the appeal and judgment should be speedy. There might be cases where it would be absolutely necessary that there should be a prolongation of a man's life in order that absent witnesses from a distance might give testimony; but, if that were the law and the practice, it would not hold out any false hopes that life would be spared, because the man would know that the prolongation was not on account of any doubt as to his guilt, but because it was necessary and was his legal right of which he could not be deprived. Nobody suggested, in the recent Lamson case, that the Secretary of State was guilty of inhumanity, because he reprieved the prisoner two or three times, for the purpose of enabling him to produce evidence in his favour after his conviction, and no inhumanity would be committed in enlarging the time in the very few cases where it might be required. This suggestion was by no means a new one. In former times, so far back as the Reigns of Edward I. and Edward II., when greater humanity certainly did not exist in the way of regarding these matters than at present, there was a period of 40 days given to the convicted man in order that he might challenge the judgment and verdict, and, therefore, he was only at the worst reverting to periods the antiquity of which would satisfy even his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Launceston. His hon. and learned Friend would find in a book, published in the Reign of Edward I., *The Mirror of Justice*, three grounds stated as to challenging a verdict, and 40 days were given always to every criminal, during which he might challenge that verdict. In the year 1752, however, during the Reign of George II., the Legislature passed a law directing that every condemned man should be executed within 48 hours, unless the man was tried on a Friday, in which case he was not to be executed till the Monday. Under that law, there was but little chance of a reprieve, and the only answer that could be given to the prayer for "a long day" was to try the poor wretch on a Friday. But that practice had now been departed from, and a considerable interval was always permitted to elapse between the conviction and execution of a prisoner. In Scotland, North of the Forth, condemned persons might be executed within a period of 28 days, and South of the Forth, 21 days; and he had never heard anyone say that, by extending the period, they were doing a cruelty to the condemned persons by raising hopes which could not be realized. Now, the House was aware that, at present, there was practically no substantial appeal on a matter of law. There was an appeal, if error of fact or law should appear on the record; but that error should appear on the record was scarcely conceivable in the present day. There was, it was true, one other mode of reviewing the sentence in point of law which amounted to an appeal. Under the present Act, the question of law could come before the Court for Criminal Cases Reserved at the will of the Judge who tried the case. But a person who challenged the judgment of the Judge had no power whatever to appeal from that decision, and he had to trust to the Judge thinking that the point was so doubtful that it ought to be raised; and there was this important circumstance also, that such appeals never could exist unless the man were found guilty. Beyond that, the very confidence which would induce a Judge to refuse to state a case for the opinion of the Court of Appeal was what had, perhaps, led him astray. A man might also be detained in custody, and then it might be found that he had committed no offence at all. He thought that was a state of things that ought to be amended, and he had the authority of Judges themselves for saying that it was an unsatisfactory state of things. In determining when an appeal should be allowable, he had taken a course which had been much criticized as being somewhat arrogant. He felt, however, that he would be acting rashly, and almost badly, if he gave an appeal in every case. He had, therefore, taken a middle course, and proposed, by the Bill, that the holder of the office of Attorney General should have the right of sanctioning an appeal on points of law, if he thought fit, on the facts brought before him. As the law stood, no person could obtain a writ of error without the permission of the Attorney General, for he had always had cast upon him the duty of saying whether an appeal should take place when there had been an error in the record. In this Bill there was an extension of that very principle. In reply to those who said that the power here proposed to be conferred on the Attorney General was an assumption of power over the Judges, he would point out that the Judges themselves, in the Code they drew up, made that very proposition, and clauses embodying it would be found in the Bill introduced by the late Government, and backed by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Gifford). There was another principle in the Bill. The Judges had proposed that there should be an appeal on points of law for the Crown, as well as for the accused. To his mind that was an inadmissible proposition. To tell a man who had been acquitted, owing to some miscarriage of justice on the part of the prosecution, that he would have to go through all the excitement, degradation, and agitation of a second trial, was a proposition to which he could never assent. The proposition he had to make was, that if the Judge had doubts whether any offence had been committed in law, he might, under the Bill, stay the hand of the jury in finding the prisoner guilty, in order to have the question determined before the verdict was entered. That would not do, however, in all cases, as the man might be content to take the verdict of the jury. Therefore, he had introduced a proposition that the Judge might, if he thought fit, with the consent of the prisoner, consent to a postponement of the trial until such question had been determined. He believed that that would be a satisfactory extension of the law. He would not detain the House any longer. In conclusion, he would say that he only dealt with the principle of the Bill, and there were, no doubt, many matters of detail which were worthy of criticism. He had done his best in framing the Bill, and he was certain that the House would endeavour to consider the question in relation to the ends sought to be achieved. He felt that if they could do anything to take off from their fellow-men the load and burden—the heaviest which could in this human life be borne—the greatest which, perhaps, the mind could contemplate—the doom of guilt cast on an innocent man, they would be doing a work not suggested by sentiment, but they would be listening to the voice of Justice when she spoke in her sternest and her truest tones. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD, in rising to move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, that seeing that the Bill was one of the most important that had ever been introduced into the House, he must confess he looked with dismay at witnessing such a deserted state of the House at the time it was being discussed. It was a matter on which a great deal of our happiness and the stability of our institutions depended, and the mode in which the Criminal Law had hitherto been administered, and the universal respect with which it had been regarded, were matters of such transcendent importance, that he looked upon his own side of the House, more than to the other, with some degree of sorrow that the importance of the question should not have been sufficiently appreciated. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, in the very brief speech he made to the House, had entirely omitted what seemed to him (Sir Hardinge Giffard) to be the cardinal principle that he ought to have established—namely, the existence of the practical evil against which the Bill was directed. Was there anyone inside the Profession, or outside of it, who really believed that a great many, or even a few, innocent people were convicted? All human tribunals were fallible, and that it was possible that people might be wrongfully convicted was true; but that would be equally possible after this Bill was passed, and at present he believed that all practical injustice was removed by the jurisdiction of the Secretary of State for the Home Department. But the Bill then before them did not propose to interfere with that jurisdiction, neither was it proposed that it should be extended. The jurisdiction which he had hitherto exercised, with the greatest benefit to the community, would still have to be made use of; but it would only be exercised under much more difficult circumstances, and he believed that one effect of the Bill would be to render those duties of the Secretary of State far more anxious than they were at present. What he ventured to submit was that this Bill did not go one step towards removing the possibility of an improper conviction. He hoped that the lay Members of the House would not be led astray by the technicalities contained in the Bill. The Bill started with enacting what was at present the law, and then proceeded to state the different cases in which an appeal would be granted. But in all these cases the present law was sufficient by proceeding under a writ of error.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) pointed out that that was abolished by the Bill.

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD said, he was aware of that; but his point was that no person was imperilled as the law now stood in these cases. He wished to say one word as to the Attorney General's fiat. The Attorney General was an officer responsible to Parliament, and he did not believe that in any case, during some centuries at least, the fiat had been refused. There were other provisions, which really seemed to be calculated to make some reflection on the Judges, such as that there had been no evidence properly submitted in support of the charge. He would pass over those, because such cases were not likely to arise. Then he came to the real core of the Bill—namely, the power which it gave for an application for a new trial on the ground that the verdict was against the evidence. He was glad that that question could be discussed without Party feeling. As the Attorney General had said, the most earnest advocate of this proposal was the late Lord Chief Baron Kelly. But the person who most conclusively demolished the cry for a criminal appeal was Sir George Cornewall Lewis, when exercising the office of Secretary of State for the Home Department. If anyone would read the debate on the 1st of February, 1860, on this proposal, which was made at that time in Mr. MacMahon's Bill, he would, he believed, see the most complete answer to the question then submitted by the Attorney General. If they were to have a Court of Appeal, they must consider what it was to be, because the principle of the Bill must, in a great measure, be judged of by its details, and if it was not a practically workable Bill it was idle to discuss the theory of the matter. He had to submit to the House that the Bill was not a workable one. It was impossible adequately to consider what would be the result of a measure of that character without considering what was the ordinary course of a criminal trial, how totally unlike it was to any civil proceeding, and how entirely false was the analogy between the two things. In the first place, the present proposal was unilateral. In civil cases the plaintiff or defendant might equally apply for a new trial; but here they did not allow a new trial to be moved for on the part of the Crown. In former times, when a sanguinary and cruel system of jurisprudence prevailed, everybody was anxious, if a prisoner got off, that he should not be put on his trial again, and, under such circumstances, one could understand the propriety of allowing a person who was once acquitted to remain acquitted for ever. But the system under which they administered criminal justice was not the same now, and it should be remembered that there were two parties to be considered—not the prisoner only, but the public also. He wished to know, if a person who had been found guilty was to have an appeal, why, if a man had been wrongly acquitted—for that was the hypothesis—he was not to be tried again? He could well understand the feeling which had been engendered by our system of jurisprudence; but when the extravagant punishments and vindictive cruelty once inflicted by way of a sentence of a Court of Law no longer existed, why, as a matter of common sense, was a guilty person who had been wrongly acquitted not to be brought to justice? When a noted burglar, for example, was found to have been wrongly acquitted, either by perjured testimony or by the perverseness of the jury, why was he not to be put on his trial again? Had society nothing to say to the matter? If the function of a Court of Justice was to do right, why, when the tribunal was found to have gone wrong, was it not to be set right? That was an objection to the whole theory on which that Bill was based. At present, the course of a criminal trial was usually this:—First, they brought the accused before a magistrate. That was really a preliminary trial; the Grand Jury afterwards found a bill; and, finally, there came the trial. There was nothing there in the nature of a surprise. Under Mr. Russell Gurney's Act, the prisoner's witnesses were in the same position as those of the Crown, and paid for by the State. Take a case where a crime had been committed at sea. The hon. and learned Attorney General knew the extreme difficulty of keeping the witnesses either for the Crown or the prisoner from their ordinary avocation as sailors. What were they going to do in instances of that kind, of which there were many in every seaport? Were the witnesses to be kept on shore, on the possibility of there being a new trial? There were many convictions obtained, and properly obtained, by admissions from the prisoner's own witnesses. If a new trial was granted, would those witnesses be called on the second trial? And was it to be only a second trial? The Bill said nothing of that. Let it not be said that it was to be a repetition of the first trial. Did the hon. and learned Attorney General recollect a civil case in which the second trial was a repetition of the first? The weak points of the case were provided for, and new evidence was sought, and there was no limit to the power of granting a new trial in civil cases. In any case, what guarantee was there that the second trial would be better than the first? His experience in civil cases by no means induced him to say that second trials were better than the first, and if that was so they might have any number of new trials. Cases of ejectment had been tried over and over again, because the parties had that right, the result sometimes being that almost the whole value of the estate went into the pockets of the lawyers. Then the expense of those proceedings ought not to be altogether overlooked. Mr. Greaves had suggested that there should be a Public Defender as well as a Public Prosecutor. When a verdict of guilty had been returned in a capital case, the gaoler was to be directed to give the prisoner all facilities for the purpose of an appeal. What did that mean? What was to be done in the case of a person convicted without defence? Of course, it would be easy to say what should be done in the case of a wealthy criminal who had attorney and counsel; but was the gaoler to provide the man convicted without defence with attorney and counsel? Supposing a man was convicted in Northumberland or in Cornwall, what was the gaoler to do? Was he to provide the prisoner with a solicitor? It was to be presumed that there would be an appeal in every case of a death sentence. What was to be the nature of the appeal which the prisoner was to have? Was the criminal to be brought up from Northumberland or Cornwall to appear in Court? ["No!"] The hon. and learned Attorney General said, "No!" But what was the Court to do? The notes of the Judge who had tried the case would come up from some distant place. Where they were dealing with questions of law, the presence of the accused would be comparatively immaterial; but where they were dealing with questions of fact, and might require explanation of particular facts proved in the case, the presence of the accused was absolutely essential. It was idle to suppose that the Judges were to surmise the explanations which the man himself might give. The hon. and learned Attorney General had referred not obscurely to a case in which the Secretary of State had been called upon to consider the death-bed repentance of a man who had admitted that he had inflicted on himself the greatest injuries short of death—injuries which he had accused innocent men of inflicting upon him. Hardly anybody could conceive of such a thing as that the man who had made that accusation should have inflicted on himself injuries from the effects of which his life was only preserved almost by a miracle, and yet that was the sort of example which was quoted to the House to induce them to assent to the new trial proposed to be given by that Bill. The hon. and learned Attorney General had stated that he did not propose to abolish the right of appeal to the Secretary of State; but this Bill would make his position with regard to an appeal more difficult. Suppose a case in which popular prejudice had penetrated into the jury-box, and the jury, actuated by that prejudice, convicted, and upon that ground a new trial was granted. Suppose a second time the prejudice operated, would it not be infinitely more difficult, for the Secretary of State to deal with the matter after two juries had pronounced against the prisoner? Again, supposing an application were made for a new trial to a Court such as the Bill proposed, of not less than three and not more than seven Judges—the minimum number, however, he thought open to great objection—would it not be possible that the majority of these Judges might be overborne by one strong mind among them, just as in the case of a jury? The hon. and learned Gentleman was surely not unaquainted with such instances. Upon questions of fact, he (Sir Hardinge Giffard) himself would rather have the judgment of a jury than of a bench of Judges. Supposing, on a conviction for murder, an application for a new trial, on the ground that the verdict was against the weight of evidence, was refused, but that there was one dissentient voice on the Bench, would the Secretary of State venture then to execute the man? He (Sir Hardinge Giffard) for one thought not. The notion that a man could be executed when one of the Judges had thought the verdict was wrong was impossible to entertain for a moment. Besides, under the Bill it would be found quite possible for a man to be found guilty in July and not hung till the following January or February; and if so, this was exactly what Sir Cornewall Lewis had pointed out—an indirect expedient for getting rid of capital punishment. Of course, hon. Members who took the view that capital punishment should be abolished approved of this expedient; but that was not the view of the country generally. The country generally was of opinion that it was necessary to safeguard life by inflicting death, if necessary. If the Government meant by an indirect expedient to get rid of capital punishment—that was to say, to render its infliction impossible—they were not dealing fairly with the House or the country. The hon. and learned Attorney General had altogether omitted to notice one of the most important considerations in criminal justice—namely, the necessity that the punishment should swiftly follow the crime. If a long delay were allowed to elapse after a conviction for murder, the public mind would revolt against an execution. The hon. and learned Gentleman was in error in saying that there was formerly a right of appeal by persons convicted of murder. There was such a thing as an appeal of murder. If a person was interested in the life of a man whose life was lost, he had a right of appeal of murder.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the hon. and learned Gentleman had misunderstood him. He had not said a man convicted of murder had formerly a right to a new trial.

Sir HARDINGE GIFFARD said, he was glad to find he had misunderstood the hon. and learned Gentleman. He failed to see that the mere fact of the Court of Criminal Appeal not arriving at the same conclusion as the jury was sufficient ground for sending the case for a new trial. That was not the principle upon which a new trial was granted in a civil case. Then, no provision was made by the Bill for the actual machinery for appeal; and upon that point he would again refer to the opinion of Sir Cornewall Lewis—that if the right of appeal were simply allowed, without showing how a man could avail himself of it, it was illusory. It was very desirable that the hon. and learned Attorney General should have given the House some instances of injustice done under the present system; but he had given them only one, which would not, under any possible circumstances, have come before a Court of Criminal Appeal, even if it had existed. The result was they had no proved necessity for what was a most startling and extraordinary innovation on the principle upon which our existing Criminal Law was administered. There was one most serious objection which went to the root of the matter, and would affect the mode in which the Criminal Law would in future be administered. A person present at a criminal trial, under the existing law, could not fail to notice the watchful attention of everyone in Court. Judges, jury, witnesses, and spectators were alike impressed with the transcendant importance of the subject; for when once the jury had pronounced a verdict of guilty, the man's life was forfeited. But under this Bill, if there was a right of appeal, if they assimilated the criminal to the civil procedure, the responsibility of the Judge and the jury would be diminished, and the latter would feel that there was a decision to be come to after they had given their own. No doubt, it must strike everyone with horror that an innocent person should be put to death; but the feeling of horror could be scarcely less that an innocent man should be sentenced for the term of his natural life, or for any less period, to the shocking slavery of penal servitude to which the convicts of the country were properly remitted. If they averred that the administration of criminal justice was so imperfect that it was necessary to establish a Criminal Court of Appeal, and and that the right of appeal was to be allowed to a person whose life was at stake, how could that right be refused, on any ground of sense or reason, to one who was liable to be sent into penal servitude? The reasoning which led to the one conclusion must inevitably lead to the other. Death, no doubt, was popularly considered the severer penalty, although there were some cases in which it was the lighter. But if there were injustice, there was as much right to the appeal in the one case as in the other. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said that the Judges could not get through their work if an appeal was granted in all cases; but, if there was injustice, that was no answer, and if there were no injustice, then they were only tampering with the Criminal Law in a way that must inevitably lead to grave consequences. This Bill, if passed, must inevitably lead to the abolition of capital punishment. That was one reason why he hoped the House would not accept the measure, for it would be an indirect mode of preventing the execution of criminals. All authorities—all law reformers, even of the most merciful tendency—were against a change of that character. The hon. and learned Attorney General had quoted the authority of Lord Chief Baron Pollock. On what authority he had done so he (Sir Hardinge Giffard) did not know, for Sir Cornewall Lewis distinctly quoted Lord Chief Baron Pollock as being against a Court of Criminal Appeal. The weight of authority was altogether against the Bill, and no really existing grievance had been shown to justify it. The hon. and learned Attorney General had, indeed, hardly argued the question upon that ground, or suggested that there was any practical grievance to remedy.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) observed, that he had mentioned 12 cases in which the course of justice had been interfered with by the Secretary of State, either on the ground of the innocence of the condemned persons being established or their guilt rendered doubtful.

Sir HARDINGE GIFFARD said, that it was impossible for him to discuss those cases, as he had no information with respect to them. If the hon. and learned Attorney General had mentioned the names to the House, some hon. Members might, perhaps, have thought that the verdicts and sentences were right, and the intervention of the Secretary of State wrong. But the fact of those cases existing seemed to him the strongest possible argument in favour of the existing system, for it proved that the Secretary of State at present exercised the functions of a Court of Appeal, and, he believed, with .great benefit to the public at large. And he would commend to the hon. and learned Attorney General's attention that it was not a legal tribunal of three to seven Judges that was required. At present the most illiterate scrawls were brought to the Secretary of State's notice, and, as he had reason to know, were considered with the utmost care and attention. In the case of persons considered improperly convicted their release was ordered, but that was no reason for altering the law. Assuming those 12 cases in the hon. and learned Attorney General's favour, it was an odd thing to say, and no reason for altering the law, that 12 persons were ordered by the Secretary of State to be released in the course of three years. No true grievance existed, and the tendency of all authority was against this new-fangled notion of a Court of Criminal Appeal, on the ground that it would diminish the sense of responsibility in juries. With respect to the practical difficulties of the scheme they had already an overworked Judiciary. His hon. and learned Friend had entirely understated the average length of time that would be required by these cases. They would be questions of verdicts against evidence, and would involve inquiries into the evidence of every witness. If there were no counsel, the Judges would have to act the part both of counsel and accused, and go through all the evidence, to see whether this or that particular point was established, or ought to have been submitted to the jury with the amount of force which the Judge at the trial attached to it, and no ordinary murder case on which there was really any question to be determined could possibly be got through in the usual judicial day. Every part of the evidence must be read, and the present Judiciary would be wholly insufficient for the work thrown upon them. Even at present the Judicial Bench was undermanned, and the arrears of work and delays were sufficiently alarming. Then he regarded with very considerable objection the sort of tribunal proposed. It was to consist of not less than three, nor more than seven, Judges. Such a tribunal ought to be fixed, for nothing was more undesirable than to have a different tone at one time and another in the administration of Criminal Law. It was no secret that some Judges habitually took one view, and others another, and it was in accordance with the nature of the human mind that it should be so. But nothing could be more mischievous than to have a tribunal which changed from time to time according to the changes in the Judicial Body. Nor could he understand on what ground the selection of the Judges, as it were, was to rest with the Lord Chief Justice. That did not seem to be a desirable plan; but, being a matter of detail, it was more properly a question for discussion in Committee. That it should be a permanent tribunal seemed to be absolutely necessary, if there was to be anything like confidence in the administration of such an extremely delicate jurisdiction as that of saying whether a jury had gone right or wrong in determining whether a man had been guilty of murder or not. The rest of the Bill seemed to be of comparatively small importance. Questions of law were already sufficiently provided for by a Court of Criminal Appeal. It was true, as the hon. and learned Attorney General had said, that they could be appealed against only with the permission of the Judge; but surely the hon. and learned Gentleman's experience must have shown him that learned Judges never refused to reserve any points of law which were really arguable. He had never known any such instance ; on the contrary, he believed the anxiety of a Judge was always to relieve himself of the responsibility of deciding any really difficult question of law. Everyone must recognize the fact that a Judge would be only too glad, in cases of murder, to have the opportunity of obtaining the judgment of other Judges upon a legal question, before he had cast upon him the terrible necessity of condemning a man to death. The main necessity for the Bill seemed to rest on a question of words. They were now obliged to pardon a man, and to say that he had not committed a crime. But it was only a form, just as the verdict of not guilty was, which was often intended by the jury to mean, not that a man was absolutely innocent, but that he was not proved to be guilty. Formerly the feeling of Crown prosecutors was that they were not so much advocates as ministers of justice. The assimilation of the proceedings in criminal trials to the proceedings in civil trials had, however, an injurious effect, inasmuch as the counsel for the prosecution, instead of looking upon himself as a minister of justice, now often acted as an advocate, and exerted all his power to obtain a conviction. In the same way, if the proposed tribunal was to be established, and the responsibility of juries to be diminished, there would be an end to that solemn finality which was the greatest security to the prisoner, and which in 99 cases out of 100 had prevented injustice being done to him. On all these grounds, he submitted that the Bill was one which ought not to receive the assent of the House. It was not a Bill to be amended in Committee, because the principle, which was not founded upon any necessity, was against experience and authority, and was one which the House would do well not to accept on the present occasion. Believing, therefore, that the principle of the Bill was a wrong one, he begged to move its rejection.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Sir Hardinge Giffard.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. WADDY, who had given Notice of an Amendment, declaring it inexpedient that the Bill should be confined simply to capital cases, said, that the answer which the hon. and learned Attorney General had given to that Amendment was, singularly enough, precisely the answer given to the hon. and learned Gentleman's own proposal by the hon. and learned Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard). The great objection taken to his (Mr. Waddy's) Amendment, as he understood, was that it would make the Bill unworkable, and would overweight it so completely as to bring it down entirely. The same objection was made from the other side of the House, that the Bill, in its present form, was unworkable. He did not believe that there was very much weight to be attached to the argument from one side of the House or the other. If they now decided the question of principle, means would soon be discovered for making it workable. He quite agreed with the objection to leaving it open to the Court to be constituted by any number of Judges between three and seven, as there would be the risk in an even number of an equal division of the Bench. He thought it should always consist of an uneven number; but that, however, being a matter of detail, was a question for Committee. The great objection made to the Bill was that they were about to abolish capital punishment by a side-wind. He was not prepared to say that, if that were so, it would be a matter that would cause him any poignant grief; but it certainly was not upon that ground, in any degree whatever, that he would support the principle of the Bill. They were told that there was no grievance; but, if there was no grievance, it must be because the Court, as at present constituted, must be taken to be practically infallible. Directly it was admitted that the tribunal before which the capital cases came was not infallible, there was a grievance, and they must have a remedy in some way. Faults were found with the new system in order to show that it was no better than the old. He could not help being amused at this. Every fault that could be found with the new Court also attached at the present moment to the review of those questions by the Secretary of State for the Home Department. One illustration would suffice. It was asked, what were they to do with a prisoner from Northumberland? Was the prisoner to go up himself, or how was he to be represented? But how was he represented now? How did he represent himself before the Secretary of State? The Judge's notes were referred to. He was quite prepared to say that it was by no means satisfactory to trust always to the report of the Judge. Those of them who were lawyers knew that within recent years they had had a Judge who had an enormous power over juries, but whose opinion and notes in a certain class of cases it would be most fatal to rely upon. The Bill appeared to him to involve two questions—first, whether there should or should not be a power of appeal; and, secondly, the question as to the system by means of which it was to work. The great objection which had been taken to the Bill was that it proposed to alter the existing system, and it had been argued that that system was everything. He did not at all agree that the system was everything. The great point they had to settle was whether there was to be or not, in some few cases now—perhaps in more cases afterwards—the right and the power of appeal in criminal cases. He wanted to have that matter argued and settled. They were told that the Bill was only tentative. It was because the Bill was tentative, and they were going to lay down a principle, which, once it was tried, might be extended and regulated and modified with the greatest advantage to the country, that he would heartily support the second reading. He did not propose, of course, to press his Amendment at the present stage. He understood, by the 4th section, that by leave of the Court, a new trial, as regarded questions of fact, was to be granted in capital cases alone, He did not believe that that was at all satisfactory or sufficient, for it was not always easy to obtain leave to reserve a case from magistrates sitting in Quarter Sessions. It might be sufficient as regarded capital cases; but they must remember that it was more important that there should be a right of appeal from Quarter Sessions than from the Assizes; and he could not help thinking that they ought to propose, as soon as possible, that the right of appeal should be incident to every trial of an indictable offence. He believed, when they had once got this in thorough operation, they would laugh to scorn the objections made to it, just as they did the objections to the previous modification of the Criminal Law, and the alleviations of its harshness. He could understand that that would throw a great amount of work upon the Judges; but that could be easily provided for; there could be rules *nisi* moved for, and that would relieve the Court of Appeal to a great extent. He believed, when they had it in operation, they would extend it until every criminal had a right which he ought to have; and that the man, when the result of a verdict was not to fine him a certain amount of money, but to send him for a longer or shorter period of imprisonment, should have the right of appeal. If he could appeal in a matter of £20 or £25, why should that right be denied him when his character and life were at stake. It was for these reasons he supported the second reading of the Bill. Let them not proceed upon the argument, as of old, against any alteration in the Criminal Law, that there should be no change at all.

Mr. GRANTHAM said, that the hon. and learned Member who had just spoken (Mr. Waddy) had fallen into the same error as the hon. and learned Attorney General in assuming an analogy between civil and criminal procedure, and that there should be a right of appeal in criminal cases, because there was a right of appeal in civil cases. They should not proceed upon the assumption that sufficient care was not taken in the trial of prisoners. The two systems of procedure in civil and criminal cases were very different, and a great distinction should be made between them. In civil procedure, each party stated his case in such a manner as to keep his opponent as much as possible in the dark; but, in criminal cases, the evidence that was to be brought forward, and the nature of the case which the accused would have to meet, were known beforehand, and no new evidence was allowed to be adduced, unless due notice were given and a copy of it furnished. In a criminal case, no step could be taken at all unless application was made to a magistrate for a warrant, which, in many instances, the magistrate refused to grant; but in every case the evidence was given upon which it was expected at a later period a conviction might be obtained. There was little necessity for the Court granting an appeal on a question of fact, because the principle of our law was, that if there was any doubt in the mind of the Judge, it was his duty to direct the jury in favour of the prisoner; whereas, in civil cases, an appeal was frequently granted on the ground that the parties had been taken by surprise, and did not know the nature of the evidence to be brought forward. In civil cases, also, where there was much more probability of a wrong verdict than in criminal cases, an appeal was not given unless the Court granted a rule *nisi* in the first instance. But, according to this Bill, it only required a person who had been convicted—*i.e.*, where judgment of death had been passed—to say that he wished to have an appeal, and then there was to be one. This appeal followed on the mere statement of the prisoner, written out by himself, coming before the Court, although the evidence was as clear as noon day. He agreed with his hon. and learned Friend (Sir Hardinge Giffard) that this was an attempt to get rid, by a side-wind, of capital punishment. It was also an attempt, by a side-wind, to enable prisoners to give evidence which they were not now allowed to do; and why these matters should have to be discusssd twice over—namely, in this Bill, and then in the Criminal Procedure Bill, he was at a loss to understand. He thought that reasons stronger than those offered by the hon. and learned Attorney General were necessary to justify a proposal which would completely alter our whole system of criminal procedure. The arguments in favour of the Bill came simply to this, that they were not satisfied that the Judges tried criminal cases fairly; and that, therefore, prisoners should have an opportunity of being re-tried by three Judges, or it might be by seven. That would be the practical result of the Bill. He believed that their criminal jurisdiction had worked well and fairly for many years, and they should not throw any doubt upon it by an alteration of the law based upon sentimental grievance alone. Why should it be altered because, as the hon. and learned Attorney General had stated, the Secretary of State for the Home Department during the last three years had either reversed or altered the sentences in 12 cases? Another argument of the hon. and learned Attorney General was taken from deathbed confessions. But, in every case to which the hon. and learned Gentleman alluded, it was not until after the lapse of several years that new evidence of that character was forthcoming; while, under the Bill, if a new trial was to be granted, notice that it would be applied for must be given within seven days. The Appeal Court, moreover, to be established by the Bill would simply re-try, with the same evidence, cases only tried three weeks before, and when there had not been time for fresh facts to come out, or public or private passions to be assuaged. The only difference would be in the tribunal. Of course, too, there would be appeals in almost every case, for a person under sentence of death would, like the proverbial drowning man, catch at a straw, and go to the Appeal Court, as he would thereby at least get another month's extension of life. The Government had shown no justification for the change they proposed, though it would involve great expense; and he, therefore, hoped the House would not give the Bill a second reading.

Mr. HOPWOOD, in supporting the Motion for the second reading, said, he felt there was something in the question which must appeal to a much wider range than that which was represented by the legal fraternity in the House. What his hon. and learned Friends left out of account was, that they had to reckon with the feeling out-of-doors. They ought to be aware that there was an increasing uneasiness and uncertainty in the public mind as to the justice of the conclusions arrived at in many of our criminal trials. The question had been dealt with by those who had preceded him as one which it was inconvenient to deal with, and, therefore, not to be granted, or as one which, if granted, would be ineffectual. But his answer to these arguments was that we ought to try the principle of an appeal, because the public necessity for it was great. If that were done, he had no doubt it would give satisfaction. Let them get into Committee and discuss the principles of the Bill. He strongly advocated the advantages which would arise from a Court of Appeal. An appeal was a natural course to take. It was already in a sense allowed in the resort to the Secretary of State and to the Crown; and he considered that it would be much better to have a Court of Appeal. He believed that every Secretary of State who had served the Office would admit that no other duty was more painful than the decision in criminal cases. No power could so well review the erroneous decision of one Court as another Court. The appeal to the Secretary of State, it was true, had the semblance of an appeal; but it was not perfect, as one obstacle in the Secretary of State's way was the decision and firm will of the Judge. With regard to capital cases, he contended it was necessary there should be an appeal in each one; and if any inconvenience should arise from the consumption of public time in dealing with the number of appeals, the public would only feel grateful for the interposition of an additional safeguard as to the justice of the sentence of death. A change had come over Courts of Justice, and the safeguard which once surrounded the prisoner was gone. In the majority of cases they could not now rely, as they formerly were able, upon a doubt being cherished in the prisoner's favour. They had had changes of Judges, who had to try criminal cases when their experience had been solely in Civil or Chancery Courts, and the tendency of both Judges and juries now-a-days was to compel the prisoner to prove his innocence rather than the accuser to prove his guilt. Instances had been asked for in support of the Bill; and he was able to mention several which unquestionably showed the necessity of the measure. To say nothing of the less striking cases in which the Secretary of State had intervened, he might cite the Staunton, or Penge case, with respect to which the public mind was still very uneasy. In that case one of the men had died in gaol, the other still languished there, while the wife of the dead man was also in gaol, although the young woman, Alice Rhodes, who was condemned with them, was liberated by the Secretary of State at the time. He maintained that the Staunton case was one which ought to have been tried again. There was also the case of Dr. Smethurst, in which fresh evidence clearly proved the desirability of the change now proposed. It was to be remembered that a person wrongly convicted had no direct means whatever of obtaining redress, though, in certain circumstances, his innocence might be shown by a more or less indirect process. Thus, when Mr. Hatch, a clergyman, was convicted of a criminal assault, he had no choice but to indict his accuser, a young child, for perjury. This was done with difficulty and at great cost, and it was proved that the charge was unsupported and untrue. He mentioned other cases. Now that instances had been given in proof of the necessity of the Bill, it was rather too late in the day for its opponents to deny that there was a call for such a Court, and such a means of review as they were now seeking, to make the public conscience easy, and to bring peace to the public mind. The present state of things, which threw an unfair responsibility on the Secretary of State, was as unsatisfactory as possible; but the Bill would make everyone feel that justice was administered, not only with mercy, but with certainty.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. O'DONNELL said, that, however generally the desirability of a Court of Appeal in criminal cases might be recognized in this country, in the case of Ireland there was a still greater necessity for such a tribunal; and, although there were shortcomings and defects in this Bill, still he had no hesitation in saying that it marked a most important step in advance; and if it were passed, even in its present shape, it would do more towards introducing justice and equity into the trial of criminal cases in Ireland than any Bill, with the single exception of Lord O'Hagan's Act, which had ever been passed for Ireland since its connection with the British Crown. The provisions empowering a Court of Criminal Appeal to quash verdicts and grant an order for new trials, were the most important in the Bill, and would have the effect of removing evils in Ireland, which, if not chronic, were at least recurrent. He found that a new trial might be ordered where there was some informality and irregularity in the trial, or some misconduct on the part of the jury, or from any cause whatever. In his opinion, on more than one occasion deplorable excitement and deplorable distrust of the law would have been prevented if this provision for the establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal had existed in Ireland for the past 20 years. He did not wish to refer to recent cases; but he would refer the hon. and learned Attorney General to that very serious and momentous case—the Manchester rescue case, now a good many years old. In that case, the jury found five men guilty of murder; and it was afterwards found that one of the men, at least, was a quiet, loyal private of Marines, who was miles away at the time; but, in their headlong haste and the confusion arising from public excitement, the Manchester jury convicted not only the four others, but the absent Marine also. Then he thought it would be admitted that the murder for which the three men were hanged was murder in the most technical sense of the word; and in his opinion, if there had been a power of appeal in that case, the three men might never have been executed, and the cry, "God save Ireland!" would never have gone up from the Salford scaffold, the bitterest watchward that now resounded amongst Irishmen on both sides of the Atlantic. Nor would the cry, "Remember Orr!" the particulars of whose case were, no doubt, well known to the hon. and learned Attorney General, have set in insurrection the entire North of Ireland at the end of the last century, if there had been a power of appeal from a verdict given by a jury, several members of which admitted that they were in a state of intoxication when it was returned. If he did not misread the provisions of the Bill, the whole question of jury-packing could be gone into as justifying an appeal for a new trial; and, if that were the case, the infamous system of jury-packing in Ireland would come to an end, for the very knowledge that a new trial might be moved for on that ground, would deter any Crown official from attempting to despatch men by a rope twisted by the hands of a packed jury. It was not drunkenness alone, and the expressions of partizan feeling, that might be made the ground of an application for a new trial; but he took it for granted that anything that could be fairly alleged against a verdict might be brought forward. In a case lately tried in Ireland, the whole evidence rested against a prisoner on the fact that the dying man said he was the person who murdered him. Now, a priest proved that the man was so insensible that he was unable to go through the simple preliminaries required by the Catholic Church before the last rite could be given, and a jury, composed exclusively of Protestants, were utterly unable to appreciate that piece of Catholic evidence, and the prisoner was found guilty. Now, he thought that under this Bill power would be given to move for a new trial, on the ground that from the constitution of the jury, they were wholly incapable of appreciating an important piece of evidence given on the part of the prisoner, and a new trial might be given; and if it was, they would have a better and a fairer trial on the future occasion; and even if it was not given, the probability of a fairness in subsequent trials of other prisoners would be greater. As far as the principle of the Bill was concerned it was admirable and excellent, and he believed it would be a great calamity if it were not allowed to pass into law. At the same time, he thought it his duty to say that if the Court of Appeal for Ireland was to be the same as the present Court of Appeal, as he was told it was, he should protest against that provision of the Bill. The principle of the Bill was an admirable one; but to have that principle carried into useful execution, the Appeal Court should have the public confidence; and he should say, as quietly and as calmly as possible, that the Appeal Court of Ireland had not the confidence of the public, and never would have until Judges were appointed, not because of their political service, but because of their professional ability. However, so much given so much gained. He was heartily glad that the principle of appeal had been introduced into the Criminal Law of the country; and in Ireland, notwithstanding that the Court of Appeal was to remain the same, he felt that the power of moving for a new trial hanging over the head of the jury-packer would be so direct and so powerful, that jury-packing in the future would be practised on a smaller scale, and when it was attempted, the public condemnation of it would be stronger and more effective than in the present day.

Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL, in supporting the Bill, said, he thought his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General was to be congratulated on the attempt he had made to remove a very glaring anomaly and blot which, no doubt, existed in our law with regard to criminal procedure. Very little argument was necessary to show—indeed, he believed it had been sufficiently shown—that a practical grievance did exist; and the effect of the Bill would be that, while it left untouched the exercise by the Crown of the Prerogative of mercy properly so-called, it would apply to a number of cases which had been held to come under that Prerogative, but which, in truth, did not do so. They were dealing with a tribunal whose fallibility was shown every day in the Courts of Justice in the trial of other questions. He had seen it stated lately, on professional, if not judicial, authority, that 25 per cent of the applications for new trials in civil cases resulted in new trials being granted—or, one in every four cases. If civil tribunals fell into error in that very large percentage of cases, why was it not to be supposed that there was not a certain percentage of mistaken verdicts given in criminal cases also? The hon. and learned Gentleman the late Solicitor General (Sir Hardinge Giffard) said that in former times the prosecuting counsel was merely the Crown prosecutor; but that now, under the new state of things, the prosecution was often a struggle on the part of counsel to obtain a conviction—in fact, a rivalry between two counsel as in civil cases. If that was so, it made appeal more necessary; and if there were no principle of greater importance to be sacrificed, they ought to follow the analogy of the law in civil matters in that respect so far as to give the accused the benefit of an appeal. It was urged, if they were to apply that analogy to criminal cases, why not make it complete, and let the Crown have the power of moving for a new trial as well as the prisoner? The practical answer to that question was, that society would not have it; that society would feel that by such a course as that there would be imparted to the criminal judicature of the country a certain air of vindictiveness which it ought not to have, and the public would not have the confidence in it which prevailed at present. As to the argument that the existing practice of proceeding by writ of error was sufficient, he maintained that there was no more technical, no more cumbrous, or clumsy proceeding known to our law than that of error in the record or allegation of error in fact. This Bill, on the other hand, proposed a plain, direct, and common-sense mode of proceeding. While the Bill left untouched the exercise by the Crown of the Royal Prerogative of mercy, properly so-called, it did apply to a number of cases which had been dealt with as coming under the Royal Prerogative, and which ought never to have come under the Royal Prerogative at all. It was said that the Secretary of State did all that was needful to be done; but upon what principle could the present Home Secretary, or the right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir R. Assheton Cross), whom he saw in his place, justify the extent of interference which of late years had been practised by the Secretary of State? Did they justify it on the ground that it was strictly, as lawyers understood it, the exercise of the Prerogative of the mercy of the Crown? They could not. If not, upon what ground did it take place? He thought the House would see that, in truth, to a great extent, the interference by the Home Office was not sanctioned by Constitutional authority, and only received the tacit consent of the community because it was the only weapon at hand—rough, anomalous, and inadequate as it was—to redress a grievance which society admitted did exist, and demanded should be redressed. Again, Secretaries of State for the Home Department, with the onerous and responsible duties which properly involved upon them, were about the worst possible persons, whatever amount of care and attention they might bestow on the documents of a case, to deal with these questions. The introduction, under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of State, of that class of cases never would have been tolerated, or could have been justified, unless the mind of the country had been impressed with the fact that a grievance did exist in that matter, and that there was no other machinery adequate to deal with it. That the Secretary of State should be called upon to be a Court of Appeal, a Court of Error, and, practically, to hear appeals for new trials without the power of granting them, besides advising the Crown in the exercise of its Prerogative, within Constitutional limits, was a position in which no Minister ought to be placed, because it involved duties which it was impossible to expect him adequately and satisfactorily to perform. He therefore thought some such measure as the present Bill was a necessity; but it might require considerable amendment in Committee. He would not now enter into its provisions in detail; but he would suggest to his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General whether, when they got into Committee, instead of endeavouring exhaustively to state what the Court was to do in a number of different events, set out principally in Section 3, it would not be far better, sounder, and more comprehensive legislation to say that the Court of Appeal should have power to do what was just and right in the case? Another suggestion he would make was, that the Court of Appeal should have power to deal with any fresh evidence that might be forthcoming.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, there was a provision to that effect contained in the Bill.

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL said, he was glad to hear that was the case. He would further suggest that it was obviously of the highest importance, and especially in its early proceedings, that the Court of Appeal should be the strongest possible, because the Judges composing it would have in their hands the moulding of the Criminal Law of England, and the framing of the rules under which that Law was to be administered. Therefore, it should not be left to a mere rota of Judges to form this Court of Appeal; but the Judges should be selected in whom the Profession and the public had the fullest confidence. These were the grounds on which he supported the principles of this Bill, and therefore he should vote for the second reading.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT said, he gave his cordial support to the Bill, and entirely agreed with what the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had said, begging to be allowed to congratulate him on having brought the subject at length before the House in a tangible shape. To no one would the Bill bring more relief than to the present Secretary of State for the Home Department, whose ability in the discharge of his difficult and onerous duties no one was more ready to acknowledge than himself (Sir Eardley Wilmot), though differing from him in his political views. But the machinery at the Home Office for reviewing criminal cases was entirely inadequate and defective. It was a tribunal secret and irresponsible, and was an administrative and political, rather than a judicial Office. The present subject was one in which he had always taken great interest, for he had directed his attention to it for the last 30 years, and 23 years ago he prepared a Bill, in conjunction with the late Chief Baron Kelly, and introduced it into that House, though it never reached a second reading. That Bill, however, did not go so far as the present, being confined to an appeal in capital cases, and not absolute, but guarded by certain limitations; but, under the present Bill, he was perfectly satisfied that justice would be done, if the provision as to capital punishment were carried out. Where there was an equality of opinion upon the Bench, he considered that the decision should be in favour of the accused. Indeed, he thought that unless two-thirds of the Bench were in favour of upholding the verdict, the man ought to be allowed to go scot-free. He did not think the present responsibility should be left to the Secretary of State for the time being. Even Sir Cornewall Lewis, who had been mentioned as Home Secretary, with all his ability and great experience, sometimes made mistakes. As an instance of that he might mention the case of the Road Murder, in 1860. At that time, he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) was County Court Judge at Bristol, and he felt so convinced of the innocence of Mr. Kent, that he called upon the surgeon who first saw the body of the child after the murder. The surgeon assured him that the child was murdered in sleep, as was afterwards proved by the confession of the guilty party. That did away with the supposition that Kent murdered the child, because the theory was that he went into the room for a purpose which it was unnecessary to specify, and that, upon the child waking up, he murdered it. He (Sir Eardley Wilmot) thereupon went up to London expressly to see Sir Cornewall Lewis, and informed him of the statements of the surgeon; but Sir Cornewall Lewis, nevertheless, expressed his opinion that Mr. Kent was guilty. He had never in the course of his life seen such unparalleled suffering as had been borne by that unhappy man, accused as he was of murdering the child whom he most tenderly loved. Its mother was the first victim of those sufferings, and the father, not long afterwards, followed her to the grave. Differing, as he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) did on many political questions, from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), he was happy to have that opportunity of paying his humble tribute of respect to him for the great assistance he had always given to render more humane the administration of criminal justice. The right hon. Gentleman had rendered him great assistance in a case which he had brought before the House of an innocent man

(Edmund Galley) who had been wrongfully convicted. That, as well as other cases, showed that if a Court of Criminal Appeal had been in existence, it might have been the means of averting years of undeserved misery and suffering. If that one event in his Parliamentary life was the only one to which he could point, he was proud that it had been in his power to render that service to an innocent man. He strongly supported the Bill, and had no doubt that, if it had any little inperfections, they would be amended in Committee, and a measure would be laid before the country which would entitle the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General to the thanks of the community.

MR. SERJEANT SIMON said, he cordially supported the Bill He confessed that he went the whole length with his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Waddy) in saying that there should be an appeal in all criminal cases as a matter of right; but he believed that public opinion was not prepared for this. The House, at any rate, was not prepared for it, and he thought that the Attorney General had acted wisely in bringing forward the present Bill in a somewhat curtailed form. Every step in the process of Law Reform, civil or criminal, had always been met by objections, actual or assumed. Objection had been made to the details of the Bill. Some of the clauses were, no doubt, open to amendment; but they did not touch the principle of the Bill. That principle was that a prisoner was to have the right, qualified or unqualified, to a re-hearing of his case for the purpose of remedying any errors that might have been committed at the trial. At the present time a most informal and unsatisfactory re-hearing did take place at the Home Office; there was a secret investigation, and the only reason why public opinion tolerated a new trial under this most objectionable form was that the moral sense of the community would be shocked, especially in a capital case, if the sentence were carried out where there was an alleged wrong verdict. He thought that the right of appeal should include a revision of the sentence. With every respect for the Bench, he could not help saying that Judges, no more than juries, were infallible. A sentence recently passed was a great shock to public opinion on account of its severity, and if anything could have aggravated it, it was the language in which, according to report, it was delivered. It carried us back many centuries. There were now cases in which, had there been judicial inquiry in open Court, the sentences might have been entirely reversed. As it was, the Home Secretary was in a great difficulty. He was forced sometimes to a compromise by mitigating the punishment, instead of reversing the sentence altogether. Without question, the law as it at present stood required alteration. In a civil case where the amount in dispute was a few pounds there was a right of appeal, and yet in cases where liberty and character, or life, were involved they went on the principle that the tribunal was infallible. The time had come when we ought to have a more rational system; and although he could have wished the Bill to go much further than it did, he accepted it as an instalment, and would give it his cordial support. He would only add that though in favour of the abolition of capital punishment, he could safely say that in supporting the Bill he was not influenced by any consideration of the kind, but simply by a desire that the administration of justice should be free, open, and upon a rational footing.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, he rose to support the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard), challenging the principle of the Bill. The speech which had just been delivered by the hon. and learned Member for Dewsbury (Mr. Serjeant Simon), whatever value it might have as a contribution to the controversy, was not a speech in favour of the Bill. As he understood the speech of the hon. and learned Member, it appeared that the hon. and learned Member supported the Bill as advocating the idea that it was the right of every prisoner to have a re-hearing of his case. That, however, was not the principle of the Bill. In the Bill, with regard to everything except capital punishment, the right of the prisoner was qualified in a way in which no right could be justly qualified and still remain a right; that was to say, by the will of somebody else—by the permission either of the Judge or of the Attorney General. The hon. and learned Member also thought that sentences were often excessive, and certainly no feature in the Criminal Law was more unsatisfactory than the inequality of sentences; but this defect was not dealt with in the present measure; as it stood, the Court would have no power to make any alteration in a sentence unless the prisoner had been wrongly convicted upon one indictment, and should have been convicted upon another to which a smaller punishment attached. He had listened with surprise to the speech of the hon. Baronet the Member for South Warwickshire (Sir Eardley Wilmot), who had identified himself with the question of criminal appeals. He had expected to hear some justification of a proposal which was not sanctioned by the experience of other countries, by the opinions of the Judges in this country, nor by the opinions of the great majority of those members of the Legal Profession who were familiar with our criminal procedure. The hon. Baronet had mentioned the case of the Road Murder, and also that of Edmund Galley. The latter was certainly a remarkable case, and he was not sure that the late Lord Chief Justice Cockburn could be acquitted of some negligence in not using his influence to bring the case under the attention of the Government earlier. But no assistance could have been rendered by the proposed Court of Criminal Appeal. The facts ultimately relied upon were not known immediately after the trial, and unless they were going to allow any sentence upon any criminal to be re-opened after any length of time the Bill was useless for such a purpose. The hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell) had supported the Bill; but, in his opinion, the hon. and learned Member went astray at the very outset. He had compared civil with criminal trials; but there was no real analogy between the two. No one who was at all familiar with Criminal Courts could have failed to observe with what care a capital inquiry was conducted, always before one of the Judges of the Superior Courts. The criminal was first brought before the magistrate, where the evidence against him was fully gone into, and he trusted it always would be fully gone into, for by this means the prisoner was put upon notice of the evidence which would be brought against him. Then his case came before the Grand Jury; and, thirdly, he had to meet the evidence brought against him before a jury. But besides, and, perhaps, more valuable than all this, was the presumption in favour of his innocence with which he started, and which followed him throughout his trial down to the concluding words of the Judge, who almost always directed the jury that if they had any reasonable doubt as to his guilt they ought to acquit the prisoner. That was a safeguard far more valuable for the innocent man than any multiplication of appeals before any casual or fixed tribunals that could be established; but he greatly feared that the introduction of a Court of Appeal would greatly diminish the value of that presumption. The hon. and learned Member for Dundalk pointed out that in 25 per cent of civil cases a new trial was granted, and argued, on that account, in favour of an appeal in criminal cases. He was not sure that, but for that chance of appeal, the decisions in civil cases would not be come to more carefully. It was, therefore, an argument against giving appeals in criminal cases, lest it should induce the same carelessness on the part of juries as was shown in civil cases. The hon. and learned Member said you must take this Bill to be proved by its necessity. Certainly, there was no other argument open to its supporters. The Attorney General had dismissed with curt contempt the opinions of the Judges now on the Bench.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I am sorry to interrupt the hon. and learned Gentleman; but I really must interpose. I said not one word about curt contempt of the Judges.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, the phrase, "curt contempt," was his own, and not the hon. and learned Attorney General's; and he used it because the hon. and learned Member said that Judges and lawyers were not very much inclined to adopt reforms in their Profession. His hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Charles Russell) was content to accept as a reason for the Bill the statement that out of 36,000 criminal convictions during the last three years 12 persons who had been found guilty were set free by the Home Secretary, either because he was satisfied of their innocence, or because there was very much doubt whether they could properly be kept in confinement. He hoped the

Attorney General would lay on the Table a statement of the facts of these cases, giving the time of conviction and the time when the sentences were remitted; because he believed it would be found that in most of them the Court, as constituted by this Bill, would be of no use at all. The House was invited to pass the second reading of a Bill which stood first on the Order Paper that night, while the Bill which stood second contained provisions utterly inconsistent with those of the first Bill on the same subject. The House, therefore, was asked, on the authority of the Government, to send to the Grand Committee two Bills dealing with the same subject in an entirely different way. Were the Government going to adopt the plan recommended by the Commission of Judges, and matured by the most able criminal lawyers, or were they going to throw it over in favour of a Bill which had no judicial authority in its support? The Criminal Code Procedure Bill provided that in every case there might be an appeal by leave of the Court; this Bill provided that there should be an appeal by right in capital cases, and in other cases by leave of the Judge. The Attorney General said it was necessary to have the leave of the Judge, because otherwise there would be such a number of appeals that the Court would be overworked; and yet he gave an elaborate calculation showing that a Court of three Judges could dispose of three cases in one day. Well, he did not know of any other instance in which one case could be disposed of in a third of the scant day which the Judges now allowed themselves. This Bill was giving an appeal in cases in which no appeal was required. He could recall only one instance in his experience or reading, during the last 50 years, in which a person condemned to death was absolutely pardoned. In 1877 an unfortunate jury, having been kept 11 hours listening to the Charge of a Judge, found, late at night, four human beings guilty, and the Prerogative of Mercy was needed to set the matter right. Now, if this Bill was passed there would be an application for a new trial in almost every murder case. What would follow? In the first place, there would be the delay, with the chance of something going wrong with the witnesses for the prosecution. In the second trial some of the witnesses might be absent, some juror might be obstinate, or be influenced by what he had seen in the newspapers or by discussions upon the case. When the application for a new trial came before the Court of Appeal, counsel of the highest rank would be retained, either by wealthy friends of the prisoner, or by those very kind persons who, whenever a capital sentence was pronounced, did their best to save life. Every word of protest uttered by counsel would be reported, and would make the task of the Home Secretary much more difficult if the Court were to refuse a new trial. But, suppose a new trial were granted, fresh evidence would be brought forward. There would be several wealthy criminals, for poison was very much more frequently used in this country than was commonly believed by those who were guided simply by the verdicts of guilty. Whenever there was a trial for murder in which poison had been employed, scientific witnesses would be found to give evidence, which the Court of Appeal could scarcely refuse to consider when asked not to give its own judgment of guilty or not guilty, but to say whether the unfortunate condemned should not have a chance of obtaining a verdict in his favour from the Court below. The Attorney General must have seen the strange light thrown on the probable working of his Bill by the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), who enthusiastically supported it on the ground that every conviction obtained in Ireland during the last six months had been wrong. ["No!"] Hon. Gentlemen who said "No!" must not have been present at the time. The hon. Member said that if those cases had come before a Court of Appeal, and had been sent back, the menaces employed would have prevented jury packing. But they might have prevented honest verdicts as well. Suppose a case were sent back for a new trial and the jury found the man guilty, an appeal would be made to the Home Secretary. It would be urged on him that the Judges had sent the case for a second trial because they were not satisfied, and the Home Secretary would find it very difficult to resist the appeal. There were two reasonable grounds upon which a measure of this kind might be recommended—one, that it would prevent the punishment of innocent persons; the other, that it would relieve the Home

Secretary from an anomalous and most painful duty. But, so far from preventing the conviction of innocent persons, the Bill would have the contrary effect, because it would take away from jurors that sense of responsibility which they now had. There was nothing more awful than the closing scene of a capital trial, when the jury were being charged by the Judge. If the jury found the man guilty, there was no question of the sentence the Judge had to pronounce; it must be sentence of death. That very often led to the guilty being acquitted, and made it almost impossible for an innocent man to be found guilty. But if a juryman, who might otherwise be reluctant to find a verdict of guilty, knew that there was a power of appeal, he might not feel his responsibility so greatly, and there would be a better chance than at present of an innocent man being convicted. With regard to the question of relieving the Secretary of State of the very difficult duty which he had at present to perform, if he thought this Bill would relieve the right hon. and learned Gentleman of that terrible responsibility, he should be inclined to waive objections of all kinds, and endeavour to support it. But he did not believe it would relieve him at all; on the contrary, he felt that it would only increase his responsibility. He had the greatest respect for the present Home Secretary in regard to the way in which, during the last three years, he had dealt with all capital cases brought before him. He acknowledged the right hon. and learned Gentleman's unwearied industry and unfailing courtesy, and he was quite sure that this most serious responsibility had never been better or more worthily discharged. In the year 1880 28 persons were found guilty of murder and sentenced to death. Of these 21 were men and seven women. Only 13 of those persons were executed, and they were all men. In 1881 23 persons were sentenced to death; 19 were men and four women, and only 11 men were executed. The lives of the majority in each year were spared, not because they were improperly convicted, but because the Home Secretary advised Her Majesty to exercise her supreme Prerogative of Mercy. But what he wished to emphasize was this—that exactly the same question must remain for the decision of the Home Secretary whatever Court of Appeal they set up to deal with those death sentences. The responsibility, however, would not remain the same; it would be aggravated. If they took all the criminal commitments and convictions in the country they would find that from 73 to 75 per cent of the criminals were convicted of the offences with which they were charged — 12,000 every year out of 16,000. But turn to the charge of murder, and see what the result was there. In 1880 61 persons were tried for murder —28 were convicted; in 1881 61 persons were tried—only 23 were convicted. How was it that the proportion was altered? Surely it was to be found in the very safeguard for innocent persons —the responsibility of the jury; and if they lightened that responsibility by enabling the jury to think that if they made a mistake the Court of Appeal would set it right, then probably out of those 61 persons the Home Secretary would have to deal, not with 23 or 28 persons, but with 40 or 45, and he would find the anxiety of his duty doubled. He did not care very much for the argument with regard to the abolition of the death punishment, nor did he lay stress on the illogical character of the distinctions drawn with regard to the Bill, because, if it was desirable to have an appeal, let them have it as often as they could. But his protest against the Bill was, that it gave the appeal as a right in the cases where it was least wanted, and where the granting of it might do more mischief than it could possibly do good, by lightening the feeling of responsibility on the part of the Judges and juries who were dealing with capital cases, while it would not lighten the responsibility of the Secretary of State. He protested likewise against the Attorney General having anything to do with the right of a criminal to have a new trial. He hoped, however, in anything that might be done, whether under this Bill or some other, there would be a right of appeal against a sentence. Sentences of penal servitude were pronounced with a light heart by Judges, who sometimes did not quite know the amount of misery they were inflicting on the unfortunate creatures whom they sent away from the dock. He was sure this point in the administration of the Criminal Law brought a great deal of anxiety and pain to the Secretary of

State, who sometimes was implored to consider the terrible sentences which had been passed, and there could be no reason why appeals in such cases should not be allowed. He believed the Judges themselves would be glad of it. Some of them, perhaps, felt afterwards that the anger evoked by the trial had led them to pass a heavy sentence, when a lighter would have been sufficient; and there would be this advantage from the question of sentence coming before a Court of Criminal Appeal—that there would be some regularity and equality of sentences among the Judges administering justice in the several parts of the country. On these grounds he hoped the Amendment would be assented to.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that, after the long and interesting debate to which they had listened, it would not be necessary for him to occupy the attention of the House at any length. Hon. Members, however, would probably expect that a person filling the Office which he had the honour to hold should say something on this subject. There could be no doubt that the Home Secretary was the person most interested in the passing of a Bill of this description—that was to say, if he were at liberty only to consider the weight of responsibility which was cast upon him; although, of course, any person occupying that position, if he thought the method proposed were less efficient than that at present in operation, would feel it his duty to resist it, however great the responsibility might be, if he thought the existing method dealing with the question were satisfactory. He had to thank the hon. and learned Member who had just sat down for the extremely kind and indulgent manner in which he had spoken of the way in which he had endeavoured to discharge the duties of his Office. But he should like to say a word in regard to the exact position of the Secretary of State in reference to this matter, which he thought was not very clearly understood by the public, or even by the House. The notion that the Secretary of State considered himself to be, or endeavoured to act, as a general Court of Appeal to re-try criminal, or even capital cases, was entirely unfounded. He did not claim that right, and he did not accept that responsibility. If, therefore, hon. Members thought there ought to be, as he thought there ought to be, some method of re-trying these cases, they could not fall back upon the Secretary of State as an official discharging a duty which he had never undertaken. Another error was that the administration of this matter in the Home Office lay in the breast of each individual Secretary of State, who acted in some arbitrary manner according to his own ideas or fancies. Nothing could be more incorrect than such a notion; and nothing could be more improper if it were true. If they were to act, in the phrase of Selden, "according to the measure of the Lord Chancellor's foot," such a proceeding would naturally shake the confidence of the public in the administration of justice and in the execution of the law. It had always been the endeavour of successive Secretaries of State to act in accordance with the traditions of the law, and of the administration of the Home Office. He ventured to say that there were very few cases in which different Secretaries of State would come to different conclusions upon these questions. There was, in fact, a desire to act on a certain fixed principle. The last speaker had referred to the fact that in the two years which he specified no women were executed. This was owing to the circumstance that in these two years the only cases in which women were convicted were cases of infanticide; and for the last 30 or 40 years the established practice of the Home Office had been to remit the capital sentence in such cases. Of course, the Secretary of State had to consider many cases where sentence of death had been passed, accompanied by a recommendation to mercy by the jury; and in such cases the Secretary of State had to determine whether the recommendation to the mercy of the Crown ought to be acted upon. There was another class of cases—probably the most important of all—where, after the trial, circumstances transpired which had not been brought under the notice of the Judge or the jury. This occurred sometimes by accident, but more frequently from the inability of the prisoner to have at his command the evidence which would have served his purpose at the trial, and which would have cleared him from the charge. That happened especially in the case of the poor. The moment such a person was convicted, and death was staring him in the face, witnesses came forward to give evidence to the Home Office which would have served him before the Judge and jury, and that evidence was laid before the Secretary of State, who could not be as competent a judge of these matters as the tribunal it was now proposed to create. But even if he were more competent than this tribunal to sift the facts, and to apply the law to them, there was a fatal defect in the present system, which must condemn it—namely, the want of publicity as to the grounds on which the decision of the Home Secretary was based. He had over and over again heard the decisions of the Secretary of State questioned, because nobody knew the grounds on which he proceeded; and nothing more shook the administration of justice than to hear that the Judge and jury had come to a decision, and that the Secretary of State had intervened and commuted the death sentence, and yet the grounds for such a commutation were not known. That was a fatal defect in the administration of the Home Office which this Bill cured. The evidence would be made known to the public through the proposed tribunal, and there would grow up a code of law applied to these criminal cases that everybody would be conscious of, and that would have its weight upon public opinion. To his mind, this was an absolute and a conclusive argument in favour of creating another jurisdiction. In the case of Nash, to which his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Charles Russell) had referred, he had a great deal of doubt; but he would state the way in which his doubt was solved. No doubt it was a sound principle of law that a man who set fire to a house, being reckless of the consequences, if the result was fatal to human life, might be held to be guilty of murder, even though he did not intend to kill particular individuals. In the case in question, however, the principal witness came to the Home Office in great distress of mind, and said there was a circumstance which he ought to have mentioned, but which he had forgotten at the time, although questioned with regard to it—namely, that he saw the prisoner, after the fire, going for the fire escape to enable the persons in the house to get out. Now, that circumstance showed, at all events, that the man had not been as reckless of human life as he was said to be at the time. How necessary it was that such cases should have a reconsideration he was sure no one who had occupied the position of Secretary of State could for a moment doubt. What was his first experience after he entered upon his Office? Almost immediately after he took Office there came before him the case of two men who were convicted of burglary, and sentenced to 10 or 20 years' penal servitude, he forgot which. After they had been two years in prison a man confessed that he himself committed the burglary. He (Sir William Harcourt) had the matter carefully examined, and found there was no doubt of the innocence of the two men, and of course they were pardoned. One of those two men, 15 years before, had been convicted of burglary and sentenced to 15 years' penal servitude, the worst punishment a man could undergo. He had undergone two years of the sentence and then received pardon, it being proved that he was innocent of the crime for which he was convicted, so that that man had been twice tried by Judge and jury, and twice wrongly convicted, and twice received pardon, because it was proved that on both occasions he was innocent. Was not that a lesson to any man to make him feel that these were matters that required consideration? Take, again, what happened last year, in the case everyone knew of, and which his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General mentioned as a case where sentence had been commuted. One of the great disadvantages of the administration of the Home Office was that the public did not know the facts, and people might condemn a decision without knowing the grounds for it; but everyone knew the facts of the two farmers who were convicted of an assault and mutilation, and sentenced to penal servitude, and who were liberated afterwards upon the confession of the man who charged them with the offence, the man having committed the assault upon himself. In that case there was fresh evidence in the shape of the confession of the prosecutor; and there were witnesses who, if they had been called on the trial, would have established the innocence of those men. If they were to have evidence come up afterwards, surely it was much better that it should be considered by a Court in which that evidence would be sifted on oath, and everybody would know the reason why so grave a thing as a capital sentence had been set aside. Reference had been made to Sir Cornewall Lewis, whose name he regarded with peculiar veneration, and to the Road Murder, with respect to which he might assure his hon. Friend opposite (Sir Eardley Wilmot) that he perfectly recollected Sir Cornewall Lewis expressing his firm belief in the innocence of Mr. Kent at the time. Another very well-known case occurred during Sir Cornewall Lewis's tenure of Office—namely, the case of Dr. Smethurst. Could anyone believe that that case would not have been more satisfactorily disposed of if it could have been remitted to a second Court? His hon. and learned Friend the Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard) had said it was very desirable not to alter the tone of the tribunal, and had suggested that the Court of Appeal would vary according to its composition. That might be true; but what could vary more than the minds of the Judges who sat alone to try criminal cases? It seemed to him that if they had a Court of this description they should have more harmony and uniformity in the tone of the tribunal than they had now in the independent and isolated action of particular Judges. As the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke) had said, one of the great misfortunes, one of the great scandals, of our criminal jurisprudence was the inequality of the sentences given by different Judges for the same offence. One Judge would sentence a burglar to five years, and another to, perhaps, 20 years' penal servitude, according to his own particular views of the adequacy of punishment; but the best way to correct that anomaly was by referring such matters to a larger tribunal, when there would naturally be more harmony and uniformity. For himself, whether in the graver matter of capital sentences, or in the matters which, he had no doubt, would hereafter come to be dealt with, he saw no disadvantage, but, on the contrary, great advantage, in having the regulating influence of an Appellate Court of this description. He would not detain the House longer, but he had wished to state the principles on which the Home Office had acted, not only in his time, but also in that of his Predecessor, and to record his profound conviction that the exercise of the powers of the Secretary of State could never be a sufficient and complete substitute for such a Court of Appeal as the Bill proposed to establish.

MR. GIBSON said, that the Bill, which was of great importance and interest, had happily been discussed by both sides of the House without the slightest Party bias. He would take the Bill as it stood, and would consider how far it bore the test of the experiences just related by the Home Secretary. Now, he ventured to say that no one who had read the Bill, and had heard the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, would be satisfied that any one of the cases mentioned by him would be covered or even touched by the present Bill. The measure dealt with two points of practical importance—one the reform of procedure, and the other the introduction of wholly new principles. The first of these was comparatively unimportant for the purposes of the present discussion, because the reform of procedure in relation to appeals already allowed—in other words, the methodizing and new arrangement of appeals now in existence—was, in reality, no more than a departmental change. He admitted at once the desirability of some such reform; but details of that kind might be passed over on the second reading of the Bill. The more important and more often debated part of the measure was that which introduced the novel principle of giving appeals at present unknown to the law, and under conditions unknown to our existing experience. That was a matter requiring to be looked at from many standpoints, and rightly to be looked at from the standpoint of the public good and fairness to the prisoner. But the way the Bill proposed to deal with that question was that the prisoner, in capital cases, should, at his own mere will and desire, without satisfying anyone that he had a real, *bonâ fide* case, be able to appeal. Now, that was a grave and startling change which ought to be considered on its own merits; and he would point out that it was anomalous to say they would give that right to a man convicted of murder and under sentence of death, and yet deny it to a man whose liberty and honour was at stake. Another anomaly was that this right was given to the prisoner and denied to the prosecution. It was a Bill supposed to assist the administration of justice; and why, therefore, should a failing prosecution and the public suffer and a criminal plainly guilty be let loose? The object should be not to give a chance of escape to the real criminal, but to elucidate the truth of the matter. It was perfectly obvious that in every case where a man had been convicted of murder and sentenced to death, he must avail himself of the provisions of the Bill. He was not disposed, on the consideration that he had given to the question to think that giving the appeal without check had been proved to be either desirable or advantageous to the administration of justice; but he was disposed to think that it must largely weaken the sense of responsibility that existed very largely at present in capital cases, and that feeling was entirely weakened and frittered away by the details and provisions of the present Bill. The Bill also introduced delay and uncertainty in carrying out a sentence of a most grave character, and prolonged the agony of the unfortunate man, and left the result that many murderers would get off, because public opinion would revolt against executing a man who had had a long time allowed him between his conviction and the carrying out of the sentence. It would also largely weaken the authority of the Court which tried the case. No light had been thrown, either by the Attorney General or by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary, upon what would be the number of the Court; but the Bill said it was to consist of three, five, or seven members, but did not say how the number was to be decided. Again, if a new trial were ordered, what was the result? Upon a new trial being ordered, there was nothing whatever to prevent a fresh appeal upon the result of that; and was it not perfectly obvious that in the case of a man who had had two appeals and two trials, the likelihood of his execution would be reduced almost to a minimum? Suppose that in a tribunal of five there were a difference of opinion — three Judges for affirming the conviction and two for reversing it—the Bill said the judgment was to be affirmed and the man hanged. But would public opinion be satisfied that wrong was not done in carrying out a sentence after the dissent of a powerful and highly educated minority? How did the Bill apply to the duties of the Home Secretary? The right hon. and learned Gentleman who had just spoken had spoken as if the Bill were to ease him in the discharge of his duties; but how was that? He had failed to hear him say one syllable to indicate that a single anomaly would be removed on the passing of the Bill. It was a mistake to suppose that the responsibility of his right hon. and learned Friend would be relieved. He would take the cases which had been mentioned in order. First, there was that of infanticide; the Home Secretary would not be relieved there, for the Court of Appeal would be bound to affirm the appeal in every one of them. He would still have to consider recommendations to mercy. With regard to after-discovered evidence, his position would be in no way altered. Even in a case like Nash's case, the Court of Appeal would give him no relief. He thought, therefore, that the arguments in support of the Bill, at all events in relation to the jurisdiction of the Home Secretary, did not bear out the statements which had been made. A very important charge had often been brought against that jurisdiction, declaring it to be unreasonable and unscientific to have a private inquiry before the Home Secretary. But, however that might be, all those inconveniences would remain under the new system. He did not think the Bill rested on any careful reasoning; and he trusted that before it reached another stage they might be furnished with those 12 cases which were said to have happened during the last three years, in which there was alleged to be a miscarriage of justice, in order that they might consider them in connection with that extremely important subject. If Judges had been dissatisfied with verdicts in the past they communicated privately with the Executive, and invariably the sentence was either modified or remitted altogether. He would not go into the question of authority. Lord Lyndhurst and Lord Brougham, as well as Chief Baron Pollock, Lord Campbell, and Baron Rolfe, had opposed the principle, as did Sir George Cornewall Lewis in 1860, speaking on behalf of the Government of the day. He was not much pressed by the analogy between civil and criminal cases, for, even according to the Attorney General, the analogy did not hold good throughout. He desired, however, to know whether the Crown was willing in all cases to pay for the counsel employed by the appellant prisoner? If they were not, it would be said that the appeal was only for the rich. He took it that they were now, in reality, legislating in favour of an appeal in every case; and therefore they ought to take care that the poor, as well as the rich, had the advantage of it. If it was intended to abolish capital punishment, he thought it would be a great deal the best plan to do so directly and frankly. This, in his opinion, was not the time for it, nor did he think that this was the method by which such a course should be taken. Everyone must desire that a person who was placed in such a position as that of being tried for his life should be tried in the fairest possible way, with every conceivable safeguard for an honest and straightforward trial, and the jury should consider the case from the most upright point of view. He also thought that every person who was placed in such jeopardy should be given the freest and fullest means of defence. But he was not satisfied that it was advancing the administration of justice, or any concession to the claims of humanity, to invite, as they did on that occasion, an appeal in every case, which must add in innumerable instances to the agony of suspense, without doing anything to the prisoner except injury, by keeping his pain and suffering open for some time. He therefore believed that, whether they intended it or not, in the result this Bill would discredit and ultimately cause the abolition of capital punishment. He thought that fact was recognized by the speakers who had taken part in the debate; and he also thought it would be found that all and everyone who had taken part in the discussion were Gentlemen who were not in favour of capital punishment. Now, that was a grave issue, and it ought to be submitted to the nation in a frank and clear manner. He ventured to think that it was an issue which had not been presented to the judgment of Parliament, or of the country, in a sufficiently clear and satisfactory manner.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: Sir, I do not think it would be respectful to the House if I did not offer one or two words after the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman who now fills the Office of Secretary of State for the Home Department. I will only say about the whole of the debate, to which I have listened with great attention, that I am very sorry, for one, that it has been entirely confined to lawyers. I should have thought that the question was one of very general interest, and one upon which the House ought to have had the opinion, and had a right to demand the opinion, not only of professional men, but of persons who had studied the general question, who would have been able to present it in the light which seemed best to them. We heard, at the beginning of the debate, something as to the opinion of the Judges. It has been asked what the opinion of some of the present Judges, and of most of the best Judges was? The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General seemed to make light, if he will allow me to say so, of the opinion of the Judges; and he said that those learned gentlemen were apt to be biased by their professional career, and that they had never stood forward as great law reformers. The hon. and learned Gentleman called the attention of the House to several of the law reforms which have taken place, and he stated that all of them were opposed by the Judges of the day. Therefore, the opinion of the Judges on a matter of this kind was not the best guide for the House of Commons. I think I have only fairly stated what was the opinion of the hon. and learned Attorney General. Now, I should be very sorry to put aside the opinion of the Judges for that of the practising lawyers. I wish, on the other hand, that we had had the opinion of persons of very great experience in regard to the administration of the law, such as magistrates, and persons in other capacities, who might have expressed their opinion on this question with great advantage to the House. It has been argued that it is right to assimilate the practice of the Criminal Law to that of the Civil Law in respect of appeals. I think I am bound to say that, as far as the civil question is concerned, of late years we seem to have gone somewhat in the wrong direction. In these days, the first trial which takes place at the Assizes is not looked upon by any of the parties to the suit as, practically, an end of the litigation. On the contrary, it is looked upon as the beginning of it; and I know that in the majority of cases, when the parties meet at *Nisi Prius*, it is considered that it is not to be the end of the story, but that, whatever the verdict may be, the case will have to be argued again in the Court in London in the first instance; that after that there will be an appeal; and, finally, a further appeal. The whole tendency of our jurisprudence is to make as little as possible of the first trial, and generally to hurry it over as fast as possible, reserving everything to be considered hereafter. Then, if you are going to assimilate the criminal and civil procedure, I think you will make a grievous mistake. I think, further, that there is very great weight in what has been said by all the speakers on this point, on both sides of the House; and that, as far as a trial for life is concerned, there is no trial throughout the whole of England, or I believe in any other country, to which everyone concerned devotes so much of his ability, and the whole of his time and attention, in order to arrive at a right conclusion. I much fear that if the Bill passes in its present shape, it will, to a considerable extent, do away with that condition of things. I cannot help thinking, also, that the remark made by my hon. and learned Friend who sits opposite (Mr. Charles Russell) proves exactly what I have stated, because it has been laid down that if the Bill passes the Government must take care that the First Court is made most essentially a strong Court. And why? Because it is feared that if it is allowed to be a Court composed of ordinary Judges, taken haphazard, and not a specially strong Court, they would allow this process of appeal to grow up in such a way as directly to annihilate the ordinary manner in which the criminal jurisprudence is carried on. [*A laugh.*] I thought I heard someone laugh—at any rate I detected a smile, when my right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson), who has just sat down, spoke of the difference between the poor man and the rich. Nevertheless, that is a matter which the Government must consider seriously on this occasion. They are bound to take into their consideration the difference between these two classes in regard to appeals, the hearing of which will be carried on in Court in the absence of the prisoner. If they are to be carried on in the absence of the prisoner, it is absolutely essential that he should be represented by counsel, and if he is a poor man it will be necessary that the State should pay for his defence. I can see no provision in the Bill which secures that; but if we are to put the rich man and the poor man on the same footing in regard to appeals which are to be dealt with in London, and before the Court below, we must provide the appellant prisoner with counsel. It would be altogether unfair to argue an appeal unless the prisoner was able to meet the argument by counsel. Therefore, I doubt very much whether this Court of Appeal will be successful in the long run, however much we may agree with it in theory; and there is no one who ought to be able to speak more strongly upon this point than myself, because, by a Bill which I passed in 1879, I gave an appeal in every case against the decision of every magistrate in every Court. Perhaps I may be allowed to give to the House some statistics in reference to the abolition of that Bill. In the year 1881 I find that there were 669,000 summary convictions, and there were only 122 appeals. Out of these 669,000 convictions, which, of course, included all cases, however trifling, there were only 44 cases in which the judgment was reversed. That is a very small percentage, and it speaks highly for the administration of justice by the magistrates. There is one difficulty about the present Bill to which I wish to call the attention of the House. We are placed in this very peculiar position—that we have two Bills brought in by the Government—one by the Attorney General, and the other by the Solicitor General—on precisely the same subjects, but with totally different provisions. I believe that an hon. Member called the attention of Mr. Speaker to that fact some days ago. At all events, it is a curious circumstance that the Government should have introduced what is directly the Code which has been passed by the Committee of Judges in the one case, and that they should have brought forward another Bill which only contained a fifth part of that Code relating to appeals, but with totally different provisions as to the subject-matter. It strikes me that this was done for a particular purpose; and it must not be said, if we vote against this Bill, which the Government have now brought forward, that we are against all appeals when properly constituted and properly safeguarded, because in the Bill which I hold in my hand—the Criminal Code Bill—which is practically the Bill of the late Sir John Holker, and which has passed through the Committee of Judges after much time and attention had been devoted to it—in this Bill, as now introduced by Her Majesty's Government, there is an appeal granted with certain qualifications and restrictions. I, for one, entirely approve of the clauses of the last-named Bill, with one exception. Therefore, if I vote against this Bill, and other hon. Members vote against the Bill we are now considering, no one can say that we do so because we are not in favour of a certain amount of appeal being given; but we are absolutely against the particular kind of appeal which is given in this Bill. That leads me to consider what are the main points of difference, because it is quite clear that the Government would not have introduced the measure in this way unless they wished to bring forward one or two points which are not in the Criminal Code. The first objection I take to the Bill is this—in the Criminal Code Bill, whatever appeal you have is granted to everybody. It is a very great mistake, I think, to have departed from the principle of giving the same appeal in the case of all indictable offences, and to have given a new appeal that is restricted to the case of murder. That, I think, is quite sufficient to make us object to this Bill. Again, there is another matter which is of considerable importance also, and that is that in the Criminal Code Bill there is no power given to object to fresh evidence before a Court of Criminal Appeal; but in the Bill I hold in my hand fresh evidence may be given. There is a growing practice—I do not know whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State has seen much of it during the last three years, but certainly it was a growing practice when I was in Office—among attorneys, on the chance of getting their evidence more favourably considered elsewhere, to withhold evidence which ought to have been given before the Court in which the original trial took place. They did so, no doubt, for several reasons, because they knew perfectly well that if they brought forward every bit of evidence in the first instance in the Court below, all of it would be gone into and examined, and the whole of their evidence would be thoroughly sifted. They found it very much easier to send up affidavits to the Secretary of State, because they knew affidavits could not be examined in the way in which the witnesses would be, and there would not be that searching cross-examination which would otherwise be the case. I am very much afraid that by this Bill we shall strengthen the practice which has been and is growing up; and therefore I think it would be very much better if the Government were to rest content with the appeal which is given in the Criminal Code Bill, the effect of that appeal being this:—In that Bill you have to apply for the leave of the Judge. As far as questions of law go, it provides that in such cases the appeal should be with the leave of the Judge, or by the fiat of the Attorney General, in the same way as by the present Bill; but as to questions of fact the appeal can only be made with the assent of the Judge. We have heard a good deal about juries not being trustworthy, and that mistakes may take place; but it is really going a long way to say that there is a single Judge on the Bench who would not immediately grant a new trial in a case of murder if he thought that there was the slightest ground for it. I cannot help thinking that if you are to make an experiment at all, which I presume you are going to do, and which I have not the smallest objection to, the wiser experiment would be to give the right of appeal to everybody for all indictable offences, but to safeguard it in this way, and say—"Before you can have this right of appeal on questions of fact you will have to ask the Judge who tried the case originally for leave to appeal." If that breaks down, which I think it would not, you would then have fair ground for saying that, the Judge having refused an appeal in one case or another, you are bound, consequently, to provide something new. But try this experiment first. I think they will find it a much wiser, safer, sounder, and more logical course to give the right of appeal by leave of a Judge on questions of fact, and by leave of a Judge or by the fiat of the Attorney General on questions of law. If you do that you will get rid of great anomalies. I cannot imagine how you can stand up and defend the proposition that a man who is tried for his life may have his right of appeal without asking anybody at all, but that a man who is tried for his life for murder, and by the greatest good fortune gets found guilty of manslaughter, and is transported for life, should be told—"You have had the chance of a jury. If you had been found guilty of murder you might have appealed; but as they have only found you guilty of manslaughter you cannot appeal at all." I cannot conceive how that can be regarded as a satisfactory condition in which to leave the law. It would be very much better, in the first instance, because it is all tentative, to say—"We will give the same appeal to everbody, but we will give it with the leave of the Judge." It is that anomaly which I object to, and I think if the suggestion I make were adopted the Bill might be made to work without grievous injustice, and might be made to work well. The Secretary of State for the Home Department has rightly described what the duties of his Office practically are. I have no objection to take to anything he has stated with regard to them; but I will go one step further, and I will say that not only are the traditions of the Office firmly and faithfully adhered to, by every Secretary of State in these matters, and politics have nothing whatever to do with questions of this kind; but I venture to say that if the right hon. and learned Gentleman will look into the records of the Office he would find himself able to state one thing further—namely, that the powers formerly attaching to the Office were somewhat different from what they are now. My hon. Friend who sits behind me (Sir Eardley Wilmot) alluded to the late Mr. Waddington. I entirely agree with the praise which he bestowed upon Mr. Waddington; but if there is one doctrine which I hold more strongly than another it is this—that the responsibility established in a capital case rests solely with the Judge and jury who try the case, and that no responsibility rests upon the Secretary of State until he chooses to interfere. That is my own doctrine, and it was the doctrine held throughout Mr. Waddington's time—namely, that the Secretary of State incurred no responsibility until he began to interfere. But that is not the doctrine now held by Members of this House, and the Secretary of State is very often blamed for not interfering in cases in which it was probably quite right not to interfere. I prefer the old doctrine, in regard to the position and the true functions of the Secretary of State. I am quite aware that difficulties do arise sometimes—perhaps not often, but sometimes—by evidence being produced after the trial; but I do not think that in any case I can call to my mind at the present moment would that evidence have been forthcoming. Such a case never came before me, and certainly it would not have been so in the two cases mentioned by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State just now. I mean that the evidence would not have been forthcoming until the time limited for granting an appeal—that is, seven days after the conviction had elapsed. By this Bill notice of appeal must be given within seven days after the conviction; and, in the case I have referred to, what would be the position in which the Secretary of State would be placed? The time for the appeal—namely, seven days, would have elapsed; but the time for the execution of the prisoner would not have arrived. Now, this evidence, as a rule, is not yet gathered together until the friends of the prisoner begin to talk about it; it may be with a view of bringing forward an *alibi;* but new evidence of this kind would only be brought forward within a day or two of the execution. In such a case the man could not appeal at all, because he must give notice of the appeal, and the grounds of appeal within seven days after the conviction. But the seven days have expired, and, therefore, he cannot appeal at all. [The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): He can obtain leave.] Yes, within the seven days.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): He can obtain leave after the seven days by the permission of the Court.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: I am glad that that is so, because I know that whenever new facts and new evidence do come forward they do not come forward until late in the day, and sometimes barely in time to enable the Secretary of State to stop the execution. Therefore, I think it is evident that if the Bill passed in its present shape, the Secretary of State would be placed in a position of much difficulty. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard) has clearly shown the great difficulty the

Secretary of State would be placed in if one or two of the Judges differed from his colleagues. If Judges in such a case found themselves bound to affirm the conviction by law, the Secretary of State would find it difficult to excuse the man from the sentence, although there might be other grounds why he should not be executed. For these reasons I regret very much that the Government should have brought forward the Bill in this shape. I hope it will not be too late when this Bill goes to a Committee upstairs, if it does go before a Grand Committee, to consider the question whether it would not be much wiser to leave the appeal open to everyone in the first instance, but to safeguard it as to questions of fact by leaving it to the Judge who tried the case, and who, unless there were the strongest reasons for refusing an appeal, would undoubtedly grant it. In my opinion, that would be the safest course; and for that reason, and for that reason only, I shall record my vote against the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. PARNELL said, the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had noticed the fact that no speakers that evening, save those who were lawyers, had addressed the House upon this Bill; but it appeared to him, in reference to a measure of so technical a character, that Members who had not had the opportunity of being so well acquainted with all the details of the Criminal Law as the Gentlemen of the long robe might well feel a natural diffidence before trespassing into such a maze as the two Bills of the Government appeared to involve them in. He had ventured to rise to say a few words, in the hope that he might be able to put before the Government some practical considerations, which appeared to him to be of an important character, in reference to the measure, and to questions connected with the probable passing of the measure. The question of an appeal in criminal cases was one which he was surprised had not before been attempted to be dealt with by an English Government. It had, undoubtedly, been a very great anomaly in English jurisprudence that whereas in the most insignificant civil case they permitted the defendant or the appellant to go from one Court to another, and gave him a very much wider and fuller appeal than was given in this case, yet, in the case of prisoners who stood charged with criminal offences, and who had before them the probability of losing their lives or their liberty, or of having inflicted upon them the very severe punishment which the law of this country provided for persons who were found guilty of crimes, they had never thought it right to give to such persons that chance of establishing their innocence, and of showing that the Judge or jury had been mistaken as to the state of the case, which he assumed to be the right of every criminal after he had been found guilty. Now, he agreed with all that had been said with regard to the unfitness—of course, he did not refer to the present Home Secretary any more than to any other Home Secretary, but to the official who usually held the Office of Home Secretary — he agreed with all that had been said as to the unfitness of the Home Secretary to act as the only Court of Criminal Appeal provided by the judicial practice of the country at present. In the first place, the Gentleman who held that post was always a politician; and he thought that it was of the utmost importance that a question of a judicial character, and more especially of a criminal character, should not be allowed to fall within the cognizance and decision of persons of political leanings and opinions. But, if that argument held good in regard to England, it held good in a much greater degree in regard to Ireland. Under the Irish system, the Lord Lieutenant of that country occupied the place which was occupied by the English Home Secretary in the decision of these cases; and the Lord Lieutenant had not even had the judicial training which the Home Secretary of England almost always had to enable him to decide such questions with some prospect of arriving at the truth. On the contrary, the Lord Lieutenant was generally a Peer, by no means well fitted by previous training, and by habits and ideas, for the judicial and impartial decision of the very important questions which would have to be decided from time to time in a country like Ireland. He was, therefore, exceedingly glad that the Government had at last undertaken the consideration of this question of the establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal; and he was exceedingly sorry that they had not before now had an opportunity of submitting to such a tribunal some serious and grave cases which had occurred in the judicial history of Ireland. He would ask the Government whether, in view of the fact that they had introduced this Bill, and thereby declared their belief that it was right that convicted criminals should have the privilege of submitting to the higher tribunal of Judges questions as to their guilt or innocence; whether they would proceed to execute men who might be found guilty hereafter while the consideration of Parliament was being devoted to this Bill; or whether, until this Bill had received the final judgment of Parliament, they would not suspend the execution of persons who might be unfortunately found guilty in Ireland of capital offences, in order that they might have a chance which the Government declared, by the introduction of this Bill, all convicted criminals ought to have in Ireland, as well as in England, of establishing their innocence? There was also another question. He observed, although the Criminal Code Bill provided greater facilities for bringing alleged criminals to trial and punishment, and making it more easy in every way for the Crown, as the Public Prosecutor, to act against such persons—and especially added new offences to be punished under the provisions of the Bill—he had observed that, although the Bill was retrospective in its character, it was not retrospective in this respect, since it provided that the person convicted must give notice of his appeal within seven days after the judgment had been passed. He thought it was an extraordinary anomaly that although there might be some prisoners who might have been convicted a month ago, or who might be convicted next month before this Bill could be passed into law, yet, even if it were possible for these persons to be able to prove their innocence just as well and just as speedily as persons convicted after the Bill had passed into law, by the absence of any provision of a retrospective character in the measure, they deprived such innocent persons of the right of proving their innocence. They had had remarkable cases in the history of the English Courts of Criminal Judicature where persons had been sentenced to long terms of penal servitude who had actually served out many years of their punishment, and who yet, at last, succeeded in demonstrating their innocence so undisputably to the Home Secretary that he had granted their release, and paid them compensation for their sufferings from the Public Exchequer. Surely it would only be fair, right, and proper—and he did not wish to lay any undue stress on any matter which pertained more strictly to the domain of the Committee stage—but surely it was only right and proper, in considering a subject of this important character, to give due weight to the position of those persons who might have been convicted, and who might have been able to prove their innocence before the tribunal which it was proposed to establish. In his conscience he believed that it would be possible to prove that there were, at the present moment, in the Irish prisons, persons convicted of Whiteboy offences, and sentenced to long terms of penal servitude, who were as innocent of the offences imputed to them as any Member of that House. When he was in Kilmainham Gaol, a young man came to him on one occasion—it was after the first Court of Winter Assizes had been held, at which so many convictions had been obtained—and, drawing his attention to the conviction of two men who had just been sentenced to a considerable term of penal servitude, he said — "These men were not guilty of that offence, because I was the man who did it." He added—"One of the men is very like me, and it is probably a case of mistaken identity." He (Mr. Parnell) was not in a position to make use of the information given to him, because the judgment of the Court was final, and there was no appellate tribunal to which the case could have been submitted; but if it were possible to go back upon it now, and to bring it before the Court which this Bill proposed to establish, he believed, in his conscience and in his soul, that it was possible for the innocence of these men, who were suffering now this long term of imprisonment for an offence they were not guilty of, and of which they had not the slightest cognizance, to be completely established, and the unfortunate men would be relieved from the terrible sufferings which a long term of penal servitude must, undoubtedly, inflict on those who had the misfortune to suffer it. He thought it was a very great pity that this Bill was to be made part of the larger Bill which had yet to come under the consideration of the House. The Bill which established a Court of Criminal Appeal was one which appeared to commend itself very much to both sides of the House. In point of fact, although Notice of objection had been placed upon the Paper declaring that the Bill ought to be read a second time on that day six months, it was a matter of extreme doubt whether the Gentlemen who supported that objection would go the length of supporting it in the Division Lobby. He had listened to most of the discussion which had taken place that evening, and it seemed to him that everybody on both sides of the House was in favour of some one or other of the main provisions of the measure. It would be a great pity, therefore, if by including with it some Bill of a larger scope, anything were to happen, owing to the difficulty of getting through the Business of the House in the way in which the House was now fettered, and owing to the nature of the circumstances of the transaction—it would be a great pity indeed if anything should happen to a measure so thoroughly approved of by almost everybody in the House, and if it were not to receive the definite opinion of Parliament and the sanction of the Crown. He did not propose to enter into points of detail at any length, because, in all probability, full opportunity would be afforded for doing so before the Grand Committee, who had to take charge of the Bill; but he noticed that although in capital cases they proposed to suspend the execution of the punishment pending the judgment of the Court of Appeal, of course for good and obvious reasons, yet, in other cases, they did not propose to suspend the infliction of the punishment. Thus persons might be condemned to penal servitude, and might, in all probability, have to undergo some portions of that penal servitude, who might be able to establish their innocence. Should they, in the end, succeed in doing so, it would not be until after they had served some six or twelve months of the worst portion of their punishment, because every person knew that the first part of a sentence of penal servitude, including nine months of solitary confinement, was the worst portion of the punishment which a convict had to undergo. Therefore, he took it that under the Bill as it stood a person sentenced to penal servitude would have to serve out, perhaps, some nine or twelve months of the most severe portion of his punishment before the Court of Appeal could have any opportunity of coming to a decision upon his case. He thought it was only reasonable, under these circumstances, to extend the provision which the Bill contained with regard to the suspension of punishment in capital cases to the suspension of punishment in all cases, so that they might not run the risk, while they fulfilled the condition of keeping a person in safe custody, of punishing a person for a crime of which he might be able to prove his entire innocence. He could only say that he looked upon this measure as a step in advance, and as supplying a very greatly needed want in the Judicature of this country. If he were disposed to suggest any radical alteration in the measure as it now stood, it would be that persons convicted of offences in Ireland should be permitted to appeal to the English Court of Appeal and not be compelled to go before the Irish Judges.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 132; Noes 78: Majority 54.—(Div. List No. 46.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, although he had voted for the second reading of the Bill, he was bound to confess he had done so with considerable scruple with regard to some matters of detail which it contained. Now, with reference to the last Motion of the Attorney General, that, the Bill be committed to a Standing Committee, he would point out that the right hon. Gentleman had made no statement whatever when he proposed it—he had not offered to the House any reasons why the Bill should be so referred. He thought that the hon. and learned Gentleman, by abstaining from offering any reasons, made an assumption which he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) believed the House would take the very earliest opportunity of repudiating—namely, that the reference of a Bill to a

Standing Committee was to be taken as a matter of course. He felt, if that course were to be taken in future, nothing could more justify the apprehension felt on those Benches that the institution of Grand Committees would take away the sense of responsibility which the House had hitherto possessed, and ought always to retain, with regard to every measure introduced. But if the objection of Irish Members on those Benches to the Bill being referred to the Grand Committee without comment was great, it was largely increased by the constitution of the Committee itself. There was the very strongest objection on the part of his hon. Friends and himself, not only with regard to the Committee generally, but with regard to its constitution in particular, to which the fact that the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry) was included amongst the Members contributed in a considerable degree. He therefore offered his protest against the reference of the Bill to the Standing Committee, partly on account of the composition of the Committee, and partly to show that the reference of Bills to similar Committees in future would not be treated on those Benches as a matter of course.

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE said, he did not, of course, object to the Bill being referred to the Standing Committee on Law; but it would be seen by the Order Paper that the next Order of the Day was the Criminal Procedure Bill, which it was proposed to refer to the same Committee, the Government also giving the Committee power to incorporate the two Bills. Now, that seemed to him, for several reasons, an unwise course to take. The Criminal Procedure Bill contained 134 clauses, which must occupy a large amount of the time of the Committee, and it was just possible that the Bill might not be disposed of in the course of the present Session. The Bill which had just been read a second time, however, contained but eight clauses, which referred to questions of appeal alone. If the Criminal Procedure Bill were referred to the Committee, it would be in the power of the Government to propose fresh clauses to the former Bill; and even if the latter Bill were to fall through, they would still have their Bill on Criminal Appeal, which could be easily dealt with in Committee of the Whole House. He submitted that the most practical way of dealing with the question would be to treat the Criminal Appeal Bill in the same way as the Bankruptcy Bill was treated a few days ago—that was to say, not to refer it to the Standing Committee at present; and then, if the Criminal Procedure Bill did not come to anything, it could be dealt with in Committee of the Whole House.

Mr. PARNELL said, he was glad the hon. and learned Gentleman had pointed out the practical inconvenience which would result from the Criminal Appeal Bill remaining in abeyance until the second reading of the Criminal Procedure Bill had been taken. He thought that, if the Bill were referred to a Grand Committee, such Committee should have power to go on with the provisions of the measure, and that they should not be obliged to wait until the subsequent Motion in the name of the Attorney General, relating to the Criminal Code Bill, had been passed; otherwise the Grand Committee would have to lose the time which would probably elapse before the second reading of that measure. The Order might possibly not be reached for several days, as the Government had not command of the time of the House until next Thursday. He did not know when it was proposed that the first Sitting of the Committee to which the Bills were to be referred would take place; but surely, from the point of view of despatch in regard to Public Business, it was desirable that the Grand Committee should be allowed to get to work at once, and that it should not be hampered by the necessity of delaying until the House had decided that the Criminal Code Bill should be read a second time.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS rose to Order. He asked whether, inasmuch as some of the provisions of the Bill cast an expense upon the Exchequer, it was not necessary that the Bill should pass through the Committee of the Whole House?

Mr. SPEAKER: If the Bill involves a question of money, it would, no doubt, be necessary that it should be so committed.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he was unable to assent to the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke). He would, however, propose that the Grand Committee should meet to consider this Bill for the first time on Thursday, the 12th of April. By that time, probably, the Criminal Code Bill would have been read a second time, so that the two measures, he hoped, would be ready for consideration at the same date.

MR. RAIKES said, he ventured to call the attention of the House to the inconvenience likely to be caused by the course about to be taken by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General with regard to this Bill as distinguished from the course taken by the President of the Board of Trade, a few days ago, in the case of the Bankruptcy Bill. The Government were, no doubt, anxious to get these Bills into Committee; but, having regard to the express terms of the Standing Order passed last Session, which regulated the admission of Bills to Standing Committees, he wished to point out that if this was to be done as a matter of course, and as a mere perfunctory proceeding, the House would be deprived of that discretion as to the details of measures which it had hitherto possessed in regard to every Bill remitted to the Committee of the Whole House. Whatever might be thought of the propriety or necessity of submitting Bills to the Committee of the Whole House, there could be no doubt that the House should be afforded that opportunity of considering the details of a Bill before it was parted with by the House and sent to a Committee upstairs. It was, of course, for the House to consider whether it would sanction the sending of Bills, without any examination of their details, to the Standing Committees, merely as a sort of consequential proceeding after the second reading. He did not wish to offer any vexatious opposition to that course, if the House was desirous of adopting it; but he thought the House should remember that it was parting with a most important stage, and losing one of those opportunities of which it had always availed itself. This mode of procedure would be also adopted under circumstances of peculiar disadvantage, because the House was about to send the Bill to a tribunal which was not the House, and that under circumstances in which he thought they ought to take especial care to investigate the details, and to make use of every opportunity of offering instruction or advice to the Committee. They were, however, sending the Bill without a word of warning to the Committee—a perfectly crude body—and thereby relieving themselves of all responsibility with regard to a very important measure, at a time when it was certainly desirable that its details should receive consideration, not merely from Members of the Committee, but at the hands of the House at large.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he would venture to point out that the Bill did actually bring up a new charge on the people, and that it was necessary that the payment out of the Consolidated Fund should be authorized by the Committee of the Whole House.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) begged to thank the right hon. Gentleman for the suggestion made, and would, of course, take care that the proper course was followed with regard to the Bill.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *committed* to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure.

Ordered, That the Committee do sit and proceed on Thursday 12th April, at Twelve of the clock.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (UNREFORMED) BILL.—[BILL 6.]

(*Sir Charles W. Dilke, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Mundella, Mr. Hibbert.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that in the course of the last few days he had had the opportunity of placing himself in communication with the hon. Members who had placed Notices on the Book in regard to this Bill, and also with many of the hon. Members who had Amendments to move. He thought he might say of all those hon. Members that there was little or no difference of opinion with regard to the principle of the measure; but that there was a good deal of difference of opinion with regard to its clauses. All the hon. Gentlemen he had succeeded in seeing had agreed upon a course which he ventured to ask the House to take. It was that the Speaker should leave the Chair on the Bill to-night, on the understanding that the proceedings of the Bill in Committee would be postponed for a month from this day. In the course of the month he would place himself in communication with the representatives of the Corporations interested, and do his best for the views they might entertain. At this time of the night (12.40) it would not be considered necessary for him to make any detailed remarks upon the provisions of the Bill. The Bill was framed substantially upon the lines of the Report of the Royal Commission, and it was in the form in which it passed the House of Lords last year. There was only a change in regard to two Corporations. He would content himself by moving that the Speaker do now leave the Chair.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

Mr. SIDNEY HERBERT said, he was very glad they had had, after many years of waiting, a few remarks from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) on the subject of this Bill. It was a very curious fact that this was the first time in the course of the present Parliament that the right hon. Gentleman had vouchsafed any observations in regard to this measure; indeed, he believed it was something like six or seven years since the right hon. Gentleman had opened his mouth in respect to unreformed Corporations. The fact of the matter was that in 1875, when the right hon. Gentleman took up the question, he was an independent Member sitting on the Opposition side of the House; and it might be he was, in the words once used in the House of Commons, a reformer in search of a victim. In 1875 the right hon. Gentleman moved for a list of the Municipal Corporations that came under the Act of 1835, and for certain Correspondence; and he particularly mentioned the Corporations of Queenborough, New Romney, and Woodstock as needful of reform. He (Mr. Herbert) fancied the right hon. Gentleman withdrew that Motion, and that certain Correspondence regarding the noble Lord's (Lord Randolph Churchill's) borough was moved for in the shape of an unopposed Return. In 1876 the right hon. Gentleman again called attention to the unreformed municipal boroughs, and on that occasion he added to the list of boroughs which would come under his scheme for reform. He (Mr. Herbert) would not read the list, because hon. Gentlemen were acquainted with it. He was not sure whether, upon that occasion, the right hon. Gentleman moved anything; but, if he remembered rightly, his right hon. Friend the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross) agreed, on the strength of the evidence brought forward, that there should be a Royal Commission to inquire into the state and working of the unreformed Corporations. A Royal Commission was appointed, and in 1880 its Report was presented to Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman in charge of the present Bill brought forward all sorts of charges against different Municipal Corporations; and he (Mr. Herbert) was curious to ascertain how far those charges were justified. He had very carefully read through the Minutes of Evidence which was contained in a very large volume; and he found that, on the whole, a minority of charges was proved. That was, however, a matter of detail, upon which he did not now wish to enter. Last year a Bill on the lines of the Report of the Royal Commission was introduced in the House of Lords. The Bill passed through all its stages in the Upper House, not because no valid objection could be raised to it, but because noble Lords were hardly so careful in looking through their Parliamentary Papers as the Members of the Lower House were—in fact, it was owing to a want of vigilance that the Bill passed through the other House. What he objected to was that because the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had brought certain complaints against certain municipal boroughs, and because some of those complaints were proved before the Royal Commission, the right hon. Gentleman should bring forward a Bill in which were included the whole of the Municipal Corporations that did not come within the scope of the Act of 1835 in one fatal Schedule, with the result that nearly the whole of them would be deprived of their present status, and, in the case of many of them, deprived of their Charters. He complained that the Royal Commission had put on the end of their Report an analysis of the complaints made against the different boroughs, without saying whether the complaints were proved or not. He re-asserted that in many cases the complaints were not proved; and he protested against Municipal Corporations which were perfectly pure being brought within the terms of this Bill and deprived of their Charters, because a few boroughs had shown themselves incapable of conducting their affairs properly. He had taken the trouble to analyze the list of Corporations, in order to see which had been complained of and which had not, and he would give the House roughly the result. In the first part of the 1st Schedule of the Bill there was a list of boroughs to which the right hon. Gentleman proposed, subject to the advice of the Privy Council, that fresh Charters should be granted. He found that of such boroughs there were 25, and out of this number 13 had had complaints made against them, though he did not think that more than half of the complaints had been sustained. In the second part of the 1st Schedule there was a list of 49 Municipal Corporations, of which only eight had had complaints lodged against them, and not all of them had been proved. The total result was that in both portions of the Schedule 74 Corporations were included, that in only 21 instances complaints had been made, and that in many cases the complaints had been groundless. He asked if it was just that those Corporations which had not given any cause of complaint should be included in a Bill of this character? The borough which he represented had not given the slightest cause of complaint; it had exhibited no indication of a wish to be changed; and, therefore, he asked why it should come within the purview of this measure? He regarded it almost as an insult to his borough that it should have been scheduled side by side with the borough of Woodstock, which was represented by his noble Friend (Lord Randolph Churchill). Complaints had been made against the Municipal Corporation of Woodstock. He did not say they had been proved—in fact, in looking over the Minutes of Evidence, he found the majority of them were not proved. He, however, objected to the Corporation of Wilton being placed in the same category as that of Woodstock, New Romney, or Queenborough. He could not see in the least why all the Corporations exempted from the provisions of the Act of 1835 were dealt with *en masse* in this sort of way. He did not see that there was any reason for dealing with any of the Municipal Corporations except those proved to be corrupt. If the inhabitants of the different boroughs had presented Petitions praying to be brought under the Act of 1835, he could have understood their inclusion in this Bill; but in many cases —in fact, in the majority of cases—the inhabitants were very much opposed to any change at all. He observed that a Petition was presented by the Municipal Corporation of Usk against any change. The inhabitants of Brackley and Great Tomline were strongly opposed to any alteration; and in the borough in which he was principally interested there was no feeling at all in favour of the change. He did not exactly understand the lines upon which the right hon. Gentleman desired to proceed with the Bill. If the right hon. Gentleman would read the Minutes of Evidence, he would see that in regard to Wilton there was every reason for retaining the Corporation as it was, and none for altering it. In the few remarks in which the right hon. Gentleman proposed the Motion now before the House, he did not say upon what lines he was prepared to accept Amendments. He (Mr. Herbert) strongly objected to the Municipal Corporation of Wilton being included in the Bill at all; and he, to-morrow or the next day, intended to present Petitions signed by all the principal ratepayers and inhabitants of the place protesting against any alteration being made in their constitution or Charter. This was not a measure of general importance, and he failed to see any reason why the House should force a Corporation to come under an Act of this kind, when it was absolutely and entirely against their own will, and against the wishes of the inhabitants generally. He could not help thinking that by far the best course which could be pursued with respect to this Bill would be to refer it to a Select Committee. The adoption of such a course would greatly simplify matters. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board might say that the whole thing would then have to be gone over again, and that there was nothing in the evidence given before the Royal Commission from which the House was not capable of drawing its own conclusion. It must be borne in mind, however, that circumstances could be adduced to prove that these Corporations ought not to be dealt with in one Bill. These Corporations differed from one another in status, and they were all managed in a different manner. In 1875, when the right hon. Gentleman first brought in the Bill, he said he was of opinion that when corporate bodies did not apply the funds under their control to proper uses the money should be taken possession of by the State. He (Mr. Herbert) was not going to quarrel with that proposition; but he pleaded that many of the Corporations included in the Schedule had been tried and not found wanting. The House would be acting contrary to all principles of equity if they allowed those Corporations which had been proved to be pure, and which did administer their funds in the best possible manner, to be thrown alongside Corporations which he had no doubt, from the evidence he had read, needed reform. It was simply because he found that several Corporations did require alteration that he had not put down Amendments to the Bill; and he only now moved, as a matter of form, that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the Bill be referred to a Select Committee,—(*Mr. Sidney Herbert,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he must thank the hon. Member for not putting down a blocking Notice against the Bill. He could not find fault with what had fallen from the hon. Member, as everyone had a right to his own view about his own Corporation; but the hon. Member was hardly correct in saying that this was a matter which concerned everyone in every borough. That was no doubt true, as regarded some of the boroughs in the Bill; but the Bill would not affect some of the boroughs which were not mentioned in the Schedule. There had been cases of direct conflict of authority amongst the magistrates in some of these very small Municipalities; and, no doubt, right hon. Gentlemen opposite would remember some conflicts of jurisdiction between the borough and county magistrates, especially in regard to licensing matters, the result of which had been long and costly litigation. As to what had been said in regard to the borough of Wilton, there might be a case for the exclusion from the Bill of some of the Corporations which might be called purely "ceremonial Corporations." Some of these might be left out of the measure, although he very much doubted whether the borough of Wilton was one of this kind. The question, however, would be one for the Committee to consider when it came to the Schedule. He could not agree to the proposal to refer the Bill to a Select Committee; but he would promise, during the next four weeks, to give the same careful attention to every case referred to him as would be given by a Select Committee. If the Bill were referred, as suggested, the only result would be that the Committee would again go all over the evidence given before the Royal Commission. If the Committee heard any, they would have to hear all cases; and they would have to hear, not only the representatives of the Corporations, but also the inhabitants of the boroughs, who might not be satisfied with the views of those representatives. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) must resist the Amendment of the hon. Member.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question again proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he wished to ask one question. In many of the towns of Ireland the Town Councils were elected under entirely anomalous and ancient franchises. For instance, in the town he represented—Galway—there was a plurality of votes of a most antiquated and unpopular kind. He would ask, therefore, whether it would be possible to deal with the cases of these Irish Corporations in this Bill?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE, in reply, said, that the Bill before them was founded on the Report of a Royal Commission, which had considered the cases of the Municipal Corporations of Englan dand Wales, which were subject to the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835. It would be out of the scope of the Bill to introduce Irish cases, because, in regard to them, no such inquiry had taken place.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* 30th April.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.—[BILL 123.]

(*The Marquess of Hartington, The Judge Advocate General, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) said, that, as the House was aware, this was only the old Mutiny Bill under a new name. The War Office had taken the opportunity this year of introducing a few Amendments into the Bill, most of which he might describe as matters of course, intended to supply omissions in the original measure. He would, however, call attention to one or two alterations of importance. The first was in Section 6, and was to enable officers, as well as magistrates, to attest recruits. The Amendment had been inserted in consequence of the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting this year, which pointed out that the former condition of things was inconvenient. It was highly inconvenient to have to go before a magistrate with the papers in all cases, and the recruits themselves disliked it. An Amendment proposed last year by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had been incorporated in the Bill. It was one which rendered it obligatory on the Secretary of State for War, instead of optional, to order a sum to be deducted from the daily pay of a soldier for the support of his wife or children, either, in the first place, in liquidation of a sum adjudged to be paid by the soldier by an order or decree made for his payment of the cost of the maintenance of his wife or child, or of any bastard child; or, in the second place, if it appeared to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State that a soldier had deserted or left in destitute circumstances, without reasonable cause, his wife, or any of his legitimate children under 14 years of age. Section 8 made further provision respecting the validity of orders of the military authorities for the detention in custody of persons subject to military law on board ship; and Section 9 made some alteration in the status of certain half-pay officers. Formerly, officers on the half-pay list were all retired, and were, therefore, not made subject to military law; but now that depended upon whether they were on the "active" or "retired" list. As half-pay officers on the "active" list were really waiting for employment, it seemed only right that they should be subject to military law. The Bill, therefore, subjected to such law—

> "Officers of the Regular Forces on the active list, within the meaning of any Royal Warrant for regulating the pay and promotion of the Regular Forces, and officers not on such active list who are employed on military service under the orders of an officer of the Regular Forces who is subject to military law."

A Warrant would be published shortly defining the officers to whom this provision would apply. He begged the House to now read the Bill a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*The Judge Advocate General.*)

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman clearly defined, so far as he could understand them, the new provisions in the Bill. He had pointed to one which was exceedingly important; and that one, singularly enough, he had not so clearly explained—he referred to the one he had last mentioned, dealing with officers who were still on half-pay waiting to be employed. It would be a very dangerous thing to state off-hand that that was a proposal which should be readily accepted. It was one which required more explanation than the right hon. and learned Gentleman had given; because, under it, they would have officers living like civilians, subject to all the pains and penalties to which officers serving with their regiments were liable. The House had a right to ask for a more detailed explanation than they had yet received. As to Section 6, which would enable an officer to attest a recruit, no one could deny that it was a fair, reasonable, and just proposal. He presumed there was nothing in the Bill further than the right hon. and learned Gentleman had stated. There was one point which had not been dealt with, and which had come up incidentally in the debate on the Army Estimates—it was a statement made in the Inspector

General of Recruiting's Report, and that was the question of desertions and fraudulent enlistment into other regiments. As he understood it, what had been done of late was this—the man who deserted and fraudulently enlisted into another regiment, when that fraudulent enlistment was found out, was allowed to remain in the regiment into which he had fraudulently enlisted, and was not sent back to the regiment into which he had enlisted originally. Was that the case; and, if so, was it the practice now adopted?

Captain AYLMER asked whether there was any intention of taking more than the second reading to-night?

The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. Osborne Morgan): No.

Mr. SEXTON said, that, some days ago, he had given Notice that on the Motion for the second reading of this Bill he would propose a Motion. He had not availed himself of the half-past 12 o'clock Rule in order to oppose the progress of the measure, because he wished to recognize the spirit displayed by the Government in accepting one of the two Amendments he unsuccessfully brought before the House last Session. But the Amendments introduced into the old Mutiny Act by this Bill still left one of the existing main evils of the law untouched. In the matter of compelling a soldier to contribute towards the support of his wife and family, if he had deserted them, it was well that the discretion of the Secretary of State had been dispensed with, and that the section had become mandatory; but everything in this matter depended upon the spirit in which the clause was administered. He trusted the War Office would see their way to fixing the amount to be stopped out of the soldier's pay—3*d.* a-day in the case of the soldier, and 6*d.* a-day in the case of the non-commissioned officer. He hoped that the noble Lord at the head of the War Office would inaugurate such an administration with regard to the deduction for the purpose stated as would carry into full effect the intentions of the Legislature. The history of the liability of a soldier to maintain his wife and children was this—Lord Cardwell—then Mr. Cardwell—promised to consider the matter; and in the Act of 1881 engagements were solemnly entered into by the Legislature that the wife and children of a soldier should be looked after and cared for as they would be if they did not belong to a man in Her Majesty's Service. Had those engagements been fulfilled? Though there were 600 wives of soldiers, and 1,200 children, receiving outdoor relief, the amount deducted from pay and handed over by the War Office towards the support of these poor persons was only £58, or short of 1*s.* per head per year. The provision enabling the authorities to summon a soldier from his regiment to attend an inquiry at the place where he had left his wife and family was utterly nugatory. Why had it proved so? Because, before the soldier could be summoned, the wife or her representative—unless the Guardians were willing to do so—were obliged to deposit a sum of money with the military authorities to pay the soldier's expenses. This sum was never less than £2; and the result was that the woman, who was usually of the poorest and most helpless class, and the Guardians being unwilling to incur an expense of £2, £3, or £5 for the sake of recovering 2*d.*, or perhaps 1*d.* a-day, the British Army became a shameful refuge for persons who wished to avoid their natural and just obligations. Of what avail was the discretion of the Secretary of State to make an allowance out of the pay of the soldier? It was of no avail. Prosecutions rarely took place. There was a regulation which enabled a soldier ordered on foreign service to evade his liability to attend the summons to answer the charge against him; and he (Mr. Sexton) thought the Army would suffer little if, when a soldier had such a charge brought against him, he was separated from his regiment for a time, or, if necessary, drafted into some other regiment. By this means the respectability of the Army would gain, and its efficiency would suffer nothing. It might be said that there would be collusion between a soldier and his wife or relatives to get him called away from his regiment in order to enable him to desert; but such cases would, he thought, prove to be very rare. If the military authorities suspected it, it would be easy to send the soldier up under escort; at any rate, the system by which poor women and children were cheated out of the contribution from the pay of those who were their natural providers was perfectly immoral and disgraceful. The House paid large sums of money for the vindication of the law, and he could conceive no way in which a few pounds could be better spent than in compelling men in the Public Service to meet such charges as these.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, the hon. Member had admitted that the Government had gone some way last year in the direction advocated; but he thought it would be more convenient to discuss the question in detail in Committee, and that, if the hon. Member considered it desirable to insert the second part of the Amendment in the Bill, he should give Notice of it. He was afraid he could not give the hon. Member any such undertaking as he had asked for; but the subject was under consideration. He would look into the matter before the Committee stage; but he could not undertake that the Government should go further in the matter. The most convenient course now would be for the hon. Member to give Notice of the Amendment he thought ought to be inserted.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he had no doubt that the plan suggested by the noble Marquess was the plan most convenient for the Government; but it was not so for the hon. Member (Mr. Sexton), who rightly insisted on the reform he desired to effect. If the hon. Member took the course recommended by the noble Marquess all his control over the future progress of the Bill would be lost, and the Government was at perfect liberty to reject or accept the course proposed by the hon. Member. He thought the House would be very strongly inclined to take up the opposition of the hon. Member to the measure of the Government. The concession which the noble Marquess had made, while it fulfilled all the engagements he had undertaken, practically left the question in the same position as before. As the law at present stood, the woman was compelled, or the Guardians acting for her were compelled, to deposit the cost of the soldier going to the place where the case was to be tried; but, of course, women of this kind were of the dependent and pauper class; and, with a natural anxiety to save the ratepayers' money, the Guardians would not be inclined to expend money on a charge which might not be proved by the woman satisfactorily to the Court. Therefore, although the discretion of the Secretary of State for War was taken away, practically the law remained the same, because the woman in every case was practically deprived of benefit when the soldier was removed from the locality where the woman lived, or sent on foreign service. He would make no suggestion to the Government, but the course advised by the noble Marquess was more convenient to the Government than to the hon. Member; and as this matter had been before the authorities for several years, and before the present authorities for a year, he thought the hon. Member would be justified in asking that the Government should at this stage state what their intentions were.

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER said, he believed the arrangement would be more simple than the hon. Members seemed to suppose. If a complaint was made by a woman the Guardians took it up. An application was then made to the War Office, which communicated with the officer commanding the man's regiment; and if the soldier made no dispute to the claim the money was deducted from his pay. If, however, he did dispute the claim, there was a further investigation; some guarantee must be taken that the case was a *bonâ fide* case; but he thought any woman would be able to give a guarantee for a few pounds. In the great majority of cases there would be no dispute at all, and the Guardians would only have to apply to the War Office.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday.*

BANKRUPTCY [COMPENSATION FOR ABOLITION OF OFFICE].

Resolution [March 29] *reported.*

Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

MR. RAIKES said, that, although the hour was late, there was an important point arising out of this Resolution which it would be well for the House to consider. He quite agreed with the President of the Board of Trade that a Resolution of this kind used to be a mere matter of form; but, having in view the institution of the new Standing Committees, he was inclined to think that the House would hold that a Resolution of this sort had now ceased to be a mere matter of form. For the first time in the history of Parliament, the House was invited to delegate to another body the power of imposing burdens on the people of this country; and when the House considered the great importance which the English people had always attached to the taxing power of the House, he thought they would hardly be departing from their duty if they discussed this question for a moment before referring the Resolution to a Committee outside the House. He wished to express no opinion with regard to the precise merits of the proposal to compensate these officers; and if the matter had been before the House in the usual manner, in the ordinary course of Business, he should have been very unwilling to interpose at all in relation to it; but as they were asked, as he presumed they were, to refer the question to an extraneous body, he really thought the House would do well to consider how far they ought to deprive themselves of their own privileges in dealing with a matter of such great importance. The ordinary course had been to go into special Committee to consider whether it was desirable to arm the Committee of the Whole House with this power of dealing with questions involving future taxation. Such had been the vigilance of the House that it had not been thought desirable even to trust the Committee of the Whole House with the power of initiating a burden of this kind, unless it had been made a matter of special consideration in a Committee of the House appointed for the particular purpose. When that Committee had decided upon it, and not till then, it had been thought desirable that such a matter should be considered in Committee upon a Bill. The House was now asked to pass this Resolution in Committee of the Whole House; and by doing that they were, he presumed, in some way or other, to make the Committee seized of the whole subject; but they were not allowed the machinery by which the sanction of this Committee was to be imparted to that Committee. He presumed that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain), who, no doubt, was anxious to make his Standing Committee work as well as he could, would make some Motion to instruct that Committee as to the course they were to adopt with regard to this Resolution; but, whether he did so or not, it would be better for the House to retain in its own hands the power it had hitherto exercised. It had fallen from the Attorney General that night that in regard to one of the other Bills which were to be referred to the Standing Committees, he was prepared to consider whether it would not be better to remit the question of expenses arising from that Bill to the Committee of the Whole House; and he thought the President of the Board of Trade would be well advised if he would accept the suggestion to re-commit this Bill, when it came back from the Standing Committee, in respect to the money clauses. By that course the House would retain the jurisdiction it had always exercised in regard to such an important financial question —a question, he ventured to say, which was not to be measured in its importance by the £30,000, or £60,000, or £100,000 involved in this particular case, but which raised the whole issue of the taxing power of the House, and of the exceptional privileges enjoyed by the House in regard to taxation. He did not wish to create any difficulty as to how the Standing Committee was to deal with this question; but he could not help thinking that it would be more in accordance with the spirit of the Constitution, and certainly with the precedents of the House, if the right hon. Gentleman would adopt the course he had indicated. If that was done, he could not see any objection, so far as the question of form was concerned, to the House assenting to the Resolution passed by the Committee on Thursday last; but if that course was not taken a serious question would be raised by this new departure, which would involve the surrender by the House of that particular power which it had always been the first and most important duty of the House to claim for itself. If the right hon. Gentleman would consent to re-commit the Bill when it came back from the Standing Committee, it would probably not take more than five minutes to put in the money clauses. Whenever a Bill of this kind came back from the other House the space for expenses was left blank, and the money clause was put in by the Committee of the Whole House;

and he only asked that in dealing with such questions, when they came back from the Standing Committees, the House should be in the same position as in respect to a Bill coming back from the other House. Questions of this kind were well worthy of consideration; and if this House was to retain the privileges it had hitherto enjoyed, it would be well for the President of the Board of Trade to give this question that attention which he now invited from the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, the right hon. Gentleman had given several special reasons why this Resolution was not precisely a matter of form; but the main argument was that it was to be referred to a Standing Committee instead of to the Committee of the Whole House. That might be a very good reason, but it ought not to be required; because, if the matter were not referred to a Standing Committee, he and many other Members would object to this Resolution. The Resolution declared that it was—

> "Expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of compensation to persons whose office may be abolished, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to amend and consolidate the Law of Bankruptcy."

Practically, that was to give the Executive power to compensate any persons whose offices might be abolished under the present Bill. There was a little matter of form of this kind in 1869, when there was also a Bankruptcy Bill; and we were paying for that now. In addition to commutations—and he did not know how much they amounted to—we were paying £18,000 per annum to gentlemen whose offices had been abolished under that Act. Now, 10 or 12 years afterwards they came forward with another Bankruptcy Bill. They found that a change was wanted again, and Her Majesty's Ministers asked the House of Commons to grant compensation allowances to those officers who had been appointed under the second Bankruptcy Act. He was told that there were a great many gentlemen who were now enjoying the £18,000 a-year still paid in the shape of compensation allowances, who were in excellent health, and were probably likely to enjoy their pensions for many years to come. For his part, he was opposed to the old system, of giving to the Government the right to grant pensions. What happened in such cases? They all knew perfectly well what happened. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade was, he had no doubt, one of the purest men who ever sat on the Treasury Bench—[*Cries of* "Oh!"]—well he (Mr. Labouchere) thought so, at all events. He had no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman would do his best not to give compensation more than was actually necessary. Still, he would find it advisable to grant pensions to some of the existing officers, and they knew very well what would happen. The right hon. Gentleman would not sit for ever upon the Treasury Bench. To use a colloquial phrase—"Some Minister would arise who knew not Joseph," who would have a good many people to provide for, and who would provide for them by giving compensation allowances under this Bill; and 10 years after the Bill passed they would find the country saddled with the payment of further large allowances in the shape of compensation. Now, what he held was this—that when a gentleman received a salary in the Public Service the public had a right to his services. He had not the freehold of the particular place to which he was appointed; and if that place was abolished because it was no longer required, the public had a right to call upon him to do something for the money he received, in some other place as similar as possible to that which was done away with. The adoption of the contrary doctrine had cost the country millions of money. He was not going into that question at that hour of the night, and he complained that the right hon. Gentleman should have brought the matter forward at so exceedingly late an hour. Having, however, done so, he and others who did not agree with the proposal submitted to the House, and who objected to give the Executive the power they asked for, which might enable them 10 years hence to saddle the country with the payment of another sum of £18,000 per annum, would meet the Motion with a direct negative.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: The objections which have been taken to the Resolution are entirely distinct. I will deal first with that which has been taken by my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), which is based, in some degree, upon a misapprehension. The House is not asked to pledge itself to any proposal to grant superannuation allowances. The proposal for superannuation in the Bill itself is extremely limited. My hon. Friend says that, although he would be willing to trust me, he is not willing to trust my successors in Office at the Board of Trade.

MR. LABOUCHERE: It was only a qualified trust.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: All I have to say is, that the qualified trust of my hon. Friend in me is entirely superfluous. I have no occasion to ask for that qualified trust, because the Bill does not propose to confer upon me any power to superannuate officers at all. The only clause in the Bill which raises the question is the 144th, which says—

> "If the Lord Chancellor is of opinion that any office attached to the London Bankruptcy Court at the passing of this Act is unnecessary, he may, with the concurrence of the Treasury, at any time after the passing of this Act, abolish the office."

The Board of Trade has nothing to do with the matter. But though the office has been abolished, there is another clause, the 146th, which provides that—

> "Every person appointed to any office or employment under this Act shall, in the first instance, be selected from the persons (if any) whose office or employment is abolished under this Act, unless the opinion of the Lord Chancellor, or, in the case of persons to be appointed by the Board of Trade, of that Board, none of such persons are fit for such office or employment. Provided that the person so appointed or employed shall, during his tenure of the new office, be entitled to receive an amount of remuneration which, together with the compensation for loss of the abolished office, shall be equal to the emolument of the abolished office.

The object of this clause is to prevent claims for compensation coming upon the Exchequer; and the only case in which such a claim would be valid would be where, in the opinion of the Lord Chancellor, or, in the case of persons to be appointed by the Board of Trade, of that Board, none of such persons were fit for such office or employment. The only effect of the rejection of this Resolution would be, that if any such officer attached to the London Bankruptcy Court, on account of old age or unfitness, becomes disqualified for serving the country with advantage, we should be unable to abolish such an officer, because we should be unable to superannuate him. Accordingly he would be retained; but the taxpayers would not be benefited, because he would continue to receive his full salary. That is the answer I have to make to the objection of my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). The House will see that the question is a very small one indeed, and that the interests of the taxpayers will not be served by the rejection of this Resolution. Then I come to the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman opposite the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), for which I thank him, because I quite understand the spirit in which it is made. The right hon. Gentleman says that by the Resolution we are delegating the power of taxation to an extraneous body. Now, I take exception to that as an inaccurate description. In the first place, we are not delegating to any body the power of taxation possessed by the House. The power of taxation is retained by the House because, after the Committee upstairs shall have considered the subject, and either have accepted or rejected the Resolution of the Government, there will be full power on the Report stage to deal with the matter afresh, and either to reject the recommendation of the Committee if they adopt the Resolution of the Government, or to insert the proposals of the Government if they should have been rejected upstairs. Not only so, but if there should appear at a later stage any reason for such a course, there would be, as the right hon. Gentleman is aware, no difficulty in re-committing the Bill, in order that the matter might be dealt with by a Committee of the Whole House. As at present advised, it seems desirable that the matter should be treated in the same way as similar matters are now dealt with by Select Committees, which consist of a much smaller body, and are much less representative of the House than the Grand Committees. It has always been the practice to consider similar Resolutions, and to deal with matters involving charges on the Public Exchequer. Another exception which I propose to take to the right hon. Gentleman's description has reference to the word "extraneous." The Grand Committees are not bodies which are extraneous to the House; but, on the contrary, as far as the Committee of Selection can make them, they are representative of the House.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I cannot help expressing my regret that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade has not seen his way to the adoption of the suggestion made by my right hon. Friend behind me (Mr. Raikes). I think there is really a great deal of substance in the objection which my right hon. Friend has taken. We are now asked to take a new standpoint, and to adopt a new mode of procedure with regard to Bills of very great importance. Not only will there be additional charges for pensions to be awarded under this Bill, but there will be a very considerable additional charge arising out of the operation of the measure itself; and I hold that it would be a very great misfortune if this House were to lose the power of considering in Committee of the Whole House questions affecting the taxation of the country. That, I think, would be a matter of very considerable importance indeed. I think that when the time comes for receiving the Bill from the Standing Committee that it should be re-committed as far as these charges are concerned. I think it would be most desirable that that should be the case. With regard to the objections which, in substance, the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) has taken, there is, I must say, a great deal of reality in the form to which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade has referred. This Resolution is precisely in the same terms, and the clauses in the Bankruptcy Bill are almost identical with the clauses which were passed in the Bill of 1869. In that case the Lord Chancellor had the power of recommending pensions to be given to officers who had served for a certain period, or who, in his judgment, were unfit to be appointed under the new Bankruptcy Bill. What was the consequence? There were charges imposed by the Act of 1869 which amounted to something like £40,000 a-year; and there now remains in the shape of annuities, so far as these people are concerned, a charge of £18,000 a-year. There are gentlemen who were enjoying a salary of £1,000 a-year, whose age of retirement was only 38, and who are now in receipt of £660 a-year. There are also gentlemen at the age of 49 who were granted their full annual salary of £2,000 a-year, and there are others who were retired on the full salary to which they were entitled at the time of their retirement. One cannot help feeling that there is in the Bill now before the House a return to the system which was introduced in 1869. We may be called upon to pension a large number of officers, or to pay pensions to persons who are discharging duties analogous to those which it is now intended the officers of the Board of Trade are to discharge in future as officers to be appointed under this Bill. Under the provisions of the Bill the Lord Chancellor will have the power, with the concurrence of the Treasury, of pensioning various gentlemen who may be found in the enjoyment of an annual income; and then, 10 years hence, we may have to consider the question of bankruptcy afresh, and have to deal with a fresh body of officers under the Board of Trade, who may not have realized the expectations which are now formed of them. The legislation of 1869 has cost the country altogether close upon £500,000, and whether the legislation of 1883 will cost the country a similarly large sum remains to be seen. I quite agree with the proposal made by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), and I trust that the House of Commons will not rush lightly into any measure in which burdens may be imposed on the country without any corresponding advantages.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL): The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith) is not altogether correct in saying that the provisions of this Bill correspond with those of the Act of 1869. Under the Bill of 1869 I think that I am right in saying a distinct scheme of retirement was contemplated, and there was no provision that the person so retired should be employed under the Bill. I do not think there was any such provision in the Bill of 1869 as that which is contained in the present Bill. I speak, however, from memory, and if the right hon. Gentleman says that I am wrong, I will accept his correction; but I do not think I am. What I understand the right hon. Gentleman opposite to recommend is that, though a person may not be fit, nevertheless he ought to be employed. [MR. W. H. SMITH: No!] That is what I understand to be the effect of the suggestion, because the Bill in terms provides that the persons who are to be employed are, first of all, to be selected from among those now employed, if they are fit to discharge the duties of the new offices. I do not think that it would be desirable that if persons are unfit they should, nevertheless, be appointed to places under the Bill, and I understand that to be the real issue. [Mr. W. H. SMITH dissented.] My right hon. Friend shakes his head; but this is the way in which I understand the question, and it seems to me to be the clear construction of the clause to which the right hon. Gentleman referred. I can assure my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) that there is no one more alive than I am to the great scandal which has arisen under the Act of 1869. No doubt there are persons in the enjoyment of pensions who ought not to be in the enjoyment of pensions at all, and I have no sympathy with what was done in the Act of 1869. There was no provision, however, in that Act for compelling the employment of persons if they were unfit for employment. In this Bill it is simply proposed that such persons, if unfit for employment, should receive a superannuation allowance; and to that extent, and to that extent only, a charge would be thrown upon the Exchequer. It has been suggested that there are other charges that will be incurred under the Bill; but there are no other charges whatever.

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, he did not think that it mattered in the slightest degree to the House what analogy the present Bill had to the Bill of 1869 in regard to the claims for compensation. What he objected to at the present moment was that this Bill was drawn upon different lines from any other Bill ever brought before the House. He thought the suggestion made by his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) and the right hon. Gentleman below him (Mr. W. H. Smith) was worthy of much more attention than had been given to it. It was one thing to give a Committee of the Whole House power to deal with the Bill and the money clauses contained in it, and quite another thing to give to a Committee upstairs the same power. Such a power had not been given before, and if it was to be conceded in this instance he thought the proposal should be considered with very great care. The power they were asked to give to the Grand Committee was the power of inserting in the Bankruptcy Bill a clause that would involve the expenditure of money without their knowing how far the expenditure might lead them, as there would be no means of checking it. It seemed to him that the most natural course to take was to know, first, what the amount of the expenditure would be, and then effect that expenditure in the recognized way. In such a case they would deal with something definite and tangible, instead of a proposal which was altogether indefinite. They did not say to the Committee to whom they were sending the Bankruptcy Bill that there must be a certain amount of expenditure; but they said—"You are to pass certain clauses of the Bill which will afterwards, under certain circumstances, occasion expenditure." He thought it would be far better for the Government to declare what the amount of expenditure would be, and then ask a Committee of the Whole House to sanction the expenditure itself. Under these circumstances, in order to give an opportunity for the Government to reconsider the matter, he would move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Captain Aylmer.*)

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I am sorry that I do not see the right hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) present; but clearly the objection made by his side of the House is to the proposal to leave the matter entirely to the Committee upstairs, without an assurance that the Bill will be re-committed. I think I have stated that we should be ready to consider favourably any suggestion that might be made at a subsequent stage for that purpose; but I thought it would be better to leave it as a matter to be considered at a later stage. I do not desire that the Government should be called upon to pledge itself to any distinct course. I now gather from what has been said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) that he and his Friends attached considerable importance to such an assurance, and all I can say is that I see no objection to giving it. Therefore, I will undertake that when the Bill returns from the Grand Committee the Government will move that it shall be re-committed in respect of this clause, in order that the clause itself may be reconsidered.

Captain AYLMER said, that, after the assurance which had been given by the right hon. Gentleman, he begged leave to withdraw the Motion for Adjournment.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 70; Noes 13: Majority 57.—(Div. List, No. 47.)

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) BILL.—[Bill 24.]

(*Mr. W. J. Corbet, Mr. Callan, Mr. Dawson, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Gray.*)

SECOND READING.

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [14th March].

Mr. WARTON rose to Order. He had given in a Notice of opposition to this Bill on the 19th of March, and it would be remembered that the House only sat until the 20th of March, when it adjourned for the Easter Recess. He asked Mr. Speaker to decide whether the days which intervened before the House re-assembled on the 29th of March would count in the time allowed for renewing his Notice of opposition? It had been the practice for, perhaps, 100 years in the Courts of Justice not to take into account the Vacation intervals in deciding the time within which pleadings had to be delivered.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Standing Order relating to this subject seems to me very clear and positive. The Notice of opposition on the part of the hon. and learned Member having been given on the 19th of March, and not renewed, it does not now apply to the Motion before the House.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at a quarter after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 3rd April, 1883.

MINUTES.]—Public Bill—*First Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 2)*.

LAW AND POLICE — INTERROGATION OF PRISONERS.—OBSERVATIONS.

Lord DENMAN said, that, seeing the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition in his place, he desired to call his attention to a report in the morning papers, from which it appeared that the noble Marquess, presiding at the Hertford Quarter Sessions, had said—

> "He had always tried to impress juries that evidence of that kind was evidence to which they should not attach the slightest importance."

The report did not appear to be a full one, and his object in calling the attention of the noble Marquess to the matter was to give him an opportunity of disclaiming any intention of saying that the evidence of policemen generally was not to be relied upon. An Act of Parliament imposed upon the police the duty of cautioning prisoners against saying anything which might criminate themselves, because anything they might say might be used against them; but his noble Relative — who had been thanked by Sir Robert Peel in the House of Commons for his testimony as to the good conduct of the police soon after their establishment — constantly expressed his wish that prisoners might be allowed to state anything they wished, when first apprehended; because, if corroborated by evidence or circumstances, it would be of the greatest importance to them on their trial.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: My Lords, my noble Friend gave me no Notice of this Question. I have not even seen the report to which he referred; but undoubtedly the statement I made as the Chairman of Quarter Sessions appears to be very much in the sense of that which was made by the distinguished Judge, the Relative of my noble Friend—that is to say, that we ought not to attach any importance to evidence extracted from prisoners by interrogation by the police.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 2) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and to be read 2ª on *Thursday* next.—(*The Earl Granville.*)

House adjourned at half past Four o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 3rd *April,* 1883.

MINUTES.] — Public Bills—*Ordered—First Reading*—Universities (Scotland) * [131].

First Reading—Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) * [130].

Committee — Report—National Gallery (Loan) * [128].

QUESTIONS.

NAVY—MARINE PENSIONERS—THE AUXILIARY FORCES.

Mr. E. COLLINS asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he can hold out the hope that the position of Marine Pensioners serving as Sergeants on the permanent staff of the Auxiliary Forces will be favourably considered by him, with the view of removing the inequalities which at present exist between them and Army Pensioners, serving in a like capacity, as regards pay and status?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes, Sir; the attention of the Departments interested has been directed to the matter referred to by my hon. Friend, and I hope that the inequality complained of will be redressed.

IRELAND—LABOURERS' COTTAGES—LORD CRICHTON'S COMMITTEE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If, having regard to the necessity for encouraging the better housing of Agricultural Labourers in Ireland, the restrictions at present existing, against lending for more labourers cottages on an estate or portion of an estate given as security than are necessary for its proper cultivation, will be withdrawn, and also if the collateral security, which is taken on loans for building labourers cottages in urban districts, may not also be taken in loans for similar purposes in agricultural districts?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, the hon. Member bases his Question on certain recommendations in the Report of Lord Crichton's Committee; but the subsequent passing of the Land Act has materially altered the circumstances of the problems considered by that Committee. However, in reviewing the provisions of the several Land Improvement Acts with a view to their simplification, the suggestions made in the Question shall be duly weighed.

NAVY—DOCKYARD CHARGES—REPORT OF DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE.

Lord HENRY LENNOX asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, What, if any, objection he has to lay upon the Table of the House the Report of a recent Admiralty Committee on Dockyard Incidental Charges, which was presided over by Mr. Hamilton?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, the Report of the Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into incidental expenditure at the Dockyards is of a confidential character, and intended for the information of the Board of Admiralty. It would be inconvenient, and, I believe, also quite unusual, that such a document should be made public.

Lord HENRY LENNOX: In consequence of the unsatisfactory answer I have received, on going into Committee of Supply on the Navy Estimates I shall call attention to the great inconvenience which arises from Members of the Government quoting in their speeches official documents of a confidential character which they are not prepared to lay on the Table of the House.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Perhaps I may be allowed to explain—and my explanation may save the noble Lord the trouble of drawing attention to the subject—that I did not quote from this document at all in my speech on the Navy Estimates. I merely referred to the fact that an inquiry had been held, and had had the result of promoting economy; but I did not say anything about the Report or quote from it.

Lord HENRY LENNOX: The hon. Gentleman alluded to the document as bearing out his own views. If a document were, even in that manner, brought before the House of Commons, it becomes the property of the Members of the House of Commons.

TREATY OF WASHINGTON—THE ALABAMA CLAIMS.

Mr. KENNARD asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been directed to the following passage in the "New York Times," on the subject of the undistributed balance of moneys under the Geneva Award:—

> "The Award was made to the States, the money to be divided at its own discretion, guided by no standard except such as our Government should adopt for itself. But good faith and honour have been defiantly ignored by our Government in its action, which has struck a blow at arbitration, as the means of settling international disputes, from which it will not soon recover;"

and, whether Her Majesty's Government will afford the House an early opportunity of discussing the Motion of which I have given notice?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, it is contrary to usage, and would be inconsistent with the dignity of the House, to found a discussion on a passage in a foreign newspaper, which has no official character, and represents only the opinion of the writer. The question of the Alabama arbitration has now only a historical importance; and Her Majesty's Government has no interest in the manner in which the United States Government may deal with the money which it has received in respect of these claims.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND — TRAINING COLLEGES—ADMISSION OF DISSENTERS.

Mr. MORGAN LLOYD asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to a letter from Mr. Boucher, the Principal of the Carnarvon Church Training College, which appeared in the "Carnarvon Herald" of last Saturday, in which Mr. Boucher declared his determination to refuse to admit a young man as a student to that College on the ground that though confirmed by the bishop of the diocese, he had been baptized by a dissenting minister, and was not a member of the Church of Christ at all, but merely of the Congregational Society; and, whether he will consider if a person holding those views can discharge the duties of Principal of a Training College supported in part by the State?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he had no knowledge of the fact stated in the Question. Indeed, if he had, the matter was not one which would come within the control of the Home Department.

MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND ART, DUBLIN.

Mr. WHITLEY asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether by the conditions of the competition issued by the office of the Public Works, Dublin, dated the 5th of September 1881, in reference to the Dublin Science and Art Museum, it is provided by Clause 20—

> "That the Committee of Selection shall report to the Treasury upon the five selected designs, and the Treasury will select the author of one of them to execute the new building as architect;"

whether all the difficulty has arisen owing to the breach on the part of the Board of Works and the Treasury, of Condition 21 of the competition—

> "That until after the award on the final competition is given and officially made public, no drawings or photographs should be sent to the public, nor any design or copy should be exhibited publicly or privately;"

and, whether, under the above circumstances, he is still prepared to maintain that no guarantee was given that one of the selected five should be the architect of the building?

Mr. COOPE: I beg to ask, in addition, whether, owing to the breach of contract on the part of the Government, an offer has been made to one or more of the five successful competitors of £500 on condition that they gave a receipt in full of all demands?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, in answer to the Question of the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope), I must deny that there has been any breach of contract. No contract at all has been entered into; an offer has been made, but quite irrespective of any alleged contract. The hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley) has put to me three Questions, two of which lead up argumentatively to the third—namely, whether any guarantee was given that one of the selected five should be the architect? In answer to this I would reply that, under the 10th paragraph of the memorandum of the terms of appointment of architect, provision is expressly made as to what should be done supposing no one of the selected five was appointed architect; and I, therefore, adhere to the conclusion that no such guarantee was given. The hon. Gentleman will, I think, agree with me that it is unnecessary to answer the preparatory Questions.

MR. COOPE: I wish to ask whether, if the Government has offered £500 to one or more of the successful competitors, it is his intention to award the same amount to all of them?

MR. COURTNEY: Certainly not, Sir.

LICENSING ACTS—OFF-LICENSING—BEER LICENCES.

MR. D. GRANT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the decision of Mr. Justice Field and Mr. Justice Stephen in the case of "Kay versus The Justices of Darwen," by which the judges named held that "The Beer Dealers' Retail Licences (Amendment) Act, 1882," gives the licensing justices power to refuse the renewal of existing off licences without there being any grounds for such refusal; whether he is aware that in consequence of the Act, and the decision referred to, several respectable holders of off licences applying for renewals to the licensing justices at the recent annual licensing meeting, were deprived of their licences, and have suffered considerable loss as a result; and, whether the Government recognise the hardship the Act in question is inflicting upon a respectable body of tradesmen without any fault of their own; and, if so, whether they are prepared to take such steps as will secure such persons being properly compensated?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that the question of compensation was not raised at all by the cases decided by Mr. Justice Field and Mr. Justice Stephen, who had held that the Beer Dealers' Retail Licences (Amendment) Act, 1882, gave the licensing Justices power to refuse the renewal of existing off-licences for the sale of beer at their discretion, for other reasons than those mentioned in the Wine and Beerhouse Act of 1869. There had, however, been a more recent decision —March 15—of the Supreme Court, which showed that the magistrates were bound to exercise a judicial discretion, and were not free to refuse arbitrarily. Probably the hon. Gentleman had not seen this decision; but in no case could the question of compensation arise.

LAW AND JUSTICE—JUDICIAL INQUIRY INTO CRIME, OR ALLEGED CRIME, WHERE NO PERSON APPREHENDED.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to recent correspondence regarding a notable case in which he has taken part, Whether, as the Law of England now stands, there can be no judicial inquiry into a crime, or alleged crime, short of murder, when no person has been apprehended and accused?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, there is no such provision in the existing law for the purpose suggested by my hon. Friend; but he will find that certain power is taken for that purpose in the 12th section of the proposed Code.

PARLIAMENT—RULES OF DEBATE—BLOCKING.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the honourable and learned Member for Bridport, If he is aware that the Bill to afford increased facilities for obtaining sites for places of worship, schools, and residences for teachers and clergymen in Ireland, applies to Ireland only; and, if he will remove his block, so as to permit of this Bill being read a second time, with a view to its being then referred to the consideration of a Committee?

MR. WARTON: Sir, I must thank the hon. and gallant Member for his courtesy in giving me Notice of this Question. With regard to the Question itself, I am quite aware that the Bill applies to Ireland only. Regarding it as an invasion of the rights of property, and Ireland being a country where these rights have been already attacked, I wish to prevent any further invasion; and, therefore, I decline to remove the block.

TURKEY AND RUSSIA—ARMENIA.

MR. M'COAN asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to a correspondence in the "Daily News" of Saturday last, dated "Trebizond, March 18," which reports the expected imminence of a Russian invasion of Armenia; and, whether, in view of such a contingency, Her Majesty's Government regard the Treaty known as the Anglo-Turkish Convention as being still in force?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I read at the time it appeared the statement in *The Daily News*, which amounted, I think, simply to this, as the hon. Member has correctly quoted—that a report from a correspondent abroad stated that there was an expected imminence of a Russian invasion of Armenia. We have had no confirmation whatever of that intention, and the matter remains in a state of pure hypothesis. To discuss a question of such great importance, resting on a statement so hypothetical, would be contrary to the rules on which the Government act in all its Departments, and not, I think, be in conformity with the public interests.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether Her Majesty's Government have received any assurances from the Porte as to whether they will carry out such reforms in Armenia as will satisfy the people of that country?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am much obliged to the hon. Member for calling my attention to this matter; but perhaps he will kindly give me a day or two's Notice before he puts the Question.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—THE COAL AND WINE DUES.

Mr. RITCHIE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether any communications have passed between the Government and the Metropolitan Board of Works on the subject of the renewal of the Coal and Wine Dues; and, if so, whether he will state to the House the nature of such communications; and, whether the Government have come to any decision on the subject?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, there have been communications between the Government and the Metropolitan Board of Works on the subject of the renewal of the coal and wine dues to this extent—that there was the expression of a wish from the Board that a deputation should come to the Treasury on the subject. The matter stands for further consideration, and I think that when the Session is more advanced it is highly probable that I may receive a further communication from the Board of Works; and such a deputation, if asked for, will undoubtedly be received.

Mr. RITCHIE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Metropolitan Board of Works has postponed any further step on the question of providing any further connection across the Thames until the decision of the Government has been given on this question? I understand that the Board has requested an interview, and that the right hon. Gentleman has not yet replied fixing a time to receive the deputation.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am not aware of it.

SPAIN—EXPULSION OF CERTAIN CUBAN REFUGEES FROM GIBRALTAR.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, On what day he can give facilities for discussing the question of the release of the Cuban refugees? He might add that he had done all he could to get a place at the ballot for the discussion of the question.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, the Papers which explain the nature of the arrangement that has been accorded to us by the Spanish Government are now on their way, and will be immediately presented to Parliament. Not being of any great bulk, they will, I hope, be in the hands of Members before many days have elapsed. When the right hon. Gentleman has read them, I shall be happy to confer with him as to the way he can best raise the question if he should desire to raise it.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he would repeat the Question on Monday.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE POLICE BILL.

Colonel ALEXANDER wished to know why the Police Bill was not proceeded with last night, although the President of the Local Government Board had informed the right hon. Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) that as the blocks had been dropped the Bill might be brought on at any time?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: It was thought, Sir, that the Bill was too important to be taken at so late an hour as 2 o'clock in the morning.

PARLIAMENT—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—GRAND COMMITTEES.

Mr. CAINE said, he wished, with the permission of the Speaker, to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther), Whether he was correctly reported in *The Yorkshire Post* on the 28th of March as having said, in a speech delivered at a Conservative banquet at Kirby Moorside, that—

> "Attempts had been made to remove from the immediate control of the House of Commons the consideration of the practical details of legislative enactments and to refer them to carefully packed representatives of the Birmingham caucus. He ventured to think that Members would consider when a Bill came out of that select *coterie,* and when that monstrous farce had been done, the serious business of legislation would begin?"

If the right hon. Gentleman were correctly reported, was the House to expect that the resolution thus expressed of systematically re-debating on Report the Bills coming from Grand Committees would be seriously carried out? And he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman also—[*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: Any Question not put to Ministers of the Crown should relate to some Bill or Motion before the House. I do not understand that the Question of the hon. Member does relate to a Bill or Motion before the House.

Mr. CAINE said, that the Question had reference to the Standing Orders of the House and to the Bankruptcy Bill.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask the Government what Business it is proposed to take on Thursday and Monday next?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, the majority of the House is aware that on Thursday my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer will submit the Financial Statement. In former times it has been usual to receive the Financial Statement and simply to put questions upon it, and to turn to some practical account the remainder of the evening. It is generally felt that that is a convenient course, as a subsequent day is always fixed for the consideration of the Statement. I am inclined to think that there will be a disposition to pursue that course in the present year, more especially as my hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) has an important Motion to come on with regard to the Public Expenditure on the very next day. Therefore, I presume the right hon. Gentleman wishes to know how we intend to dispose of the residue of Thursday evening. The most urgent call upon us at the present moment is the Army (Annual) Bill, with which it will be desirable to go forward. If there should be further time at our disposal, we should take the second reading of the remaining Bills that have to be referred to Standing Committees. I am hardly in a position to say what will be done on Monday until I see what will become of these Bills on Thursday.

NAVY—THE TRANSPORT SERVICE.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been drawn to articles appearing in the "British Merchant Service Journal," entitled "Slop Work," referring to defects which existed in certain vessels selected for Transport Service during the recent operations in Egypt; and, if he will state whether the Admiralty have consulted the Marine Department of the Board of Trade as to the fitness or otherwise of the numerous merchant vessels which are said to meet the requirements of the Admiralty for the purpose of cruisers or transports?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, it is not usual for the Admiralty to consult the Board of Trade with reference to the vessels engaged in the Transport Service. In the present case the vessels at the time they were hired by the Admiralty had a certificate from the Board of Trade.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—"COUNTS OUT."

Mr. CALLAN asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it was in accordance with the usual practice of Her Majesty's Government that one of the junior whips, whose duty was popularly supposed to be to keep a House and cheer the Ministers, and one of the subordinate Members of the Government, should promote and actively facilitate a "count out" of the House during the discussion of a Bill to the principle of which Her Majesty's Government stood pledged, as was the case when the Irish Registration (No. 2) Bill was counted out early that morning?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The Question of the hon. Member sounds to me like one full of pitfalls, and as I am not cognizant directly of the circumstances alluded to, I hope the hon. Member will pardon me if I ask him to postpone the Question.

Mr. CALLAN said he would repeat the Question on Thursday.

PARLIAMENT—COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (SPECIAL REPORT).

Leave to Committee to make a Special Report:—

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY accordingly *reported* from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Members fron the Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures:—Sir John St. Aubyn, Mr. Stansfeld.

And had appointed in substitution:—Mr. Henry Fowler, Mr. William Edward Forster.

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY further *reported*, That they had added the following fifteen Members in respect of the Bankruptcy Bill: — Mr. Allsopp, Mr. Arthur Cohen, Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Robert Fowler, Mr. Theodore Fry, Mr. Gregory, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Compton Lawrance, Mr. Macnaghten, Mr. Meldon, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Serjeant Simon, Mr. Waugh, Mr. Wills.

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY further *reported* from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure: — Sir Richard Cross, Mr. William Edward Forster, Mr. Henry Fowler, Mr. Gregory.

And had appointed in substitution:—Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Grantham, Sir John St. Aubyn, Mr. Stansfeld.

MOTIONS.

AFRICA (RIVER CONGO).

RESOLUTION.

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT,* in moving—

> "That, in the interests of civilisation and Commerce in South West Africa, this House is of opinion that no Treaty should be made by Her Majesty's Government that would sanction the annexation by any Power of territories on or adjacent to the Congo, or that would interfere with the freedom hitherto enjoyed by all civilising and Commercial agencies at work in those regions,"

said, it is not easy to introduce a question to the House about which little is known, and in regard to which, therefore, not a very wide interest is felt; but, Sir, the less a question is known, the more it ought to be brought to the notice of the House, if it be an important question. I am convinced that the subject before us is one of the utmost gravity; and, if I fail to impress the House with that conviction, I am sure some hon. Members who will follow me in the debate will succeed in doing so. The country to which the Resolution refers lies between 5 deg. 12 min. and 8 deg. Southern latitude, on the South-West Coast of Africa. It embraces both banks of the Congo, and has become of extreme importance, owing to the knowledge we now possess of the greatest of African rivers, and of the country through which it flows. I will first say one word as to the character of the stream. From the mouth to Stanley Pool, the distance is 336 miles. For the first 115 miles the river is generally two miles wide, and deep enough for ocean-going vessels. Portions of the remaining distance are impeded by rocks and cataracts, and here roads have been constructed for the conveyance of merchandize to Stanley Pool, from which place the river is navigable for nearly 1,000 miles. The river has large tributaries also navigable, and the productive character of the country cannot be surpassed. The territory on the Lower Congo is under the rule of Native Chiefs and Kings. Trade is more absolutely free than in any other part of the globe where any considerable commerce exists, and missionaries have freedom for all their various labours. Whatever may be said with regard to slavery, there is no such thing as the export of slaves from the

Congo. As to the general security of the country, merchants make no complaint. They pay an annual tribute, and there the matter ends. The missionaries make no complaint. Nobody in that region complains. I have looked at the official Papers presented to the House a few days ago, Containing a Correspondence between Her Majesty's Government and that of Portugal from the year 1845 to the year 1877. During this period there is no evidence of disorder until the year 1877. In the year 1877 there was a complaint from the English Consul that crimes had been committed, a factory burnt, and some Portuguese had committed dreadful barbarities on the people, and had been assisted by a British subject. I understand Lord Granville to express an opinion that there ought to be some authority there which does not now exist, by which better order might be maintained. If an authority is established there which does not now exist, it should be one in which the Natives can have confidence, and which the traders can respect. If a change is to be made, it should be a change for the better. I think everyone will agree with that proposition; and, in view of that, I should like to discuss what the Government propose, and what are likely to be the results. We have had very little information given us. Everything is vague with regard to this question; but, so far as I know, Her Majesty's Government propose to make a Treaty with Portugal, by which they will sanction the annexation to that Power of this important territory. The Treaty, so far as I understand, relates to the questions of trade, of religious freedom, and of slavery. This proposed Treaty has met with extraordinary resistance. Every class of persons, every individual who has had, or has, relations with the Congo country is in arms against it. Let me look at the question in regard to trade. The Government would require what they consider favourable conditions for us. They would ask that Portugal should give us moderate duties throughout all the Portuguese possessions in Africa; that also the British trader should be put on the same terms as the Portuguese. I trust that when my noble Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) rises to address the House, he will tell us what the Government understand to be moderate duties. A country like the Congo, that has no duties and no Custom House, is one in which trade is absolutely free. The traders in that region might, therefore, not take the same view of moderate duties which the Foreign Office takes. It does not seem that we should be wise in upsetting Native rule on the Congo. In Zanzibar, where we have a Native African Government, the trade is eight or ten times greater than in the Portuguese Province of Mozambique. It is understood that the Foreign Office looks with some satisfaction on the Mozambique tariff, where official figures show the duties to be 10 per cent; but every merchant knows that that is altogether fallacious. The duties in Mozambique on some of the most important articles are not less than from 25 to 35 per cent. No doubt, the Government will tell us that by the proposed arrangements we are to have a great improvement in Angola. In that Province, the import duties are excessive—there are considerable export duties, there are differential duties in favour of Portugal—British vessels cannot trade on their coast, nor carry merchandize between Angola and Portugal. I am, of course, prepared to admit that if we had a Treaty removing all these grievances, there would be some gain; but I am here to state that those who know the Congo, and those who know Portugal in Africa, say that no possible Treaty will induce them willingly to admit the Portuguese to another yard of African territory. If we had low duties, it does not follow that we should have a large trade. I am not speaking now for British traders only, but for the traders of every European country who go to the Congo territory. The Portuguese have a method of making trade impossible. They have passports, papers, tolls, fines, and fees—fees at every corner. You can hardly look at a bale of goods after it has passed the Custom House without having to fee somebody. My noble Friend may say—"Yes; but our Treaty will remove these difficulties, and make trade an easy thing in the Portuguese territory." But will he tell us what is the cause of the difficulty at present? It is too deep to be removed. It lies in the fact that the Portguese officials are an ignorant class, and badly remunerated, and therefore they become corrupt. There is no Treaty that could get at this radical defect in the Portuguese system. But, admitting that these difficulties could be got over, there are other methods of destroying a Colony, and of paralyzing trade which the Portuguese well understand. You may destroy trade by excessive internal taxation, and I do not know that any Treaty ever contained a clause interfering with the right of a country in regard to internal taxation. In Angola, for instance, there is an income tax of 10 per cent. Our Income Tax is at present 6*d.* in the pound, or 2½ per cent. It causes irritation. People think it burdensome. What effect would an Income Tax of 2*s.* in the pound have on the commerce of this country? How far would it interfere with our power of competing successfully with other countries? That is not all. There is a property tax of 10 per cent in Angola, and a house duty of 6 per cent. There is a duty on the transfer of property of 6 per cent. If you sell a house or a bit of land, you have to pay 6 per cent on the transfer. Will my noble Friend tell us if this Treaty, if it be made—I hope it never will—will prevent English, Dutch, French, and German commerce on the Congo from being paralyzed by a state of things like this? Then what is the character of the Portuguese—their character for intelligence, for enterprize, for any of those qualities which a country ought to possess that is expecting to extend its borders, and take still further Provinces under its control? The chief river of Angola is the Quanza. It is navigable—there are steamboats upon it—but how have the Government arranged the navigation of this river? For the last 18 years it has given the navigation into the hands of one firm, which has made it a close monopoly, and that firm charges from 40*s.* to 50*s.* a-ton for a distance of 150 to 200 miles, or, in other words, it charges as much for that distance as is charged between the Congo and Liverpool. I saw it stated the other day that we had 10,000 miles of railway in India. This is not much, considering the extent of the country. But Portugal was in possession of Angola for 200 years before the foundations of our Indian Empire were laid, and yet there are almost no roads in Angola. The people have to carry goods mainly on their heads up to this day, as they have done in times past. Another fact. There is splendid river water within nine miles of the capital of Angola; but the Portuguese have never yet succeeded in bringing it to the thirsting inhabitants of the town. It is still brought in casks and sold to the people at a high price. Now, it would be difficult for me to express to the House the anxiety which exists at the present moment in the mercantile mind of this country—of course, I mean among the merchants who have to do with this part of the world—it would be difficult to describe how nervous they are in regard to what the Government are supposed to be doing. They tell me, and I believe it, that if this Treaty were made, if the annexation takes place, if Portuguese troops were landed on the Congo, there would be no factory or business establishment that would not be put in a state of defence. Such would be the irritation of the Natives at the Portuguese taking possession of their country, that they would treat every White man as an enemy, and do all they could to destroy his property. I am an old enough Member of this House to be aware that it is a common thing, whenever any considerable change is proposed, for hon. Members to foretell that all sorts of dangerous things will happen; and, as a rule, those things do not happen. It may be that the House fancies this is a groundless fear. But let me mention one fact to show that the fear is not groundless. Twenty-eight years ago, the Government of Angola sent an armed force, which took possession of Ambriz, the most northerly town of the Angola Province. The Natives had to submit; but, before they did so, they destroyed the factories in the neighbourhood. I am not going to discuss the question as to the claims of Portugal to this territory, for the simple reason that our own Governments in the last half century have denied these claims, and successfully resisted them. For 200 years Portugal has had no connection with the Congo. The trade of the Congo, which 30 years ago was almost nothing, has now risen to something like £2,000,000 sterling per annum. But the Portuguese have not contributed in any respect to this trade, as is shown from the fact that the Portuguese steamers from Lisbon to Loanda never touched at the Congo till last January, when one came there, in consequence, no doubt, of the negotiations as to this Treaty. It left the country, without a passenger and without a ton of cargo. The House is aware that Foreign Secretaries have repeatedly guarded this territory. In 1853, Lord Clarendon, the Foreign Secretary, said—

> "That the interests of commerce imperatively required the Government to maintain the right of unrestricted intercourse with that part of Africa."

Our trade then was almost nothing. If the territory were worth some consideration on the part of the English Government at that time, one would suppose that it would now require far more earnest attention. After commerce, I understand the next most important feature of the Treaty is that which is to give us additional guarantees from Portugal that slavery and the Slave Trade shall be suppressed. I cannot help believing that the Anti-Slavery Society has more knowledge of Partugal in relation to slavery than the Foreign Office. The Foreign Office has received a Memorial from the Anti-Slavery Society on this subject, in which they say—

> "That they cannot but view the proposal for this Treaty with the gravest apprehension. Whatever amount of sincerity might be credited to the Government of Lisbon in respect to the suppression of the Slave Trade, it has been proved, by long and painful experience, that an inadequate, feeble, and corrupt Executive in Africa has both given protection to the Slave Trade, and at the same time imposed the most vexatious obstruction to the extension of legitimate commerce, by which the traffic might be superseded."

Allow me to quote also a paragraph from a despatch to Lord Granville, from Mr. (now Sir Robert) Morier, dated "Lisbon, April 25, 1881"—

> "The first act of the new Cabinet in connection with Colonial matters has been to recall Senhor Sarmento, the Governor General of Mozambique, in disgrace. The crime of Senhor Sarmento consists in having not only admitted that there was Slave Trade from the Mozambique coast, but in having done good work in putting it down; he has fallen a victim to the intrigues of Senhor Machado and the Geographical Society of Lisbon, whose object has been to make out that the Mozambique Slave Trade is a mere hallucination of Her Majesty's Consuls."

I had an interview last Friday with a Gentleman well known to the late Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and to other Members of the House—I mean Lord Mayo, who has been spending a good deal of time in South-West Africa. He has been over all these countries; he knows the Natives and the Portuguese; and, with respect to this question of slavery, he gave me some information which I think ought to be communicated to the House. He says that between Angola and the Island of St. Thomas there is a regular traffic in slaves, and that official forms are made use of in order to conceal its character, and to enable the officers of the Govern- met to reap some portion of the reward. Slaves are brought from the interior to Catumbella—they are called "Colonials," The price here is £7 a-head. They are then sent on lighters to the Portuguese steamship at Benguela, thence to Loanda, where official forms are gone through. They are assumed to have engaged themselves for five years' service. They are then shipped in the same steamer to the Island of St. Thomas. They are well treated on board, and decently clothed. Price at St. Thomas from £10 to £15; a pretty girl sells for more. They can be re-engaged by the planters at the office of Santa Anna, the capital of the Island. In this re-engagement they are not consulted. They die early. Lord Mayo came by the steamship *Angola* in February last from Benguela to Lisbon, when 82 of these "Colonials" were on board. They never see their own country again. I do not know where we could find greater credulity than that which would seem to exist in the Foreign Office, if they believe that anything on paper is likely to compel the Portuguese to suppress slavery in Africa. There is an Association exercising great influence on the banks of the Congo, which ought to be better known in this country. I refer to what is ordinarily called the Belgian Association. Generous and public-spirited men in this and other countries formed that Association some three years ago, with the munificent King of the Belgians at its head. I believe I do not exaggerate when I say that the King himself, from his own private fortune, has given not less than £70,000 a-year for its support, and the object is to promote intercourse between Europe and Africa, and to extend so far as they can the advantages of civilization to the negroes in that country. They have stations all the way up the Lower Congo; they are pushing these stations on the Upper Congo. They make arrangements with the Chiefs. There is neither force nor violence. All is done by friendly negotiations, and the spirit of Penn in his negotiations with the Natives of Pennsylvania seems to have guided this Association in Africa. They are looked upon with gratitude by traders, by missionaries, by travellers, and by all who have intercourse with that part of Africa. I need not say that this Association, from its head downwards, would dread the possible approach of Portugal to the mouth of the Congo. They believe that such an advent would be the advent of a Power hostile to commerce, to freedom, and to civilization. Then there are the missionaries. The Baptist Mission has many establishments on the Congo. It is an influential Mission, guided by men of great intelligence. They, too, look upon the possibility of this Treaty with great fear and anxiety. One of those who are engaged in missionary labours in Africa wrote to me—

> "What we, as a Missionary Society apprehend, should the Portuguese be recognized as the rulers of the Congo Country, is that they will adopt the same repressive and persecuting policy as they have adopted all along the Coast of Africa where they have had any power whatever. Already Portugal has assumed a persecuting attitude against our missionaries at San Salvador—the Roman Catholic priests intimating that, in a little while, Portugal will have the power, and that then our missionaries will have to fly the country. This is not mere hearsay, but a fact, and no Treaty guaranteeing religious equality is worth much to the Government of Portugal."

But, Sir, there is yet another class to be considered on this occasion, a class which must be counted by hundreds of thousands, indeed, by millions, if we go further into the country and assume that the Power at the mouth of the river may have considerable influence in the interior. I refer, of course, to the Native population. I shall be right in appealing to the Prime Minister with regard to them. I may ask him whether they are not to have some voice in this transaction? We are bargaining away their country, and it is not ours to give. The Foreign Office is making terms for us which we reject. Is it making any terms for the Natives? Well, in appearance, the Natives are not forgotten. The Treaty will forbid the Portuguese to buy or sell negroes; but the Foreign Office is full of evidence to show that Portugal cannot help buying and selling negroes, whenever there is a profit upon the transaction. A Government which consents to have any part in placing Portugal on fresh territory, in giving them this important country at the mouth of the Congo, should at least make some inquiry as to the character of Portugal in her African possessions. There would be no difficulty in arriving at the facts. Here is a little country, not much larger than Scotland, with a population less than that of Ireland, having territory on the Continent of Africa of six times the extent of the United Kingdom. Will anyone on the Treasury Bench place his finger on one single spot on the African Continent where the Portuguese have planted themselves, and show that there their presence has been a blessing to the Natives? On the other hand, if I assert it has been a curse, will anyone in the House give adequate testimony to show that I am wrong? Take the East Coast of Africa. Many of the officials on the Mozambique are convicts sent away from Portugal. That, I suppose, is undeniable. I have it on a great amount of authority. In Angola, the army is largely composed of convicts. I was told this by a Portuguese merchant, and on my hesitating to believe it, he said—"It is true, and it is easy to get what I say corroborated by writing to the former Consul." In a letter since received from Mr. Watson Uredenburg, Her Majesty's former Consul, he says—

> "That so far as relates to the time when I was Her Majesty's Commissioner, the troops forming the garrison of Loanda were undoubtedly formed from the worst class of convicts, capital punishment having been practically abolished in Portugal."

When he speaks of the worst class of convicts, I know what he means. He means there are men who have committed murder amongst them. It is not an uncommon thing for men who have committed murder in Portugal to be at large in Angola. A little while ago we succeeded in abolishing a punishment which was very odious to us, the punishment of flogging. That punishment, however, appears to be almost universal in the African possessions of Portugal. The persons convicted of serious crimes are generally flogged to death. In Mozambique, the Portuguese officials scarcely dare venture on the mainland, unless they are escorted, for fear of being murdered; and in Delagoa Bay, the officials dare not venture outside the town without being armed. That is the sort of feeling existing between the Portuguese and the Native population over which they rule. In Angola, the Portuguese cannot even go to the southern bank of their own river, the Quanza; they have to keep on the northern bank, on account of the hatred of the Native population. They cannot travel by land between Loanda and Ambriz. There is an interesting book, entitled "Angola and the Congo," by a Portuguese gentleman, Monteiro, who is recognized as an authority both in London and Lisbon, and I trust the House will permit me to read a few extracts showing the effect of Portuguese rule in their African Provinces. He says—

> "Trade or commerce is the great civilizer of Africa, and the small part of the coast we are treating of at present (Congo) is a proof of this. Commerce has had undisturbed sway for a few years with extraordinary results. The Natives have not been spoilt as yet by contact with the evils of an ignorant and oppressive occupation as in Portuguese Angola."

Then he says—

> "Were not the Natives of Ambriz such a remarkably inoffensive and unwarlike race, they would long ago have driven the Portuguese into the sea. It is a great pity that Portugal should neglect so disgracefully her Colonies, so rich in themselves, and offering such wonderful advantages in every way for colonization and development."

Speaking of a most fertile country within easy reach of Loanda, he says—

> "Apathy reigns supreme, and the authorities at Loanda prevent any attempt to get out of this State by the obstructions of all kinds of petty and harassing imposts, rules, and regulations, having no possible aim but the collection of a despicable amount of fees to keep alive and in idleness a few miserable officials."

Monteiro refers frequently in his book to the great depopulation in Angola. He speaks of the "depopulation of the country," of the "stifling of any attempt at industrial development on the part of the Natives." That this is a truth admitting of no denial or defence is, he says—

> "At once shown by the fact that the sources of the great exports of Native produce are all places removed from the direct misrule of the Portuguese."

There never was so strong a condemnation of the government of a Colony as that. Where Portuguese influence is felt, there the earth refuses to yield its produce; the supplies of the export trade come from regions uninfluenced by them. I am afraid of tiring the House; but I should like to make one or two more statements, because, after all, it appears to me that it is the character of the Portuguese in their Colonies that we are discussing to-night. If we find that character wholly bad, then, surely, we shall scarcely persist in carrying out the policy which we fear the Government proposes. This traveller—I quote still from Monteiro—says—

> "We passed many places where towns had formerly existed; but the inhabitants had been obliged to remove further into the interior to escape the wholesale robbery and exactions of the Portuguese. . . . We found traces everywhere of a former very much larger population, and the same true tale of the inhabitants having been driven further inland by the rapine of the Portuguese rulers. . . . The furthest inland district in Angola under the rule of the Portuguese was that of Cassange; but a successful revolt of the Natives against the oppression of the Portuguese 'chefes' led to its being abandoned a few years ago."

There is only one more short extract which I shall read. In it Monteiro says—

> "Were the Natives otherwise than inoffensive and incapable of enmity, they would have long ago swept away the rotten power of the Portuguese in that large extent of territory."

It is this rotten Power which the Government now proposes to establish amongst those inoffending Natives. I do not know what crime they have committed that they should be subjected to so tremendous a penalty—a penalty not for a term of years, but to be perpetual. There is a line well known to every Member of this House—

> "None but himself can be his parallel."

That line would apply with strict accuracy to Portugal, if we could forget the existence of Turkey. There is a wonderful similarity between Turkey and Portugal. You have a Turkey in the East of Europe, and you have a little Turkey in the West. There is similarity in this respect, that the officials and employés of both are ignorant; they are badly and irregularly paid, and the consequence is that they are corrupt and feed upon the Natives. There is also this similarity, that where Turkey rules, the Provinces are often desolate; and, according to an authority who may be perfectly trusted, the Provinces of Portugal are in many places rendered desolate by the presence of the Portuguese. The hon. Member for Bath (Mr. Wodehouse) has put down an Amendment to my Motion. He would admit the Portuguese to this important possession, on condition that we should get "adequate guarantees." I wonder if the hon. Member for Bath has ever been for a long time in connection with one in whom he had absolutely lost confidence and, if so, whether he would be willing to contract still closer engagements by getting more "adequate guarantees?" I do not know what guarantees might satisfy the little town of Bath; but I can tell the hon. Member for Bath that there is a commercial public in Great Britain outside the town of Bath, and that Liverpool, Glasgow, Manchester, Bristol, Bradford, and the City of London have all sent earnest Memorials asking that this step may not be taken. In this country, a Treaty is made by the Crown, which means, of course, the Cabinet, and it is not known to Parliament until it is made and ratified. Some four or five years ago, my hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) raised a question in the House as to whether it was safe that Treaties should be made and ratified without the knowledge of Parliament. I remember that the Prime Minister on that occasion opposed the Motion of my hon. Friend, and I think I am correct in saying that he vindicated the present practice on the ground that no Minister, no Government, would ever dream of making a Treaty which was not in harmony with the general opinion of the country. Let me ask the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, when he rises, to tell the House how many Memorials and representations, of an earnest character from public bodies and eminent individuals, the Foreign Office has received in opposition to this Treaty, and how much public support, or how much support of any kind, they have received in favour of the Treaty. The facts as to public opinion laid before the House would be such as to make any Government hesitate in going against it. I have not made any reference to France in regard to this question. There is an opinion—I do not know how far it is well-founded—that what has been done and said by a subject of France in Africa has somewhat disturbed people's minds, and has had some influence at the Foreign Office. Some of those who have communicated with me since this Motion was put on the Paper—and I cannot tell how many communications I have had from all quarters—think that there has been a great exaggeration with regard to this matter, and that it may only result in a salutary extension of French commerce. It may end in nothing; but even if there should be annexation which comes down to the north bank of the Upper Congo, why should we invite another Power to the Lower Congo, where we and the Dutch and the French have a large commerce, where she has none, and where her character is such as I have described? There is a wide-spread feeling amongst those interested in this question, and it does not seem to me to be an irrational feeling, that this subject is of sufficient importance for the different Nations of Europe to come to some friendly understanding with regard to it. We have an International Commission for the Danube. It would seem a much easier thing to have an International Commission for the Congo. There are on the Congo every year national vessels from Austria, Germany, Italy, France, and England, which go there presumably to give protection to their own subjects. Does not that point to the possibility of an international understanding? To bring about such an understanding would be worthy of the ambition of a great Government, and if the Prime Minister would consent to give his mind to the question something might come of it. One word more, Sir, and I will no longer tax the patience of the House. This vast region of Central Africa—watered by noble rivers, thickly peopled, rich in varied products—has been given to the world mainly by the indomitable courage of two men of our own race, Livingstone and Stanley—names which I venture to say will long be held in honour by two great nations. In presence of this memorable fact, of which this Assembly must be proud, I will not believe that an English Minister will place the gateway to this magnificent territory in the hands of the one European Power that is bankrupt in every quality which might entitle her to its possession. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Mr. WHITLEY, in seconding the Motion, said, it was not his intention to travel over the ground which had been so well occupied by the hon. Member for the City of Manchester (Mr. Jacob Bright). He (Mr. Whitley) thought they would all admit that no Government, however weak that Government might be, would seriously compromise such interests as those which had been brought under the notice of the House, except upon the strongest possible grounds; and, more than that, he thought the Government would not for the first time attempt to interfere with those rights which Englishmen had enjoyed so long on the Congo, and which had led to Treaties between English merchants on the one hand, and Native Princes on the other, and also to Treaties between the Government of this country and the Native Princes. He could not believe that any Government would seek to interfere with those Treaties, or to harass that trade, except upon the most conclusive grounds. In the observations he should address to the House he should, therefore, endeavour to anticipate some of the grounds upon which he believed, if any action at all was contemplated by the Government, that action would be vindicated. The House was aware, from the Correspondence which had been laid before it, that the claims of the Government of Portugal to that territory had been of long standing. Those claims had been investigated by successive Foreign Ministers, and 40 years ago Lord Clarendon informed the Portuguese Government that there was no foundation for those claims which were brought forward. Those claims were founded on the discovery of the country in the 15th century; but everyone who had read the Blue Books and investigated the subject would see that according to International Law no claims of this sort could exist, unless there had been a continuous possession on the part of Portugal, either expressed or implied. Those claims were pronounced to be void 40 years ago, and in consequence of the distinct assurance of the Government of that day there had been a vast increase during those 40 years of the trade with that country. During that time commerce had immensely increased with the people of that country, and they had become comparatively happy and prosperous. In a letter which he had before him from a gentleman who had long traded with that country, he was told, on the assurance of Lord Palmerston, that if necessary he would send a British man-of-war in order to protect British interests on the Congo, and that beyond Ambriz the Portuguese Government had not the vestige of a claim. In consequence of that assurance, he built factories on what was accounted to be ground where Englishmen could build factories. That these factories had been built and trade carried on ever since under this assurance of the Government was, he thought, a strong case why the Government should show that there should be no variance from the decisions of Lord Clarendon, Lord Palmerston, and Lord Derby. It was very difficult to understand upon what grounds the negotiations for a Treaty could ever possibly proceed. The English trade on the Congo was five times larger at the present moment than that of the Portugese Government, extending to 800 miles of coast. That commerce had been fostered by the knowledge of the freedom of trade which had prevailed, and which had been secured by Treaties made upon the statements of our Foreign Ministers. The Native Princes had entered into Treaties of commercial relationship with English houses. They had faithfully kept those Treaties, and commercial enterprize was continued up to the present moment. He would ask the Government whether they were prepared to interfere with a trade which had been so peaceably conducted for a long series of years under the protection and assurances of the British Government? He thought that such a conclusive case had been brought forward that no Government could put such a proposition before the House. It might be, as suggested by his hon. Friend, that France had made, and did make, some claim to the territory. It might be a very convenient thing to set that up; but, at the same time, he would ask the Government was it a wise thing to be faithless towards the antecedents of a great commercial country like this? This country existed on its commercial relationship—its commercial freedom—which was the watchword of the days in which we lived; and he would put it very strongly to the Government, and to the apostles of Free Trade in the House, were they prepared in a day like this, when hostile tariffs were the rule of Europe and America—when there were so few countries open to English commerce—were they ready to give to foreign countries what was denied to British commerce? Were they prepared to give a tariff to a river which had hitherto been free to the nations of the world, and to do that to the detriment of those whom they had encouraged in this trade, and who had made the country a mercantile community? He thought that such a course of procedure would be most unpopular to the country, and unpopular to those interests which, during the past few years, had suffered so grievously from these hostile tariffs. They all knew how the manufacturing and commercial interests of this country had suffered — how Liverpool, Manchester, Bradford, Leeds, Glasgow, and every commercial city had suffered—and were they going now to cripple those interests? They had learned from the statement of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Manchester that wherever the Portuguese trade was there were strong hostile tariffs. He believed the general tariff of Portugal was about 35 per cent as against the English manufacturer. He was told it was possible to effect a Treaty by which the hostile tariffs might be lowered from 35 to something like 10 per cent. He was sure the House—and he was sure the mercantile community at large—would rejoice to think that the tariffs of Portugal were lowered with regard to Portuguese ports; but he would put it to the House, and to the Government, whether they were prepared on this account to saddle with import duties a port which had been practically free? He trusted, therefore, that the Motion of his hon. Friend might be a success. He thought it was one of the most important Motions which had been brought before the attention of the House of Commons. They were defending that day the interests of Free Trade in its highest and its best sense. They were asking the House of Commons to maintain those principles which they had adopted in this country, and would they not see it adopted in foreign countries? He asked them in return to protect the interests of the English and of England, and not by an unfortunate Treaty put a hostile tariff on the struggling manufacturers and merchants of this country. It was on these grounds that he very heartily supported the Motion which had been so well and ably moved by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Manchester. On a question of this kind there could not, and ought not to be, any Party feeling. It was a question which affected them all. It affected the interests of the country. It affected the interests of those toiling inhabitants of Africa, who had been so greatly benefited by the course of procedure of the English Government in the past, and who were gradually being rescued from barbarism by honest industry and enterprize. He would ask the Prime Minister and the Government whether they were prepared to send back again to the dark ages these poor people, who had exhibited such great commercial and religious improvement? Were they prepared to take a retrograde step, and send back to the days of barbarism and obscurity those who were gradually emancipating themselves by industry and enterprize? On the ground, therefore, of benefiting those communities on the Congo which it was the object of British statesmen in the past to benefit, he asked the House to go on in the career which they had adopted, and to support heartily the Motion of his hon. Friend, for he believed that in so doing they were doing very much indeed to promote the interests of England, as well as the best interests of the Natives on the Congo. It was on these grounds he very heartily and sincerely supported the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Manchester.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in the interests of civilisation and Commerce in South West Africa, this House is of opinion that no Treaty should be made by Her Majesty's Government that would sanction the annexation by any Power of territories on or adjacent to the Congo, or that would interfere with the freedom hitherto enjoyed by all civilising and Commercial agencies at work in those regions."—(*Mr. Jacob Bright.*)

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he felt quite sure, whatever opinions might exist in different parts of the House as to the merits of this question, that everybody would agree that the speech in which his hon. Friend had introduced the Motion was one of great ability, indicating a thorough acquaintance with the subject. He could assure him, and also the Seconder of the Motion, that he was entirely at one with them as to the importance of the question which had been brought before the House. He believed it was one of the most interesting commercial subjects which had for many years engaged the attention of the House, not only in regard to its present, but also in regard to what might be called its future aspect. The great discoveries made of late years in African geography had given to every subject connected with that Continent a peculiar importance; and although, perhaps, it was not altogether a pleasant prospect, it nevertheless seemed to be one to which, in all probability, the House and successive Governments would have to make up their minds that, owing to the great increase of African discovery, and also owing to the manner in which different nations were beginning to occupy, or, at least, to attempt to occupy, the African Continent, discussions and controversies of that nature might tend, perhaps, to become more frequent than heretofore. Therefore, in this debate they were approaching a subject which might in some way become of historical importance, and the position now taken might hereafter be regarded as a land mark. Under these circumstances, the Government felt that nothing was more reasonable or more natural than that there should be a considerable difference of opinion. In the first place, he would say a word or two on the Constitutional aspect of the subject. His hon. Friend had spoken of the position and influence of the Foreign Office and the Treaty-making power of the Crown, and he had laid down the general proposition that the Crown—which he said was practically the Cabinet—had the absolute power of making Treaties, and that those Treaties were ratified before the House of Commons had an opportunity of expressing an opinion on them. Now, that proposition was one which he could not quite accept; it was one of dangerous latitude. What generally happened was this, that a Treaty was negotiated with the consent of the Cabinet and through the medium of the Foreign Office, and that at some stage, which varied in regard to time and place and according to the gravity of the situation, Parliament had, as a rule, an opportunity of expressing an opinion before it was ratified. In all those cases which were of real importance Parliament had an opportunity of expressing, if not directly, at least indirectly, an opinion. A misconception appeared to arise in regard to the term ratification. The ratification did not take place at the time of the signature, but at a later stage. In the case of the Treaty of Berlin, the ratification took place on the day subsequent to the great debate in that House. But if he wanted a case on all fours with the present one, he would rather find it in the commercial precedents; and he might remind the House of, perhaps, one of the most memorable — namely, the commercial portion of the Treaty of Utrecht, which, after it had been signed by the English Plenipotentiaries, was discussed in that House, and a Resolution brought forward by the Members for great commercial constituencies was carried against it. In consequence, several of its most important clauses never came into operation. Therefore, he could not admit that Parliament was entirely shut out by the Constitution from the consideration of those matters, and if he wanted a modern instance to support the case, he thought the present debate might be said to furnish it. If it was found, in the course of the debate, that the feeling of the House was hostile to the steps which had been taken, or to the course which the Government, on full consideration of the case, had determined to adopt, he believed it would be impossible for any Government to proceed against the clearly-expressed opinion of that House of Parliament. Apologizing for having touched on that rather dry and technical aspect of the question, he now proceeded to the merits of the case. His hon. Friend had dwelt on the enormous importance of the interests at stake. Nothing his hon. Friend could say could add to the sense of the importance of this question entertained by Her Majesty's Government, who had, in fact, already had it forced upon their notice by the information they had received from different persons, who felt great interest in the question, and from gentlemen engaged in commerce and in missionary work in that portion of Africa. But there were certain physical facts which spoke for themselves. Modern travellers, such as Livingstone, Stanley, and De Brazza, had dwelt on the importance of the Congo; but there was another and an earlier traveller, an Englishman—Tuckey—who had published his views many years ago of the immense importance of the Congo as a navigable stream. He said the Congo, even when at its lowest volume, discharged 2,000,000 cubic feet of water per second; and against the tides of the ocean 40 miles out at sea the river was still asserting itself. Of the great streams of Africa it alone possessed a navigable estuary, whereas other rivers only began to be navigable some distance up the stream; and although it was true that above the estuary there were rapids and falls, nevertheless above them again, as was stated by the travellers to whom he had just referred, there was a magnificent body of water, a great navigable river, stretching right away to the Eastern side of the Continent; while, owing to the energy of Mr. Stanley, a road had been constructed between the points where the rapids began and where they ended, which had already led to the development of a large amount of commerce. All this showed the importance of the subject. But not only on account of the commercial question was it important. Of late years, missionary bodies, comprising men of great ability and intelligence, had made their way to most difficult and dangerous regions, in a manner peculiar to Englishmen, and had achieved great results. He had heard depreciatory observations made to the effect that these missionaries were only traders under another name. Even assuming that to be so, he himself believed that missionaries engaged in trade could not fail to exercise a beneficial influence; for the example of honest men like these carrying on trade must surely exercise an influence for good upon the Natives, and, as a matter of fact, so far from losing their character by trading, they had, by engaging in trade, raised the character of the Natives and weaned them from a life of savagery and plunder. Therefore, they had not only commercial interests, but also missionary interests to consider; and both from the commercial and missionary world there was evidence in the possession of the Foreign Office of the great interest taken in this question. But the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for Manchester (Mr. Jacob Bright) was an indictment of the policy of the Government, and what he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) had to do was to meet him upon that point, and to show to the House the reasons which had induced the Government to depart, up to a certain point, from the attitude hitherto observed by the Foreign Office in regard to this question. The hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley) had alluded to the despatches which had a few days ago been laid upon the Table of the House, and had asked why Her Majesty's Government had departed from the attitude taken by Lord Clarendon, Lord John Russell, Lord Palmerston, and the present Lord Derby upon this question? He would not altogether admit that Her Majesty's Government had departed from the attitude taken by those eminent statesmen. The attitude taken by them—namely, that they did not recognize the position of the Portuguese in this region, was still the attitude of Her Majesty's Government. But Her Majesty's Government considered that circumstances had since arisen, which, they believed, had they arisen in those former days, would have induced the Government to consider whether they did not furnish adequate reasons for taking, up to a certain point, a new departure, and entering into communications with the Portuguese Government in order to see whether some arrangement could not be made to obviate the existing difficulties and dangers. Now, what were those difficulties and dangers? And here he came to a point to which his hon. Friend the Member for Manchester had referred. His hon. Friend had dwelt a great deal upon the horrors of slavery and the Slave Trade. What was forced upon the attention of the Government some years ago was this—that, owing to the fact that here was a territory over which it was very difficult to say there was any recognized or constituted authority, events were taking place which, if they did not amount to the actual restoration of slavery and the Slave Trade in their most odious form, yet assumed a close resemblance to it. It was impossible for the Government to close their eyes to the facts which were brought to their notice, not only by the Portuguese Government, but by their own officers. Her Majesty's Government felt there was no sufficient guarantee against this state of things, and that the very increase of trade was tending to create a condition of things in which the Native Tribes were running serious risks. He would lay briefly before the House the statements made upon this painful subject by a gentleman whose name was familiar to many hon. Members. Mr. David Hopkins, Her Majesty's Consul at Loanda, in a despatch, dated the 1st of May, 1877, to the Governor General of Angola, informed him of the abominable excesses practised by some Europeans on the Zaire. Mr. Hopkins especially denounced the assassination of about 30 negroes, including women and children, who, having been more or less justifiably accused of having taken part in the burning of the properties belonging to the Portuguese subject, Manuel Joaquim Oliveira, were, by the orders of the latter, and with the connivance of other Europeans and some Natives, among the former being a British subject, bound hand-and-foot and thrown into the river, some of them at Boma, and others at Port Lenha. As a climax of monstrosity, the presumed accomplices or witnesses, the victims as they were called, were put to torture by him. According to the information of Mr. Hopkins, similar attrocities were frequently perpetrated in the region under notice; and the same Consul specially named the Spanish subject José del Valle, better known as Don Pepe, as the person who inflicted frequent cruelties on his Black labourers, and who had even caused the death of some of them, whom he ordered to be drowned. Mr. Hopkins added that slavery was, in fact, re-instated on the Zaire; and that the Black labourers in the service of Europeans were literally sold to these by the Native Chiefs. But what most impressed the mind of Her Majesty's officer was the feeling that seemed to exist among Europeans living in the midst of a negro population—that it was the most natural thing in the world to treat them as slaves, and that it was singular that he should think it necessary to make such a fuss about the matter. No doubt, since then missionary enterprize had tended to introduce both among Europeans and Natives more kindly notions, and it was to be hoped would prevent such things from occurring again; but they had no real security that this would be so, and everyone knew that in these districts, where there was no strong civilized Government to control the conflicting claims, and the rivalries and jealousies of traders, these melancholy events were not unlikely to repeat themselves. That being so, it was felt that it was only probable that before long the Portuguese Government would call the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the existing state of things. Accordingly, shortly after that, negotiations were opened by the Portuguese Government with the English Government. He wished to dwell upon that, because the Mover and Seconder of the Motion were inclined to say that Her Majesty's Government had gone out of their way to hand these regions over to Portugal. It was difficult to say at what exact moment the present stage of the negotiations began; but he was justified in saying that the first proposition in the present stage of the negotiations emanated from the Portuguese Government in consequence of the atrocities and horrors which had taken place. Ever since 1878 these negotiations had been begun and dropped and again taken up by successive Governments. If the history of this question were examined, it would be found not to belong to one Government or to one Party. His hon. Friend must be fully aware of that. In 1880 certain negotiations were carried on through Sir Robert Morier, who then represented Her Majesty's Government at Lisbon; but they did not lead to any settlement. The proposal was to recognize the Portuguese claims to the south bank of the Congo. Then, at a later period, the question was again taken up, and the present negotiations were begun. This discussion was one which could only be welcome to Her Majesty's Government, which had nothing whatever to conceal, and that had looked forward to the opportunity which the Forms of the House gave for bringing on this Motion to make a statement. He felt that he would be able to press upon the House the fact that this question had not been taken up in a hurry, or without adequate consideration and knowledge of the interests involved, and that he should at the same time be able to show clearly and distinctly that it was the full intention of Her Majesty's Government to listen with respect to the expression of opinion of those Gentlemen in the House who represented important interests. Now, he would remind the House that since the despatches of Lord Clarendon, which had been so frequently referred to, were written, there had been the Delagoa Bay Arbitration. The claims put forward to Delagoa Bay by Portugal were not recognized by England, and there were other despatches quite as strong as those, which had been quoted in this debate, on the Delagoa Bay question. The decision in the international arbitration with regard to Delagoa Bay went against Great Britain; and therefore it was desirable to consider whether it was not their duty, not necessarily to give up their old position in consequence, but to ask themselves whether a wise moderation might not be desirable with regard to this question. They had also to consider the fact that these possessions were mentioned in the Portuguese Constitution, and that with the Portuguese Constitution the English Government had had a good deal of indirect, if not direct, connection. The English Government might be said to have had, if not legal, at all events equitable, notice of the Portuguese Constitution, because, as the House was aware, the Portuguese Constitutional question was frequently before it, more frequently perhaps than at the present day would be willingly sanctioned. Therefore, if the Portuguese Constitution was drawn up with these claims in it, the English Government, to a certain extent, received full notice of what Portugal claimed. There was yet another reason why the Government thought it desirable to consider this question. The Portuguese Government clearly and distinctly claimed this Coast, and a sentiment of Portuguese patriotism was enlisted in favour of the claim. It was a dangerous sentiment to evoke, because the consequences might be dangerous, and lead even to bloodshed; and Her Majesty's Government had to ask themselves whether it would not be better, without giving up the position taken up by those great statesmen whose names had been mentioned, to try and come to some fair and equitable arrangement with the Portuguese Government which would save the great commercial interests so eloquently advocated by his hon. Friend, and which would also insure the interests and the liberty of the Protestant missionaries engaged in those regions. They had also to consider whether, by the establishment of a regular and responsible Government, those horrors could be prevented occurring among the Native population to the existence of which it was quite impossible for Her Majesty's Government to close their eyes. When Her Majesty's Government considered on the one hand the evils of leaving the question entirely open, and on the other the advantages accruing from an equitable settlement, they did not hesitate on the invitation of the Portuguese Government to re-open the subject and to enter into negotiations. As had been stated by the Secretary of State in "another place," negotiations had been going on, but without hurry and without any tendency to overlook any important point. Her Majesty's Government had first of all demanded, with regard to the commercial question, that the navigation of the River Congo should be absolutely free. That was a most important point. No proposal had been made or admitted by Her Majesty's Government which would enable the mouth of the Congo to be barred by what would be far worse than rapids and cataracts—namely, the imposition of dues upon navigation which would interfere with that freedom of navigation which at the present moment existed with great benefit to commerce in those regions. Her Majesty's Government had informed the Portuguese Government that they would not tolerate the existence of a tariff similar in character to some of those vexatious tariffs with which, in former days not far removed, the commercial world was familiar in the Portuguese possessions in Africa. They had distinguished between the different tariffs, they had pointed out that the Mozambique tariff, even with the modifications introduced in 1880, was superior to what was called the Angola tariff. They were not, however, pledged to be satisfied with the Mozambique tariff without receiving far more information on the matter than had yet reached them. Great uncertainty existed as to that tariff in consequence of some high-handee acts on the part of the Portuguese Governor which interfered, while they lasted, with the trade of those regions. He was bound to say that the Portuguese Government had repudiated those acts; but they nevertheless showed how thoroughly right his hon. Friend was when he said that they had not only to deal with the Treaties made by the Portuguese Government, but with the clauses of those Treaties as carried out by Portuguese Governors and other officials. Then there was yet another commercial point in which he knew many hon. Members felt an interest. He called it a commercial point, though it was not so entirely. It was that the Government would reserve whatever engagements had been made so far as they could be reduced to express terms; whatever obligations had been entered into with Native Chiefs upon the Coast would be respected, and they would not suffer anything on account of what had happened in the past. They would be in no worse position than they were now, and would be put under the ægis of an International Treaty. It had also been insisted as a point on which there could be no mistake that religious liberty should be granted by the Portuguese Government, and that adequate protection should be given to the Protestant missionaries established in those regions. It had been stated in unmistakable language that if religious liberty were given there should be a Treaty right on the part of this country to intervene for the protection of the persons entitled to it. The Government would also insist upon a point which was mentioned in the speech of his hon. Friend, on which he dwelt not at all at undue length—he meant that the clause relating to slavery should be couched in equally clear language with those relating to the other subjects he had mentioned. This was no new demand on the part of Her Majesty's Government. There had been a long controversy on the Slave Trade Clauses of the Lorenzo-Marquez Treaty, and the House was aware that after the negotiations had been brought to apparently a successful termination there was a great deal of excitement, and a vote of the Portuguese Cortes put an end to those clauses. The Lorenzo-Marquez Treaty was a remarkable and valuable one, and gave full right to the cruisers of the English Government to operate against the Slave Trade in Portuguese Waters, and also a right of calling on the Portuguese Coast officials, whether stationed on land or on sea, to co-operate in an effectual way in the suppression of the Slave Trade on the Coast, and in the mouths of the rivers along the Coast. Her Majesty's Government, although they would not insist on exactly the same words, would insist that what was the real value should be preserved in any Treaty that might be made. Lastly, there was another point on which the Government had thought it their duty to dwell, and which had not been mentioned in this debate. They had determined—and this was a decision of great importance—not to do anything to recognize any indefinite claim of the Portuguese Government inland. While attaching full importance to the questions connected with the Coast, it was well not to forget what might happen in the interior. The past history of America showed the necessity of that; for what was the origin of those great struggles which extended in the last century far beyond America, where they arose, and involved European nations in war? Their origin would be found in the claims which different Powers put forward with regard to the occupation of inland territory in America. The representatives of various nations settled on the Coast, where stations were first established. Then they proceeded up the rivers, establishing stations as they went along. Quarrels then began, one nation claiming to go indefinitely towards the East, a second towards the West, a third towards the North, and a fourth towards the South. The result was that the different claimants came into conflict in the valley of the Mississippi and Ohio, and great wars took place in consequence. The Government held it to be their duty to avoid any act or omission which might in the future be the cause of a similar struggle. Although it might be impossible in a region so imperfectly surveyed to lay down accurate boundaries, the Government held that some indication must be given of the claims of the Portuguese in the interior, and they had resolved that nothing should appear in the Treaty which could be used by the Portuguese Government or any other as a bar to the enterprize of those travellers who, from all parts of the African Coast, were now pressing into the interior of the country. That was a consideration of the utmost importance. The Government, he felt sure, would be supported by the House of Commons when they demanded that the Portuguese Government should indicate clearly the whole extent of their claims, not only along the Coast, but also in those remote regions. In conclusion, he had to say that one of two things would happen—either a Treaty would be made fully securing all those rights and liberties, whether commercial, or religious, or territorial, which it was the duty of the Government to defend; or, if the Government should find it impossible to obtain those securities which, consistently with their duty to Parliament, they felt it imperative on them to demand, the negotiations, which had proceeded slowly and carefully, would resume the position which they occupied between the time when the negotiations of Sir Robert Morier came to an end and the time when the present negotiations began.

Mr. BOURKE said, the noble Lord commenced by telling them that this question was one of growing importance, and that, owing to late discoveries in Africa, it must in the future have even a more important place than it had at present, and that he (Mr. Bourke) considered was quite sufficient to give the Motion of the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Jacob Bright) even greater importance than he attached to it. The speech of the noble Lord consisted of two parts, the affirmative and the negative. The affirmative part was strongly corroborative of all the arguments brought forward by the hon. Member for Manchester, while the second part was a hazy description of what Her Majesty's Government were going to do, without a single word as to the steps which Her Majesty's Government intended to take with the Government of Portugal in regard to this territory. The noble Lord had not attempted to negative one single assertion or argument that had fallen from the lips of either the Proposer or Seconder of the Resolution. On the contrary, he had said that the speech of the hon. Member for Manchester was an indictment against the Portuguese Government. The Portuguese Government was a Government with whom we were on friendly terms, and he was aware that it was not the business of the noble Lord to go out of his way to carry that indictment further; but, at the same time, he might be permitted to say that he had not mentioned one single fact or argument to detract from any of the considerations which had been brought forward with respect to the conduct and the policy of the Portuguese Government, upon which Her Majesty's Government relied as a reason for not giving up this territory to Portugal. It, therefore, came to this—that all the arguments and facts of the Mover and Seconder remained perfectly intact, and were, indeed, rather corroborated by the noble Lord's speech. Of course, the salient point in the contention of the hon. Member for Manchester was the argument that the policy of the Government for the last century had been exactly the reverse of what their policy was now to be. They were told also by the hon. Member for Manchester that the tariffs were excessive, and that if this cession took place it was absolute and certain ruin to English trade on that Coast. The noble Lord, however, had not touched this matter, nor had he said a single word regarding the paramount reasons that had induced Her Majesty's Government to take this extraordinary course. There was something more, he felt sure, behind all this which the noble Lord, probably out of prudence, had not stated. He had spoken about the jurisdiction which the Portuguese Government were to have in the country, but in such a shadowy way that it was almost impossible to meet his arguments. Instead of being told what were the proposals of the Portuguese Government and of Her Majesty's Government, the House had been treated to a series of negatives, which really came to nothing. They were told, for example, that slavery was not to exist under the Treaty; but we had already a far greater guarantee against the existence of slavery in the neighbourhood of the Congo than any that could be given by a Treaty. Was it on the Coast alone that this Treaty was to be applied? What jurisdiction had the Portuguese Government one mile from the Coast? Even in those countries where the Portuguese occupied territory given up to them exclusively they had no jurisdiction in the interior, or whatever jurisdiction they possessed was exercised by means of convicts and discharged prisoners. On the other hand, the jurisdiction now exercised along those African rivers, such as the Niger and the Bonny, worked well, and did not offend the susceptibilities of any nation, and the longer it lasted the better it became. The fact was that a sort of equitable Code was made between the merchants and our own officers, and so we went on remarkably well with the Tribes. Negotiations had been going on with the Portuguese for a long time, and they always founded their claim to this territory upon grounds which could not be established for a moment. The Portuguese had never put forward any claim except that of ancient discovery; but all knew that ancient discovery was not enough. Portugal had never exercised any jurisdiction, and if ancient discovery were sufficient there was not a single mile along the whole East Coast of Africa that Portugal might not claim, for ancient memorials of Portuguese occupation would be found all along the Coast. The noble Lord used an exceedingly alarming argument when he said that Her Majesty's present Advisers regarded the commercial relations on the East Coast of Mozambique as satisfactory. It was well known that nothing could be more unsatisfactory.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE explained that he did not say that; but he stated that the Mozambique Tariffs were now under discussion between the Foreign Office and the Board of Trade.

Mr. BOURKE observed, that the noble Lord in another place spoke of the satisfactory character of the arrangements with Mozambique, and remarked that it would be well if they were applied to other parts of the Coast. Now, there was not one of the officials of the Foreign Office who would not laugh at the idea of the Mozambique arrangements being satisfactory. In 1878 the Government endeavoured to make more satisfactory tariffs; and he was sorry to say that those which had been arranged had been set aside by Portugal. The noble Lord would find in the records of the Foreign Office that the Portuguese had shown the greatest indisposition to admit British travellers into the country. There was one traveller who wanted to go into the interior in order to see whether there were any gold mines there. The Portuguese officer received him very cordially; but when the higher authorities found that to be the case they put the officer under arrest for having given the traveller any encouragement whatever. It was absolutely impossible for the Portuguese Government to carry out their own settled policy—that system which we call slavery and they "engagements"—if commerce were admitted into the country; and so surely as Portugal took possession of the Coast, so surely would slavery exist as it now existed in the Province of Angola. The noble Lord drew a distinction between the inland territory and the Coast. Now, he wanted to know what jurisdiction or power the Portuguese were to have upon the Coast, for that was the whole point? It would be perfectly impossible for them to have jurisdiction in the interior, for then they would be put down in a moment. But was the territory along the Coast to be ceded? It was perfectly impossible to ascertain, from the speech of the noble Lord, whether it was to be ceded or not. The noble Lord spoke of the rights which Her Majesty's Government would have by International Treaty. But they all knew that Her Majesty's Government, in other parts of the world, had a right to interfere, yet they did not always exercise it. It was not a question that concerned Her Majesty's Government so much as the Natives themselves. He agreed with the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Jacob Bright), and those who said that the first consideration was the future of the tribes. There was one observation of the noble Lord, however, that he heard with pleasure, and that was that the Government would listen to what took place during the debate. Well, the best way in which Her Majesty's Government could listen to what took place was to give effect to this Motion. There never was a Motion brought before the House of Commons so conclusively proved and so inadequately met. He did not blame the noble Lord for that. He defied him, with the materials at his command, to make out a case. He perfectly agreed with all that had been said by the Mover and Seconder of the Motion. He hoped, to use the words of the noble Lord, Her Majesty's Government would not make "a new departure" from the traditional policy of the Foreign Office;" but that they would adhere to the wise and statesmanlike policy of Lord Clarendon, Lord Russell, and Lord Palmerston, and would refuse altogether to entertain the claims of the Portuguese.

Mr. WODEHOUSE, in rising to move an Amendment, expressing the opinion that no Treaty should be made by the Government affecting territories in or adjacent to the Congo that would not afford adequate securities to all the civilizing and commercial agencies at work in those regions, said, that the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Jacob Bright) had seemed to regard it as presumption on the part of the Representative of what he was pleased to call "little Bath" that he (Mr. Wodehouse) should have put an Amendment on the Paper. He certainly did represent a place which was smaller than Manchester; but, while entertaining great respect for the latter place, he could not help thinking, if he was to judge from the tone of the hon. Member, that among the many virtues which flourished in Manchester, modesty was not one. If it was necessary for the hon. Member for Manchester to make any reflection upon him (Mr. Wodehouse) at all, he should have done so upon him personally, and not upon him as the Representative of Bath. But if the hon. Member challenged a comparison, he would remind him that Bath, "little Bath," was famous when Manchester was still hidden in the gloom of obscurity; and he would stake the beauties of Bath—beauties of nature and of art combined—against all the charms of Manchester. However, he would not pursue that topic further, especially as he was in accord on many points with the hon. Member for Manchester. The speech of the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) might be accepted as an assurance of the resolve of the Government to regard this Congo question with a single eye to the paramount interests of commerce and civilization; and it was, likewise, an assurance of the intention of the Government to pay the fullest measure of deference to the opinion of the House on this question. Nothing could be more natural than the jealousy with which negotiations affecting the Congo were viewed by mercantile communities who traded in South West Africa, and religious bodies who had Mission Stations there. The importance, also, of recent discoveries by travellers in Central Africa was unquestionable. The use to which the Congo might be turned as a great artery of communication stretching across the Continent profoundly affected our whole vision of the future in those regions of the earth. He would not weary the House by attempting to examine in detail the strength or weakness of the Portuguese claim to the territory between the 5th and the 8th degrees South latitude. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Bourke) spoke contemptuously of it. For his (Mr. Wodehouse's) part, as far as territorial claims of this kind went, it seemed to him to be a tolerably good one—["Oh, oh!"]—at least, he suspected many a worse one had been recognized elsewhere. But, be that as it might, the validity of this claim had never been admitted by Her Majesty's Government. The Papers which had been presented to the House showed conclusively that the Government of this country had been prepared to resist the assertion of the Portuguese claim, even by force of arms, if necessary; and when engagements had been entered into with the Native Chiefs in Her Majesty's name, they had always been treated as independent Rulers, and not as the vassals of Portugal. He fully admitted, therefore, that the recognition of Portuguese Sovereignty in that territory would be a modification, or a new departure, from the policy hitherto pursued by our Foreign Office under successive Secretaries of State. But the House must remember that the conditions of these African questions were not the same now as when they were dealt with by Lord Palmerston, by Lord Russell, and by Lord Clarendon. A good many things had happened since then, and therefore the whole subject had to be regarded from a different point of view. There had been the extinction of the Slave Trade on the West Coast; there were the great discoveries of recent travellers; there was now the international enterprize which owed so much to the enlightened initiative and public spirit of the King of the Belgians; and there was also the recent appropriation of territory by the French Republic, at a point commanding access to the upper navigable waters of the Congo. Many things, in fact, had changed in Central Africa since the days of Lord Palmerston, of Lord Russell, and of Lord Clarendon; and they could not approach the Motion of the hon. Member for Manchester as those departed statesmen might have approached it. He (Mr. Wodehouse) did not wish to criticize the terms of the Motion in any hostile spirit, for as to the impolicy of a Treaty which would surrender the interests of civilization and commerce there could not be two opinions. The practical issue he wished to submit to the House was, whether it was wise to prohibit, as far as a Motion in that House could prohibit, the Government from concluding a Treaty which, although it might sanction annexation, might also secure efficient guarantees for the liberties of commerce and the free action of all civilizing agencies? It could hardly be contended that the existing state of affairs in the territory claimed by the Portuguese was one of ideal perfection even from our point of view. Wherever there was a disputed claim to Sovereignty an incident might at any moment arise to disturb and embitter the relations of otherwise friendly States. The Papers in their hands showed clearly enough that serious evils were prevalent in the independent settlements about the Congo, over which no civilized Power exercised jurisdiction. Consul Hopkins stated that all the factories in those settlements, excepting the English factories, were worked, more or less, by slave labour; and he described some of the cruelties practised upon the slaves. The Consul summed up the situation in the following words:—

> "All the White men in the tract of country lying between the Northern boundary of Angola and the Southern boundary of Gaboon consider there is no law; they are not responsible to any Government for their actions, and they do just what they please."

Among the things which pleased them were torture by thumbscrews and drownings of slaves in batches. This was no Portuguese allegation; it was the official testimony of the British Representative on the spot; and he gathered from the words of the Consul which he had quoted that, however inefficient and defective the Portuguese administration of Angola might be, a worse state of things existed in the territories outside the administration of Portugal—territories which she desired to administer, but over which we forbade her to exercise control. ["No, no!"] That was his own inference, which he was as entitled to draw as hon. Gentlemen opposite were to draw theirs. He was sure that no men in the House were more anxious to avert the recurrence of such barbarities as those described by our own Consul than the hon. Members for Manchester and Liverpool; but what better security could they provide against the repetition of such barbarities than the establishment, in the places where they had happened, of the jurisdiction and the police of some responsible authority? Of course, the existing traders in these settlements of other nationalities than the Portuguese were opposed to annexation by Portugal; they would probably object to annexation by any country except the particular country to which they severally belonged. This was very natural, because, while there was no Sovereignty over them except the shadowy and phantom Sovereignty of a Native Chief, they did pretty much what they pleased; so long as they satisfied and propitiated the Native Chiefs by some small payments they were as free as air. This free and easy system of arrangements with Native Chiefs sometimes worked tolerably well in settlements where the trade was of moderate proportions, and where the Europeans were very few in number; but if some important discovery was made—if gold or diamonds were found, or if, in some other mode, a vista of extended trade were suddenly opened, there was an influx of Europeans to the spot, and then the free and easy system utterly broke down. Disturbances multiplied, and a stronger hand than a Native Chief's was required to maintain order. These advanced guards of civilization and commerce usually contained some of the wickedest of living men; and as Native Chiefs were easily induced by unscrupulous adventurers to cede anything and everything for a bottle of brandy or a keg of rum, all kinds of conflicting claims to land and other property or privileges were set up in the general confusion. Then out of this chaos there always came a demand for the intervention of some European Power; and he anticipated that the Congo territory was about to enter on such a critical period as he had described. The prospect of an enlarged trade would draw more Europeans to it, and then in due time the inevitable demand for intervention would come. The British traders and Missionaries would want British intervention, the Dutch would want Dutch intervention, and the French merchants would invoke the support of France. But intervention on these occasions was generally wont to glide into annexation. Now, when these things came to pass, would the hon. Member for Manchester be prepared to advocate a British annexation of the mouth of the Congo? If he were not prepared to advocate it, he would lose the support of many whose champion and Representative he might be on the present occasion. He (Mr. Wodehouse) did not wish to prejudge this question, or determine how it should be settled; he would only submit, as a reasonable hypothesis, that in order to avert worse dangers and complications in the future, it might be expedient to recognize the claims of the only Power which at present professed even to have a claim to Sovereignty in these regions. Even Lord Clarendon recognized the occupation of Ambriz, although he had disputed the right of the Portuguese to it as strongly as he disputed their right to Cabinda and Molembo. [Mr. BOURKE: Tolerated.] Well, he acquiesced in it, at all events, if that word would suit the right hon. Gentleman. He (Mr. Wodehouse) did not know that the condition of Ambriz since the Portuguese annexation had been worse than it was before. ["Oh, oh!"] As regarded British trade, no doubt it had; but as regarded an increase of anarchy, what evidence was there of it? There was, undoubtedly, a strong prejudice against the Portuguese, and he would admit there was some cause for it; but the hon. Member for Manchester did what the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Bourke) refused to do; he drew an indictment, not against the Portuguese Government, but against the whole nation, and drew it with all the charity of a philanthropist. He (Mr. Wodehouse) did not desire to strengthen the prejudice against the Portuguese; but it could not be denied that the condition of Angola was not what it ought to be, nor that their commercial policy was exclusive and restrictive, and their Church intolerant to Protestants. There had been times when we had reason to complain of their conduct with regard to the Slave Trade; and even now some of their local officials were suspected of complicity with slavery practices. On the other hand, it should be remembered that there had been times when the services of Portuguese officers in suppressing the Slave Trade had been freely recognized and acknowledged by the English Government. He would also point out that Portugal had, at least, made a step towards a more liberal commercial policy in the Mozambique Tariff of 1877. With regard to the present negotiations with the Portuguese Government, everything would depend upon the nature of the terms obtained from them in return for so great a concession as the recognition of their Sovereignty in these territories would be. A bad Treaty with the Portuguese would be worse than useless; but a good Treaty, making provision for a liberal tariff, and for the enjoyment by British subjects of all due rights as to property, and religion and for their immunity from vexatious taxation, might be an improvement on the existing state of affairs, especially with regard to future contingencies. The hon. Member for Manchester advocated an International Control of these territories. He (Mr. Wodehouse) had not a word to say against it. If it were practicable, nothing, perhaps, would be better; but he did not think it would be found a very easy thing to set up. At any rate, the Government alone were in a position to judge of its feasibility; and, in the meantime, he would leave their hands free, and not bind them, as they would be bound, by the Resolution. One other point. It had been said that a Portuguese annexation would be resisted by the Natives, who were much opposed to it. No doubt, there was always a risk of outbreaks in these settlements when a new jurisdiction was set up, or when they were transferred from one jurisdiction to another; our own experience on the Gold Coast, where we had exchanged settlements with the Dutch, taught us that; the partizans of the old order were eager to discredit the new order at its start. There was generally some European or Mulatto intriguer in the background who stirred up the Natives to riot and plunder, and then represented the outbreak to be a genuine Native protest against a hated change. The only way to minimize the risk of such outbreaks was for other Powers who had subjects in the settlements concerned to support the introduction of the new jurisdiction by the presence of their Consuls or naval officers. He hoped, therefore, that if Portugal was to set up her Sovereignty in these places, it would not be done without the full concurrence and countenance of other Powers. Portugal should then be rigidly held to her engagements. But the discretion of the Government in carrying that policy into effect ought not to be hampered. It was not because he had other objects in view than the hon. Member for Manchester that he moved his Amendment, but because he deprecated the imposition of inconvenient restrictions upon the liberty of action which the Government were entitled to have. He would, however, ask leave to be allowed slightly to modify his Amendment, so that it might take note of existing arrangements on the part of the Crown, either with Portugal or with independent Native Chiefs. In its new form his Amendment would run thus—To leave out all the words after the word "Government," in line 3, in order to insert the words—

"Affecting territories on or adjacent to the Congo that would compromise any engagement into which Her Majesty may heretofore have entered, or would not afford adequate securities to all the civilising and Commercial agencies at work in those regions."

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "Government" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "affecting territories on or adjacent to the Congo that would compromise any engagement into which Her Majesty may heretofore have entered, or would not afford adequate securities to all the civilising and Commercial agencies at work in those regions,"—(*Mr. Wodehouse*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I would ask permission to interpose briefly in this debate at the present stage, not because I am anxious to interfere with Gentlemen who may desire to continue it, but because I feel that, after the very able speech which we have just heard from my hon. Friend the Member for Bath (Mr. Wodehouse), and the Amendment which he has placed before us in its present form, the question has reached a position in which it becomes perfectly practicable for the Government to define and explain to the House, in the most precise terms, the view which they take of the Motion and the Amendment, and to give the satisfaction which they desire to afford to the natural and reasonable expectations and wishes that have been uttered in various quarters during this debate. Now, we have before us the Motion and the Amendment. The Amendment purports to limit the future action of Her Majesty's Government in regard to a certain region in Africa, by shutting them out from any risk of making a Treaty which should fail to afford adequate securities to all civilizing and commercial agencies; and, likewise, they are to be shut out from making any Treaty which would interfere with the good faith of the country in regard to any engagement into which they heretofore have entered. As respects the first-named of the two particulars, I think the intention of the Motion and the Amendment may be said to be very nearly the same. As regards the second of them, I think the Amendment is an improvement upon the Motion, because, although the Motion is somewhat rigid in the fetters which it imposes upon the future action of Her Majesty's Government, yet it does not specifically, and in terms, guard against that danger which might incidentally arise—the danger of conflicting in a state of things which is extremely complicated by a former transaction, the danger of interfering with some engagements into which we have previously entered. I do not suppose any great difficulty can arise as between the Mover of the Motion and the Mover of the Amendment. My hon. Friend who made this Motion stated his case to the House, as he usually does, with very great ability and force, and it was not difficult to perceive that he had much justification for a great part of what he said. I do not wish to subscribe—indeed, it would hardly be becoming to subscribe—to all he stated upon the subject of the Portuguese Government and policy. I hope there was something, without reproach to my hon. Friend, of exaggeration in a portion of that statement, or else we have been exceedingly unfortunate in our judgment of the character of a State which it has been customary to extol in this House as one of our most ancient and faithful Allies, for whose welfare we were bound always to exercise a peculiar care. But that is not the matter at issue on the present occasion. What I wish to point out exactly to the House is the nature and extent of the difference between the Motion and the Amendment. I have assumed thus far that, so far as the statements of the Amendment go, they would not be disagreeable to the Mover of the Motion. Now, let us see what my hon. Friend does by the Motion itself. By the Motion, he desires that there should be no Treaty made by Her Majesty's Government that would sanction the annexation by any Power of territories on or adjacent to the Congo. My hon. Friend who has just sat down has an apprehension that there are Gentlemen in this House who desire the annexation of some of those territories by ourselves;

and I take the opportunity of observing that, at any rate, the Motion of my hon. Friend effectually knocks that notion, and all such schemes and plans, upon the head. For under that Motion there can be no annexation by Great Britian. What we contend is this—that it is not wise, any more than customary, to tie the hands of Her Majesty's Government by indicating a particular region that now exists under very peculiar circumstances, and setting up a solemn declaration of policy on the part of this House that no Treaty, however advantageous, whatever compensation it may present, however unexceptional in its items, can properly be made by Her Majesty's Government, unless certain conditions, specified beforehand, are fulfilled. What we contend is that this is an unwise, as well as an unusual, limitation. It will be considered, I think, as a gratuitous and extraordinary step on the part of the House, even in a case where there was no special circumstances to be alleged. But the special circumstances here alleged are of a very grave order. They amount to this—that there are portions of this territory where there is no acknowledged jurisdiction of police, where, at the same time, the arrival of new accessions of strangers leads to an increase, it is true, of exactions, but which has brought about serious mischief and gross outrages. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Bourke) seemed to me, I must say, to make his speech very much more in the spirit of a Party connection than was at all necessary where there has been no Party issue. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the speech of my noble Friend near me as if he had mentioned only a single case of outrage. Well, it was a case sufficiently grave, where 30 negroes were bound together and thrown into a river and drowned; and had it been urged from another quarter it would probaby have received a more worthy appreciation from the right hon. Gentleman. But my noble Friend did not dwell upon that act alone, but upon a certain portion of the territory, which he did not precisely attempt to define, nor should I attempt to define, where reigns what approaches to a state of lawlessness, and that frequent outrages occur there. Under these circumstances, what was stated by my hon. Friend behind me and by my noble Friend is this—that it is a possibility that the establishment by a civilized Power of some regular rule and jurisdiction might be for the advantage of that country. Now, here let me observe that by this Motion we are asked not only to exclude annexation by Portugal—the Government of which my hon. Friend describes as so intolerably bad—but we are asked to declare that under no circumstances, and at no time, can this annexation be properly effected by any Power whatever, even the most civilized, the most careful, the best qualified to exercise a beneficial influence over the Native Tribes. Surely that is too much to ask. What I ask my hon. Friend is this—that he shall not require us to make so broad, and, I will say, inconvenient, and, within its limited bounds, so dangerous an assertion. Let me see whether, in preferring that request, I am not able to give him, at the same time, every reasonable satisfaction. Our allegation, as stated by my noble Friend, was twofold. First, that there was a portion of territory where all regular authority was thwarted, where horrible outrages occurred, and where it may be desirable to establish a civilized jurisdiction, and a regular police. He also pointed out a branch of the case, into which it is not necessary for me to enter at any length, in which there was some doubt whether the assumption of too high a tone in denouncing in principle, and radically, all the claims of Portugal may not raise inconvenient arguments in reference to the recognition we had ourselves given to some claims of this character, not perhaps consistently, but yet actually given in a very solemn document—namely, in the Constitution of Portugal itself, the adoption of which we actively promoted. The right hon. Gentleman opposite used this expression. He said—"Is the territory to be ceded?" I must say that is an extraordinary expression to come from a Gentleman who has been six or seven years in the Foreign Office. Is the territory to be ceded? What is that but giving territory to somebody which is ours? The right hon. Gentleman seems to think he has a general right to the patrimony of mankind, and if anybody takes property it is necessary for him to cede it. I think the right hon. Gentleman should approach this matter in a spirit and with language more consistent with that policy of consideration and equality which is generally recognized in international rights, and which I believe it is the desire of my hon. Friend who moved this Motion, and of the House, to recognize. We cannot accept the Motion, because we cannot consent to be shut out, by previous deliberation and decision of the House, from turning the situation to the best account, and in determining what is the best account. What we say is, that it is possible that some annexation duly guarded, which would bring in regular government where lawlessness now prevails, may appear best to fulfil that condition. But my hon. Friend will say—and I do not complain—that the Treaty-making power places very large discretion in the hands of the Executive Government. My hon. Friend has quoted a speech of mine on a former occasion, when I objected to interference with the present Treaty-making powers upon principles and convictions I then entertained—that no Government would ever venture to make Treaties in serious matters behind the back of the country and of Parliament, without being well assured that they were acting in conformity with the general wish and conviction of Parliament. I am bound to say, viewing what has happened in some recent years, I am not prepared to repeat that assurance; and, therefore, after an experience which I need not enter upon in detail, I feel that my hon. Friend the Mover of the Motion is entitled to ask from the Government, in a peculiar case like this, some further satisfaction. I propose to give him satisfaction in this way. I have no objection whatever to the acceptance of the limitations proposed to be placed upon us by the Amendment. They are just, and they are honest. But my hon. Friend may say they do not cover the whole ground. If so, I will now say, what will cover the whole ground? I am quite ready, under the circumstances of the case, to engage—and I think it is only equitable and fair to engage—that if we shall find it expedient, according to our conviction—on which I can at present give no positive judgment whatever—if we arrive at the conclusion that it is for the interest of the country, and of that country in particular, that we should make a Treaty, that Treaty should be made known to Parliament before ratification in such a way, and with the intervention of such an interval, that Parliament shall be enabled to exercise an independent judgment upon it. Therefore, I do not find it necessary to ask the hon. Member for his confidence. I believe, if I did, he would probably give us the credit of attaching due weight to all he has said, and what has been said by others. I think in a case of this kind, complicated as it is, and mixed up as it is with interests of which my hon. Friend is the zealous and faithful guardian, it is right to give the House an assurance that it shall have an opportunity given to it to exercise that jurisdiction which it is undoubtedly entitled to. I hope the words I have used have been sufficiently ample; and, if so, I cannot but express the hope that they greatly narrow any remaining ground of difference between us. In truth, I cannot believe, and I do not believe, that my hon. Friend the Mover of the Motion has any object or purpose in view whatever except that which we also have. We may err in the mode of giving effect to our common wishes. Therefore, I say, he shall have an opportunity of judging of the way we propose to give effect to them before the country is finally bound by them. I need not explain what the effect is of an intervention of a deliberative Chamber upon an unratified Treaty. We have experienced it in very important cases ourselves from other States, the effect of which is to prevent the instrument ever taking legal effect as a portion of International Law. It was to make that statement, to point out where it is we differ from the terms of the Motion, that I thought it desirable to interpose at this period of the debate. Advantage has been taken of words very properly used by my noble Friend respecting a new departure. But do not let that be misunderstood. It is perfectly consistent to take a new departure under new circumstances, even for the purpose of giving effect to the views that have been previously entertained. When the British Government was content with simple protestations against the claim of Portugal, it was because there was no urgent case for considering the question, whether any regular government of the police on any part of this territory was to be established. If a case of the kind arises, even those who thoroughly approve, and have participated, as I have, in the prior proceedings, may say that modification in the former is absolutely necessary. That is not intended in any way as a qualification of a declaration that I have previously made; and I will conclude by expressing the hope that the explanation may meet the circumstances of the case.

Mr. ANDERSON said, after the declaration made by the Prime Minister, he would recommend his hon. Friend to accept it, and withdraw his Motion. It was such a declaration as they had never had from any Prime Minister before. It was a new departure, and one of which he highly approved. At the same time, he felt bound to say that if his hon. Friend did not accept the advice, he would support him in his Resolution, because he was most anxious to impress upon the Government the undesirableness of making any Treaty whatever with this particular Power. He looked upon Portugal as a faithless Power, as a Power it was not safe to make Treaties with. The Amendment suggested our getting adequate securities; but we could never get adequate securities from such a Power. He looked upon Portugal as one of those contemptible Powers that trusted to their own weakness, and to our forbearance and generosity. The noble Lord told them about Portugal disowning wrong acts; but that Power would disown them to-day and repeat them to-morrow. They were not observing Treaties they had already made. The noble Lord knew that the other day we made a Treaty with Portugal for an International Sailing Code. They deliberately violated that Treaty, and refused to give us what we asked—arbitration. They did so simply because they trusted to our magnanimity not to press our claims. For that reason, he thought that the Portuguese Government ought to be, as a Treaty-making Power, sent to Coventry. We should refuse to make Treaties with them until they showed they were willing to abide by the Treaties they had already made. They had refused arbitration in the case he had alluded to; and he had not the least doubt, if we made a Treaty with them about the Congo, say, to have no navigation dues, and to have no tariff so bad as the Mozambique Tariff, still there would be some tariffs, whereas we wanted none. Any Treaty they made they would get out of somehow or other, and we would find ourselves in a scrape, and we would not know how to set about compelling them to keep to their Treaty. For these reasons, he hoped the Government would give up their present negotiations with Portugal, and not attempt to have a Treaty with that country at all.

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT said, after what had been stated by the Prime Minister, he would withdraw his Motion. They had received a promise that any Treaty which was entered into would not be ratified until the House had had full time and opportunity for discussing it. He assumed that if such opportunity were given the discussion would take place, and the information which the House and the country would derive from what had been said to-night would prevent any Government from passing the Treaty.

Mr. SPEAKER pointed out that the Motion could not be withdrawn unless, in the first place, the Amendment to it was withdrawn.

Mr. WODEHOUSE said, he was perfectly ready to withdraw his Amendment.

Mr. ONSLOW said, that a somewhat analogous Motion to this was brought forward last year in reference to the payment of the Indian troops employed in Egypt, but was not pressed, on a promise being given that the matter would be subject to the further consideration of Parliament. But the Mover had to take his chances of the ballot; and now he (Mr. Onslow) asked the Prime Minister whether, when this Treaty was placed on the Table of the House, he would give facilities for discussing it?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he did not perceive the analogy of the two cases, and he did not think this was the time to go into details as to the mode or opportunities of discussing a Treaty that did not exist, and might not exist. The pledge he had given was well understood; and if they availed themselves of the crowded state of Business for the purpose of escaping discussion they would be guilty of violating that pledge.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: There is one matter which I think we should clearly understand, and which we do not now quite realize—that is, how the matter will rest after what is now proposed. As I understand, the Motion is about to be withdrawn as well as the Amendment, and thus we shall have nothing before us at all. I think that would be an inconsistent conclusion, because what is the actual state of the case? As I understand, Her Majesty's Government have been, and perhaps now are, carrying on negotiations with the Portuguese Government, with a view to the making of a Treaty which would give certain rights of annexation to the Portuguese on the banks of the Congo. Then the hon. Member for Manchester comes forward and says—"I object to this. I desire to call for an expression of opinion to prevent this annexation." And he and the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley) gave their reasons for that objection; and those reasons had weighed with the Members of the House. They had weighed with the Government, so far as to induce them to come forward with a voluntary pledge of a very peculiar character—I may say of an extraordinary character—with regard to the ratification of the Treaty. They have made a pledge, embodied in the words of the Amendment which the hon. Member for Bath has placed on the Paper. There have been communications going on, and those communications have led to an arrangement between the Government and the Mover of the Motion, satisfactory to the hon. Member for Manchester. The fact of the arrangement and the conclusion will rest entirely on the records of the debate; but there will be no record of what induced the hon. Member to withdraw, so far as the Journals of the House go. They will show nothing of it, and this will raise or create a false impression. The matter is one of great importance. I am conscious of the delicacy of the position in discussing a matter which affects a Government with whom we have always been, and with whom we desire to be, in friendship. While sensible of that, I feel that after the observations of the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) there are still greater reasons for fear and apprehension. He told the House some things; but what he did not tell left the House to anticipate something less satisfactory. I think the least that the House should require is that, in some shape or other, the words apparently accepted as satisfactory by the Mover of the original Motion should be placed in the Order Book as being a record of the proceedings.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I think the hon. Member for Manchester has done right, after the assurance given him, not to press his Motion. I agree that it would be desirable that there should be some record of the debate. I should hope that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Bath, which had been accepted by the Government, should be accepted as the Resolution of the House. I believe it would greatly assist the Government in their negotiations with Portugal; but I cannot but believe that there would be an end to the Treaty if it be shown in the negotiations that this was the Resolution of the House. If we take the first clause, I do not believe the Portuguese Government would care to have a Treaty after they understood the real meaning of that clause. We have, between 1848 and 1877, 13 Treaties, and in them we, in the frankest possible terms, acknowledged the Kings as Rulers of territories; and if we state that no engagement with them is to be compromised, that means that we do not acknowledge or recognize any Sovereignty of these territories on the part of the Portuguese. I am perfectly convinced that the Portuguese Government would never consent to that. Then, as to existing commercial and civilizing agencies at work, that means, in the first place, security for Missionary effort. We know what the law of Portugal is in that matter—that other than Catholic worship is not even allowed to foreigners, save private worship in houses having no external appearance of churches. It is not possible for the Portuguese Government to give the contemplated security without a change of their own laws. If they find that their restrictions on trade cannot be enforced, their motive for a Treaty will disappear. Why have they put forward their claim? Not because of the atrocities mentioned by the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. That may have had much to do with the negotiations entered into by our own Government; but it must be remembered that almost all the persons engaged in it were Portuguese subjects. The real reason they are asserting a claim is that the Congo has become a valuable country. Thanks to commercial enterprize—mainly British—the trade with the Congo has doubled in the last 10 years. Thanks to the travellers who have been named, to the International Association, and, above all, to the King of the Belgians, who, by his benevolent efforts in this part of the world, has fastened his name on history, there is a great trade upon the Congo, and the Portuguese wish to gain something by it. That is the real reason of the Portuguese anxiety. If we are to have the adequate security spoken of, we must first of all make it clear that there shall be no toll-bar; that there will be no dues exacted on the river; that it will be a free highway; and that the stations of the International Association will be left untouched. But, if this be done, the motive of the Portuguese will be gone. The real great danger—and until the declaration of the Prime Minister I thought it so great a danger that I could not have advised my hon. Friend (Mr. Bright) to withdraw his Motion—is the interpretation to be given to the words "adequate security." Portugal is a friendly country, and I do not want to reiterate what has been said about past Treaties; but it is notorious that the Treaties about the Slave Trade were a mockery; and with regard to other matters, promises have been made and broken. There is this great difficulty in dealing with Portugal—that she does not seem to be accessible to public opinion with regard to the keeping of Treaties. She can only be got to keep them by the threat of armed force. Therefore, it is of immense importance we should know what the adequate security is. I understand the Prime Minister is to submit a Treaty to the House, though I do not believe there will be one. If there be one, it will be looked at with a critical eye by the friends of commerce, of civilization, and of Missionary work. I hope there will be no annexation by any country, for civilization is making progress. It is five years since these atrocities occurred, and the stations of the International Association and of the Missionaries are producing the most beneficent consequences. Supposing some European country was to conquer a part of this territory, it would be a strong thing to pledge us beforehand against sanctioning it; but it is a different thing to sanction a claim by the Portuguese which they can only enforce by going there. Is there anything to justify us in inviting them to go and take possession of the country? With the additional information which the Government have now obtained, I cannot believe that they would for a moment consent to any Treaty which did not contain stipulations, which I do not believe any Portuguese Cortes would sanction, and which I do not believe any Portuguese Government would give, unless they thought they could evade them immediately afterwards; and I do not think the House would allow any Treaty to be made in these circumstances without its being clear as to securities; and I do not know what securities could be required that would be adequate. Nothing would injure the Natives more than a war, and that would result if the Portuguese attempted to go there. Evil consequences could only be prevented by the presence of English gunboats; and could we send them to protect the Portuguese in making a claim which we have denied to them for a number of years? But it is not only the possibility of war between Natives and the Portuguese. How are we to make Portugal carry out its engagements? The only way would be by war with Portugal. I am convinced that all these considerations will weigh with the Government; and I believe that this discussion has put an end to any Treaty; we shall hear nothing about it; or, if we do, it will be in a form that will enable us to put an end to it.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, the Government had no objection whatever to adopting the suggestion of his right hon. Friend, and of the Leader of the Opposition, that the Amendment should be carried instead of being withdrawn, provided the hon. Member for Manchester and his Friends saw no objection to that course.

Mr. WHITLEY, as the Seconder of the Motion, said he had no objection to that course.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Resolved, That in the interests of civilization and Commerce in South West Africa, this House is of opinion that no Treaty should be made by Her Majesty's Government affecting territories on or adjacent to the Congo that would compromise any engagement into which Her Majesty may heretofore have entered, or would not afford adequate securities to all the civilising and Commercial agencies at work in those regions.—(*Mr. Wodehouse.*)

OPIUM DUTIES (CHINA).

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE rose to move the following Resolution :—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that in all negotiations which take place between the Governments of Her Majesty and China, having reference to the Duties levied on Opium under the Treaty of Tientsin, the Government of Her Majesty will be pleased to intimate to the Government of China that in any revision of that Treaty, or in any other negotiations on the subject of Opium, the Government of China will be met as that of an independent State, having the full right to arrange its own Import Duties."

The hon. Baronet said: I think I am safe in saying that there is no question in this country which has taken so firm a hold of the public mind as the question of our opium trade with China, and the production of the drug in India. There has been an extensive agitation on the subject, although there has been but a comparatively small Society endeavouring to diffuse information—I believe that the whole cost to the Society during the last one or two years has not exceeded £2,000—nevertheless, there have actually been Petitions presented to this House during the last Session of Parliament against this traffic, signed by upwards of 75,000 persons. I believe that a larger number of signatures has been attached to these Petitions than has been attached to Petitions on almost any other subject which has been recently brought before Parliament. In dealing with the question of China, as my Motion does, I intend also to make certain remarks which I feel bound to make on the question as it affects India, the Indian Revenue, and the Indian Government. This forms a very large and a very important part of the general subject of the opium traffic; and, whatever the Government of India may say to the contrary, I have around me a large consensus of public opinion. As far as that large and important body, the Established Church of England, is concerned, I may say that the late Archbishop of Canterbury—a man whose memory everyone here holds in reverence — the present Archbishop of York, and a large number of the Bishops and clergy and congregations of the Church of England, have protested against the opium trade, and they have passed Resolutions at their respective Assemblies petitioning Parliament, besides taking other steps to show their assent to the movement for the suppression of the traffic. The whole question of the traffic has been very carefully inquired into. In addition to the Church of England, Petitions have been presented from all the Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church, Roman Catholic priests, and Roman Catholic congregations, who have, from the first to the last, taken the strongest interest in the question of the opium trade with China. There is also a large Missionary body in China who have taken an active interest in putting down the use of this drug among the Christian converts in that country. I believe that there have been Petitions from Representative Bodies of all the Dissenting Churches in the Kingdom—Wesleyan, Independent, Congregational, Baptist, the Society of Friends, the English Presbyterian Synod, the United Methodist Free Churches, the Methodist New Connection, and many others. There has also been presented a considerable number of Petitions from most of the Presbyterian Bodies in Scotland, and the General Assemblies of the Church and of the Free Church of Scotland. All the Unitarian ministers and congregations and the Evangelical Alliance have repeatedly protested and petitioned in the same strain. Therefore, I say that around this question has been drawn the interests not only of the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church and the Presbyterian Bodies of Scotland, but the whole of the Dissenting Churches have given their testimony in regard to what they believe—and they are well able to speak upon the question —to be the immorality of the traffic carried on between India and China, which testimony I think the Indian Government ought, to some degree, to respect. But, in addition to this, we have had Petitions from many Secular Bodies, and one to which I should like to call the attention of this House to is a Memorial addressed to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister during last year, which bears the signatures of both the Archbishops, and 12 Bishops of the Church of England, the Archbishop of Dublin, Cardinal Manning, the Presidents of the Wesleyan Conference, the Congregational Union, and the Baptist

Union, the Earl of Shaftesbury, the Duke of Westminster, and other Peers, 60 Members of Parliament, 30 Mayors and Provosts, 30 eminent medical men and Medical Missionaries, Chairmen of Chambers of Commerce and School Boards, Presidents of Liberal Associations, merchants, bankers, shipowners, Professors of the Universities, &c., &c. —361 in all. Now, I wish to ask my right hon. Friends who sit below me whether they can think that the Indian Government and the Foreign Office are right in allowing this trade to be carried on with China, when all these people, in whose opinion they must place the greatest confidence, have declared that they are wrong; that the trade is immoral; and that it is one which ought to be stopped in the interests of morality. Well, Sir, the question does seem to me to be a question which ought to be tried by public opinion; and I think that public opinion in this country has gone so far that it will render it very difficult for the Government of India to go on cultivating this traffic, and that it would have to seek for a sounder and better source of Revenue. Nor would the Foreign Office be able to insist upon China taking this drug and paying the duties we have imposed upon it. I have worded my Resolution, in the first instance, in order that I may deal with that which seems to me to be one of the first fringes of this question, and that is to test the sincerity of the Chinese. The noble Marquess the present Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) has laughed at the sincerity of the Chinese in this question; but I believe that the Chinese are perfectly sincere in the matter, and in expressing that opinion I believe I am expressing the view which is held by a gentleman who has represented us very ably for some considerable time in China. I refer to Sir Rutherford Alcock. In the evidence of Sir Rutherford Alcock, before the Finance Committee in India, he stated, in reply to Question 5,725—

> "I have estimated the absolute interest of the Chinese Government in the Indian trade at about £1,500,000 sterling, and in reference to this I may mention that not only in the Conference that took place with the Ministers of the Tsungli-Yamên, a Minute of which I read at the last meeting of the Committee but also at different times officially or privately, they have shown the greatest readiness to give up the whole Revenue, if they could only induce the British Government to co-operate with them in any way to put it down."

Sir Rutherford Alcock went on to say, in answer to Question 5,728—

> "As regards the bearing upon the Government of China, if I had been enabled, during the recent revision of the Treaty, to hold out any distinct promise or assurance to them that, both as regarded Missionaries and opium, which are their two great grievances, something should be done more or less restrictive that would meet their wishes, I believe that I might have got any facilities for our trade that I had chosen to demand. My great difficulty was that I could offer them nothing in either direction."

Well, Sir, I ask, at the present moment, that no pressure should be placed upon the Chinese as to what duties, Imperial or otherwise, shall be imposed on China by the Foreign Office at the instigation of the Government of India. That is the simple Resolution which I propose to ask the House to assent to. I ask that the Government of China shall be treated as we should treat France or Germany, or any other independent Power which we considered equal to ourselves. I have heard the argument used, over and over again, that we have never forced opium upon the Chinese. I think the least we can say to China at the present moment is, that whether we forced opium upon them, or did not force it, we shall now leave the Chinese people at liberty to deal with the duties in regard to the drug as they like. But I say that the evidence, in spite of all that has been said by Secretaries of Legation and others, is overwhelming that we did, and do, force this opium traffic upon China. I do not know that I can read anything which will have more weight with the right hon. Gentleman's Colleagues than the words of the Prime Minister himself, which I have before quoted in this House, and which were used in reference to the war in 1840. On this occasion the Prime Minister said—

> "They gave you notice to abandon your contraband trade. When they found that you would not, they had a right to drive you from their coasts on account of your obstinacy in persisting in this infamous and atrocious traffic. You allowed your agent to aid and abet those who were concerned in carrying on that trade; and I do not know how it can be urged as a crime against the Chinese that they refused provisions to those who refused obedience to their laws whilst residing within their territories. . . . A war more unjust in its origin, a war more calculated in its progress to cover this country with permanent disgrace, I do not know, and I

> have not read of. The right hon. Gentleman opposite spoke last night in eloquent terms of the British flag waving in glory at Canton. . . . That flag is hoisted to protect an infamous contraband traffic, and if it were never to be hoisted except as it is now hoisted on the coast of China, we should recoil from its sight with horror. . . . Although the Chinese were undoubtedly guilty of much absurd phraseology, of no little ostentatious pride, and of some excess, justice, in my opinion, is with them; and that whilst they, the pagans, and semi-civilized barbarians, have it, we, the enlightened and civilized Christians, are pursuing objects at variance both with justice and with religion."—(3 *Hansard*, [53] 818-19.)

Again, in a letter written in 1880, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I have witnessed three wars in China. The two first of these wars were directly connected with the opium traffic, and grew out of it; and I was amongst the most earnest, and, I may say, the most determined opponents of both those wars."

I have many other quotations here; but I will not trouble the House with them. Sir Thomas Wade wrote, in his Memorandum on the revision of the Treaty of Tien-Tsin—

> "We are generally prone to forget that the footing we have in China has been obtained by force alone; and that, unwarlike and unenergetic as we hold the Chinese to be, it is, in reality, to the fear of force alone that we are indebted for the safety we enjoy at certain points accessible to our force. . . . Nothing that has been gained, it must be remembered, was received from the free will of the Chinese; more, the concessions made to us have been, from first to last, extorted against the conscience of the nation."

Sir Rutherford Alcock came to exactly the same conclusion. He was examined by my late hon. Friend, Mr. J. B. Smith, and he was asked—"We force them by Treaty to take it from us?" to which he replied—"That is so in effect." I think I need not go further into this question as to whether we forced the opium traffic upon China or not. We forced the whole Treaty of Tien-Tsin on China, and this duty was part of that Treaty. We have merely to say to the Chinese that, whatever we did in those days, it is different now, and that we are prepared to give up these obnoxious duties in such a manner as the Chinese may think for the best. A great deal has lately been said in favour of the drug itself, and in a manner which has certainly surprised me. The more I have looked into the question, the more satisfied I have become as to the demoralizing influences which this drug produces upon all who deal with it or who trade in it, and the more I am satisfied that the course I am now urging upon the House and upon the country is the only course that is justifiable. The principal advocates I have heard for retaining the traffic have been my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) and Sir George Birdwood, whose letters have lately been published, and who is a gentleman who holds a very honourable position in the India Office. But what does Sir George Birdwood say? In the course of these letters there are only two short paragraphs which I will venture to read to the House. He says—

> "I am not approving the use of stimulants—I have long since ceased to do so. I am only protesting that there is no more harm in smoking opium than in smoking tobacco in the form of the mildest cigarettes, and that its narcotic effect can be but infinitesimal, if, indeed, anything measurable; and I feel bound to publicly express these convictions, which can easily be put to the test of experiment, at a moment when all the stupendous machinery available in this country of crotchet-mongers and ignorant if well-meaning agitators is being set in movement against the Indian Opium Revenue on the express ground of its falsely-imputed immorality. Be that as it may, all I insist on is the downright innocency in itself of opium smoking; and that, therefore, as far as we are concerned in its morality, whether judged by a standard based on a deduction from preconceived religious ideas, or an induction from national practices, we are as free to introduce opium into China, and to raise a Revenue from it in India, as to export our cotton, iron, and woollen manufactures to France."

Now, I will hand Sir George Birdwood over to the tender mercies of his own Profession, who have given an unanswerable declaration upon this subject, and which has never been contradicted; and also to the experiments which have been tried by Professor Gamgee with unanswerable results. I believe that Professor Gamgee, a resident of Manchester, is a gentleman well known to the Under Secretary of State for India. *The Lancet*, in a leading article, says—

> "The opium-eater, after a very brief habituation, is wretched and feeble without his artificial strength, and the moderate employment of opium is comparable rather to what is now regarded as the habitually excessive use of alcohol than to its really moderate use. The moderate and even the minimum opium-eater is a slave to his stimulant as the moderate alcohol-drinker is not. The testimony on this point is overwhelming, and so, also, is the evidence of the rapidity with which the opium-eater becomes enslaved, and the extreme difficulty and rarity of rescue. The mass of evidence on this

point—as an example of which we may mention the Chinese Consular Reports lately referred to in these columns—is altogether ignored by Mr. Moore, and, *à fortiori*, by Sir George Birdwood, the former contenting himself with a covert sneer at the statements of Missionaries (who have probably enjoyed better opportunities for observation than anyone else), and by the assertion and demonstration of the fact that recovery from the opium habit is a possible thing, which no one dreamed of denying. It is, moreover, difficult to attach much weight to an opinion of a writer who at one page admits that 'confessedly the practice of using opium, in common with indulgence in alcohol, exerts sufficient deleterious influences,' and at another asserts that 'the moderate use of opium is, under innumerable circumstances, beneficial to mankind both in health and sickness,' and who deliberately defends as harmless the habitual administration of opium to young children."

Then I think the testimony from China itself, and from all those who have been engaged in China, is overwhelming; but I cannot trouble the House with one-half of the instances which I hold in my hand. Let me, however, take two or three of them. I will quote Sir Rutherford Alcock as one of my testimonies. He says—in answer to the Question—

"Can the evils physical, moral, commercial, and political, as respects individuals, be exaggerated?—I have no doubt that where there is a great amount of evil, there is always a certain danger of exaggeration. It is difficult not to conclude that what we hear of it is essentially true; that it is a source of impoverishment and ruin to families."

Sir Thomas Wade, our present Representative to China, at this moment in this country, in a Memorandum of the revision of the Treaty of Tien-Tsin, writes thus—

"It is to me vain to think otherwise of the use of the drug in China than as of a habit many times more pernicious, nationally speaking, than the gin and whisky drinking which we deplore at home. It takes possession more insidiously, and keeps its hold to the full as tenaciously. I know no case of radical cure. It has insured, in every case within my knowledge, the steady descent, moral and physical, of the smoker, and it is, so far, a greater mischief than drink—that it does not by external evidence of its effects expose its victim to the loss of a repute which is the penalty of habitual drunkenness. There is reason to fear that a higher class than used to smoke in Commander Lin's day are now taking to the practice."

The same evidence was given by Mr. David Hill, a Missionary of very large experience in China, and a gentleman very well known in the City of York. Mr. Hill, who is connected with the Wesleyan Missionary Society, and returned to this country after having been for 14 years out there, told me—

"The effects of opium smoking upon the Chinese generally has again and again been depicted to the British public in strong and earnest language; but never I think too strong, and certainly never too earnest. No language can fully picture to others the deplorable consequences of opium smoking, which I have myself seen in China, even in the case of some of my own Chinese acquaintances."

I hold in my hand copies of the opinions of Dr. Kerr, a Medical Missionary at Canton for more than 20 years; of Mr. Winchester, Her Majesty's Consul at Shanghai; of Dr. Gauld, who was connected with the English Presbyterian Medical Mission at Swatow; and of Dr. Osgood, of the Foochow Medical Missionary Hospital, from whose statement I will read one passage. Dr. Osgood says—

"In all, over 1,100 cases have been treated. As a majority of these cases have come under my personal supervision, day after day, I hope that I shall not be accused of egotism or cant when I write that, in my opinion, the use of opium is an unmitigated curse."

He also says—

"I have never yet heard a heathen Chinaman defend the use or sale of opium; but, on the contrary, they universally condemn them. The only apologists for the use of opium have been representatives of Christian lands, many of whom have had but little practical knowledge of the evil resulting from the use of opium."

Well Sir, there was a very remarkable gathering that I had the pleasure of attending—of the Chinese Missionaries, at Exeter Hall. It was held one day last year, and the verdict of all the Missionaries of China was unanimous in regard to the ruinous results upon the Chinese people of opium smoking. Therefore, I think this evidence, which cannot for a moment be contradicted, is of the highest value. Sir Rutherford Alcock seems lately to have altered his views. I wish to say nothing disrespectful of Sir Rutherford Alcock. Sir Rutherford Alcock ably represented us in China for a long time; he is now placed in an altered position. He has become the Chairman of the British Borneo Company. The British Borneo Company, to the great scandal of this country, have, in their Charter given to them by Her Majesty's Government, the power of dealing with this drug in Borneo; and in Article 15 of the Charter there is a Section (VII.) which gives the Company the power of monopolists in dealing with and selling opium. I do not mean to say that Sir Rutherford Alcock's views have altered because he has altered his position in life; but it is a rather singular thing that he should now be writing in favour of the use of this drug, after the evidence which he gave before the Committee which inquired into the question in relation to Indian finance. There is another argument which is sometimes used in these debates. I have heard it often said that the English, who indulge in excessive drinking, are the last persons who ought to protest against the use of opium. Now, I never could see the force of that argument. I think it is proved abundantly that the use of the drug by the Chinese is a very much worse thing than the use of almost any quantity of alcoholic drink. But, on the other hand, if things are allowed to happen in our own country which are a great disgrace to it, and which many of us have been labouring to put down by wise and prudent and careful measures of legislation—because the people of this country do wrong by using alcoholic liquors to excess—that can be no possible reason why the Government of India should live upon poisoning the Chinese, or why the Revenue of India should be raised at the expense of the physical and moral corruption of the Chinese people. I hold in my hand Papers which were moved for in 1881 on the consumption of opium in British Burmah. The Indian Government seems to have acted with great fairness, but with great firmness, in reference to the question of the opium trade in British Burmah. In a Memorandum written by Mr. Aitchison, late Chief Commissioner of British Burmah, dated Rangoon, April 30, 1880, he says—

> "The Papers now submitted for consideration present a painful picture of the demoralization, misery, and ruin produced among the Burmese by opium smoking. Responsible officers in all divisions and districts of the Province, and Natives everywhere, bear testimony to it. To facilitate examination of the evidence on this point, I have thrown some extracts from the Reports into an Appendix to this Memorandum. These show that among the Burmans the habitual use of the drug saps the physical and mental energies, destroys the nerves, emaciates the body, predisposes to disease, induces indolent and filthy habits of life, destroys self-respect, is one of the most fertile sources of misery, destitution, and crime, fills the gaol with men of relaxed frame, predisposed to dysentery and cholera, prevents the due extension of cultivation and the development of the land revenue, checks the natural growth of the population, and enfeebles the constitution of succeeding generations."

That passage is not written by any member of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, but by one of Her Majesty's Representatives in British Burmah, who brings together the whole of the evidence contained in this Paper, and upon such evidence the Indian Government took almost immediate and strong action. In the Report of the Administration for British Burmah, of 1880-1, it is stated—

> "In April, 1880, 40 licensed opium shops were closed, leaving 28 still open, and the price of Government opium was raised 30 per cent. It is proposed to close nine more shops on the 1st of April next, and to restrict the issues of Government opium to the holders of some of the remaining shops. . . . It is anticipated that the measures which are being taken will eventually cause a loss of from £50,000 to £70,000 of provincial revenue. In the Kyonkpyoi district the shops were reduced from five to one. There can be no doubt that all respectable classes of the people felt strongly on the opium question. Christian Missionaries and European officers who go much among the people share this feeling. Indulgence in opium sent a certain number into the lunatic asylum and a larger number into gaol. The name of opium smoker was a term of reproach throughout the country. Under these circumstances, it was clearly right to comply with the wishes of the people, and to restrict the consumption of opium. . . . The recent measures were proposed and were sanctioned by the present Chief Commissioner, and were sanctioned by the present Government of India, because they were demanded by the voice of the people, and because they were deemed to be right."

It is absurd for people to say that that which is good and right for Burmah is bad for China, and that the opium traffic ought to be maintained for the benefit of the Revenue of India. But the matter does not end here. I am told that the Government of Bombay are negotiating with the head Government—my hon. Friend (Mr. J. K. Cross) will correct me if I am wrong—and they say—

> "The Government consider there are very strong objections to the introduction of an industry so demoralizing in its tendency as opium cultivation and manufacture into a Province where at present it is unknown, and, so far as His Excellency in Council is aware, not asked for by the people. If opium cultivation were allowed in Scinde, it could not, with consistency, be prohibited in the rest of the Presidency. It has already been tried in Gujerat, and the result was wide-spread corruption and demoralization. At present the consumption of opium in this Presidency is very limited; but if the cultivation

of opium and manufacture of opium were permitted, every village might have its opium shop, and every cultivator might contract the habit of eating a drug which is said to degrade and demoralize those who become addicted to it. On the ground of public morality, therefore, His Excellency the Governor in Council would strongly deprecate the grant of permission to cultivate the poppy in Scinde, or in any other part of this Presidency."

I contend that the Indian Government seems to be doing what is right and wise at home; but they are doing an unfortunate thing if they are urging the Foreign Office still to dictate terms to the people of China on the question of the duty on this drug, and are guilty of gross inconsistency. Now, Sir, I think I have proved that this drug is demoralizing; that it is bad; and that we, a civilized, moral, and Christian people, should not deal with it. I find that there are Treaties existing between America and China, and between Russia and China, and in both these Treaties the Chinese Government has insisted that these two countries shall not take any part in the opium traffic. If the opium traffic is helpful to the people of China, surely such a stipulation is not necessary? But our American friends are beginning to find out that the use of this drug, as introduced into California by the Chinese, is demoralizing to their people, and they have already passed a statute on the subject. I find, in that excellent book of Dr. Kane's on *Opium Smoking in America and China*, that the habit of opium smoking is described as most fascinating.

> "It ensnares individuals in all classes of society, leading to the downfall of innocent girls, and the debasement of married women, and spreading its roots and growing in spite of the most stringent measures tending to its eradication."

Dr. Shurtleff again writes that the laws for the suppression of this vice were manifestly deficient until last winter, when the Legislature added a new section to the Penal Code of this State, which is as follows:—

> "Every person who opens, or maintains to be resorted to by other persons, any place where opium or any of its preparations is sold or given away to be smoked at such place; and any person who at such places sells or gives away any opium or its said preparations to be smoked or otherwise used; and every person who visits or resorts to any such place for the purpose of smoking opium or its said preparations, is guilty of a misdemeanour, and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine not exceeding 500 dollars, or by imprisonment in the county gaol not exceeding six months, both such fine and imprisonment."

Therefore, in America they find that this drug is as evil in its effects as in China; and, until some argument is brought to the contrary to convince me, I shall hold to the opinion that this method of raising the Indian Revenue is demoralizing to a friendly, if somewhat barbaric, people. Another argument was used by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, in the course of one of the debates on this subject, that it was the smuggling of opium which brought us into this traffic, and that if we do not continue it as a legal trade we should then get into the difficulty that always arises: when a contraband trade has been brought about by the large duties which have been levied on the article in question. Mr. Commissioner Aitchison says—"The evasion of the Revenue is not to be compared with the gradual demoralization of the people." That is his view, and I believe it to be the view of the Indian Government, and that it will be the view of this House. But what was our conduct towards China? Our conduct towards China comprised the abetting of smuggling. The *Arrow*, while sailing under false colours, was seized by the Chinese authorities in a way which was perfectly right, as was afterwards clearly demonstrated. But we went to war with the Chinese, and we punished the Chinese. Now I come to that which is, perhaps, the most difficult part of the question, and that is the subject of the Indian Revenue. This has been, from first to last, the great difficulty in dealing with the question of opium. I have looked carefully through the records of the Indian Revenue for some time back; and I have come to the conclusion that if the Government of India once make up their minds to do without the Revenue from opium they would without difficulty be able to find a way to do so. There have been a great many things said on this question, and the noble Marquess who is now the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) said that, while we were trying to protect the Chinese, we were endeavouring to put burdens on the poor people of India, who were very little able to bear them. But I would show how many burdens the poor people of India can be relieved from. I sat some time on the "Public Works Committee, India," and a great deal of evidence as to the want of power in India to bear taxation was brought before us. There are Memorandums in existence, one by Lord Mayo and one by Lord Northbrook, in which they specify a certain Army as necessary for India. Is there any reason for still exceeding the limit fixed by those experienced Governors? But, lastly, the Indian Revenue showed a considerable surplus. If I recollect right, the Indian revenue from the opium traffic was about £5,000,000 sterling year by year. It has run up to £6,500,000, and has gone down below £5,000,000. But, in the meantime, while it has been at rather a higher figure, the stock of opium has considerably gone down. Instead of dealing with the opium question last year, the Indian Government dealt with the salt duty—a very necessary thing, no doubt, to pay attention to this tax—and also with the duties on imports. But I cannot help thinking that the latter, at any rate, was not one of those questions that required immediate attention. It was certainly not asked for by the people of India, but it pleased the people of Manchester. I very much doubt, however, whether the Indian Government were justified in taking off the duty on cotton goods when they had so large a portion of the Revenue due to opium. I wish, in conclusion, to say that I think we are bound to look at the manner in which my Motion, if carried, might affect the Revenue of India. In the Petitions which I have had the honour to present to the House, that has been dealt with by those who have signed them, who have expressed their desire that the people of this country should be temporarily taxed, if it should be necessary for India to give up a portion of her Revenue. It would be only a portion that would be required under any circumstances. There are several Indian financiers who have laid down very strongly that there are various items in which India could save. My hon. Friend sitting below me (Mr. J. K. Cross) said, in one of his speeches on Indian Finance, that 35 per cent of the money spent on public works was spent in establishment charges which could be saved without difficulty if a certain course of policy were pursued. Then the Indian Finance Committee of 1874 reported that certain Indian charges should be borne by England. I believe none of the charges touched upon in that Report have yet been placed upon England. Whether the Indian Government can make the present sacrifice without help I cannot say; but when I turn to the ever increasing revenue of the Indian railways, to the steady development of the country, and to the probability that the Empire will still further develop in time of peace, with proper care of her resources, I have little hesitation in saying that, if Her Majesty's Government once make up their minds that they will gradually diminish their revenue from the poppy, they will find India able to exist, and exist well, without having any reliance on this source of Revenue. But I shall be asked if the House of Commons should take away this source of Revenue when the people of China cultivate vast fields of this drug for their own consumption? All the evidence, however, which is before this House shows that we were parties in the matter, and that we have forced opium upon the Chinese in a way which rendered it perfectly impossible for the Chinese Government to put an end to the cultivation in its own territory. It does not matter, in my view, whether the Chinese grow the poppy themselves or not—whether they get it from Persia or Turkey, or anywhere else. I say that we, as a Christian country, believing in the laws of morality and religion, have no right to be participators in a trade which brings demoralization and death and disease upon those with whom we profess to have friendly relations. I take a strong and a high ground in this matter; and I think I have proved that this trade has been forced on the people of China from the days of the Chinese War up to the present time; that we have never let the Chinese be free agents in the matter; that the duties we arranged under the Treaty of Tien-Tsin are still enforced; that the use of this drug is uniformly demoralizing and injurious to the Chinese; and that there can be no qualification to the statement. Therefore, I say that our first step, if we take this view of the case, is to say to the Chinese that in any Treaty which we make with them—whether it relates to the Treaty of Chefoo and the municipal duties, or to the Treaty of Tien-Tsin, which deals with the Imperial duties—we will treat you as any other independent Power of equal strength and position to ourselves; and whatever duties you think fit to make in the interests of your Revenue or your people we leave to you. We ask no more, and we want no more, than this; and I leave the matter in the hands of the House, thanking the House for the patience with which it has listened to me upon a question in which I take so deep an interest.

MR. S. SMITH *: I rise to second the Motion of my hon. Friend, the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease), and, in doing so, I will say that I think the able speech which he has delivered must have carried conviction to this House. He has set before us so fully the evidence showing the unjust character of our past treatment of China, and the very pernicious effects of the opium traffic on the people of China, that I think little more requires to be said in that connection. The time has passed when it is necessary to discuss the question of the morality or immorality of our past dealings with China. The verdict of all impartial historians is against our country. It seems to me that there can be no difference of opinion amongst honest men, that the conduct of this country towards China has been shameful and unjust in the highest degree, and that we have been the means of inflicting upon the people of China one of the greatest curses which ever befell a nation. But it is not of much use to go back upon past events which we cannot recall. The point which we have now to discuss as reasonable men is, what amends can we make for our past misconduct—what remedy can we offer for those great evils which we all deplore? I admit that the evils have now become so vast and so difficult to grapple with, that one may well be appalled at their magnitude, and feel almost discouraged at attempting to prescribe a remedy. In thinking over this matter, I have felt the full force of this view. I have felt, as many have done, that we have so inoculated the Chinese with a taste for this poisonous stuff, that it will be almost impossible to stamp it out. We have forced the Chinese to legalize the import of a drug which their Government earnestly sought to exclude. We have taken away from them all inducement to abstain from the cultivation themselves; we have stimulated the culture all over that country, and thereby have given a great excuse to the Indian Government for persisting in forcing this trade on China. This is the state of things which we have now to confront; and the question which we have to ask ourselves is, what can we do, as just and reasonable men, to atone for the past, and bring about a happier state of things in the future? I think it will be more fitting for me now to deal with some of the objections against the course which is advocated by the Motion of my hon. Friend. I need not go back to the history of our dealings with China, and I deed scarcely allude to the almost universally admitted pernicious effect of opium smoking. The first great objection is that it is now too late to apply a remedy. Our opponents say that the evil has been done, and has become so universal that it is in vain for us to attempt to grapple with it; that the Chinese will have opium, and that we may as well poison them as anyone else. Now I cannot sit down under that view of the subject. I cannot feel that it is the right view for any man to take who seeks to do justice to his fellow-men. It puts this country in a false position. It seems to me to be an immoral argument, and I hope that this House will never agree to any argument which appears in its judgment to be immoral. I think the least we can do is to leave the Chinese Government to deal with the matter as its own sense of justice leads it to act. The Motion of my hon. Friend asks nothing more than that. I think it is the very minimum of reparation that this country can offer to China. Now, it may be said that anything the Chinese Government may do is inadequate to cope with the evil. I admit that it will take a long time, even with the most beneficent Government in China, to very greatly mitigate this national evil. But that is no reason why it should not attempt to do something, and it cannot begin the attempt until we leave its hands free. What we ask is, that England should allow the Chinese Government to restrict the import of opium according as it thinks best. The Chinese Government has no encouragement to stop the growth of opium so long as we compel it to receive it from India. But let us grant it power to restrict, as it thinks fit, the import of opium, and it will have at once a strong inducement to limit the home growth. Therefore, I think that this objection is one which the House will not consider good. Then I will deal with another objection, which is raised, at all events, by the Indian Government—the objection to which my hon. Friend has already alluded—that India cannot dispense with this large revenue. The hon. Member put it as forming one-eighth of the Revenue of India; but I should think that too low an estimate. It may be one-sixth to one-eighth. Now, I know well that India is a poor country, that its resources are strained considerably, and that we cannot tax it much more heavily than now. I quite admit that at present we cannot face the question of extinguishing the opium traffic without proposing some substitute for yielding the revenue that we should lose. But I think the Motion we propose will not seriously affect the Indian Revenue for some time to come. It is not likely that the Chinese Government will attempt to prevent the import of opium, even if we agree to this Motion. But it might wish, in the first instance, to increase the tariff considerably, so as to limit the import of the foreign product, and then restrict the home product in the way which it thinks best. I think it could be shown that the real interest of the Chinese Government is to tolerate the foreign, rather than the home product. The collection of Excise duties over the whole extent of China would be an almost impossible method of taxation. The Chinese Government, therefore, as far as Revenue is concerned, would rather permit the import of foreign opium than the growth of the home product. Then we must be aware that China is liable to serious famines. It is not a long time since the Chinese people were afflicted with this terrible scourge, and many millions perished. It is not likely, for this reason, that their Government will give much encouragement to the home growth, and so I hold that, if we grant this moderate concession to China, the probability is that the reduction in the trade between India and China would be very gradual, and would not press with any great suddenness on the Revenue of India. But, as has already been said, I am sure that this country would be ready to make some contribution to the Revenue of India if necessary. I hold that it is bound to do so. This country was the author of the present trouble. The people of India were never consulted in the matter, and we are bound to accept the consequences of our own actions, and bear at least a portion of the cost of atonement. Should it be found necessary for a few years to add 1*d.* to the Income Tax for this purpose, I think there will be no indisposition to yield that moderate amount of assistance. Then we are told that another objection is that it will encourage smuggling in China. Undoubtedly, that, at first, seems a serious question. Smuggling was the cause of the first China War; but the remedy lies in the hands of the Indian Government. If it will sell the opium to responsible merchants, who will give bail that they will deliver it into the Chinese bonded warehouses, the difficulty will be met; the Indian Government can put its hands on all the opium exported, and if it was in earnest, could arrange that it should be conveyed to China in such a way as to prevent smuggling. The last objection is, that if we retire from this trade, or even withdraw in some degree, other countries will step in. Persia, for instance, is exporting increasingly large quantities of opium; but we know that any Treaty we apply to China on the subject of opium will apply all round. China will be only too glad to apply the same restrictions to other foreign opium. Now, these appear to be the chief objections against the very moderate change advocated. Let us look for a moment at the advantages to be derived. The first is that we shall thereby do something to conciliate the people of that vast Empire. We have done nothing hitherto to conciliate them. We have done everything to make them our enemies. We have done everything to make them hate us and European civilization. Now let us do something to try and conciliate a population which is supposed by some to be equal to one-fourth of the whole of the inhabitants of the globe. I think that is not a small object, and I think it would be a worthy object. I cannot conceive an object more worthy a country like this than to make 300,000,000 or 400,000,000 of people in China think of us as friends instead of enemies. In the event of a possible struggle with Russia for our Indian Empire, which I trust may never occur, the good feeling of the Chinese population towards us would be an important element, and I think we should endeavour to cultivate the friendship of this great nation. Now I lay great stress upon the effect which friendly feeling with China would have upon our trade with that great Empire. Our trade with China has been miserably small hitherto. On examining the Board of Trade Returns for last year, I find that we only sent to China £7,500,000 worth of British products as against £29,000,000 worth sent to India. Now, China has a much larger and more industrious population than India; we have almost free trade with China; so there is no reason whatsoever why we should send so little produce there as compared with that sent to India. As a matter of fact, last year we only sent to China, with its 300,000,000 or 400,000,000 of people, as much of our products as we sent to South Africa. We exported less than we sent to Belgium, and less than half of what we sent to Australia. On the Manchester Exchange, there is nothing that excites so much astonishment as the little elasticity of our trade with China. Now let us ask ourselves the reason. The reason is obvious. It is because, in the first place, the resources of the people of China are wasted upon opium; and, in the second place, because the hostility of the Chinese to the opium trade excites hostility to all foreign trade. These are the two reasons why our trade with China is so poor and so languid; and I maintain that the people of this country have lost quite as much in their diminished trade with China as the Government of India has gained by the opium revenue. If a profit and loss account were drawn up, it would be shown that the people of England, and especially the people of Lancashire, have lost as much or more in their intercourse with China than the Indian Government has gained by the sale of opium. I fully believe that, if we only change our policy with respect to the opium trade, and make China our friend instead of our foe, there will be no limit to the growth of trade that will take place with that vast country. At the present time the outlets for British capital seem almost choked up. There is nothing this country needs so much as a large field for the investment of its capital. What field in the world would equal China with its hundreds of millions of industrious, hard-working people? Supposing we make ourselves the friends of China, so that it would be willing to increase its intercourse with England, I see no reason why we should not in the next 20 or 30 years do as large a trade with China as we now do with India; we should more than make up for any temporary loss we might sustain in the falling off of the opium revenue. Another advantage that we should gain by the change of policy I have suggested, is that we should be raised in the estimation of all the nations of the world. This country suffers very much in loss of reputation on account of its connection with the opium trade. Wherever you go—in America, Germany, or elsewhere—if you speak with enlightened foreigners concerning the policy of this country, they at once put their finger on the opium trade. There cannot be any doubt that, in the eyes of the whole world, our connection with this trade appears a great blot on our national character, a great stain upon our escutcheon. By the proposed change of policy, we should get back in the estimation of the world far more than sufficient to compensate for any little temporary sacrifice we might be required to make. Then, again, in performing this great act of justice we should remove from the minds of many of our own people the painful consciousness that we were engaged in an iniquitous trade. The opium trade is one of the great national sins that this country has not yet atoned for. Many politicians are not aware of the strong feeling there is throughout the country on this matter. It would, indeed, be a wonderful relief to many people to know that we were altering our course. Furthermore, I maintain that, by the abolition of the opium trade, we should give Christianity a chance. At present, we give Christianity hardly any chance at all. In this country we have reaped the blessings of Christianity, and, surely, we ought to be alive to the responsibility of presenting our religion in its true light to the 300,000,000 or 400,000,000 of people in China. We have, however, contrived to make Christianity abhorrent to the Chinese. We have approached them with the cup of vice in one hand, and with the Bible in the other hand. We have given them the impression that our Christianity is a huge hypocrisy, on account of the cruel and unjust way in which from the very first we have treated them. The change of policy we desire will bring blessings on our own country. I believe that in every nation the moral and material go hand in hand. I believe that a country which takes the right course will always gain by it. I believe that the world is governed by providential laws, and that "righteousness exalteth a nation." I am sure that if we deal with China honestly we shall do so in the interest of our own country. I would recommend the application to China of the golden rule of "doing to others as we would wish to be done by." We wish to allow the Government of China to protect its subjects in the same way as the Government of India protects its subjects. The Government of India takes care to prevent the taste for this noxious drug spreading. I hope it will always do so; I have no wish to see the use of opium spreading in India, and I think the Government is doing its best to minimize the danger by keeping the trade in its own hands. It is also acting wisely in preventing the introduction of foreign opium. Surely, the Chinese Government ought to be permitted to be the judge of the interests of its people in the same way as the Indian Government is the judge of the interests of its people. We ask that the Government of China shall be allowed to do as the Government of Japan does. The Japanese Government has made Treaties with all European Powers, forbidding the introduction of opium into its country, and it has taken good care to prevent the entrance into Japan of this poisonous drug. I believe up to recent years it made the sale of opium a capital offence, so conscious were these Asiatics of the deleterious nature of the drug. We ask that the Government of China shall be allowed to exercise the same care of its people as that of Japan does. It is monstrous to say that what is poison to the Japanese is good for the Chinese. Most of us read in the newspapers, a short time ago, a most eloquent speech delivered by the late Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright), in which the right hon. Gentleman depicted the horrors of war. There passed before the right hon. Gentleman's mind a vision, in which he saw millions of broken-hearted widows and children, whose husbands and fathers had been slaughtered in war, and he moved his audience deeply by the picture of the sorrow and misery which he drew. I thought that, when I read that speech, we might conjure up a similar vision of the misery caused by the opium trade—of the 160,000 suicides said to be caused by it annually—of the multitudes of blighted homes for which it is responsible. If these things are true, surely the time has come when this terrible vice should be grappled with, and serious steps taken to deliver us from complicity in this iniquitous trade. It may be said it is too late. I do not believe it is. It is better to repent at the eleventh hour, than not all; and I would ask the House, even at this late stage of the opium question, to turn its steps in the right direction, to make at least a beginning, and thus afford some hope that this dreadful evil will at some future time be wiped away, to give some encouragement to the excellent and religious people out-of-doors who are continually agitating this question. Let the House give some encouragement, even if it does not go so far as we could wish. Let us feel that the Government have an earnest desire to put our policy towards China on a more Christian and more honourable footing than that on which it now stands. I hope that before long something will be done which will tend to wipe away the greatest stain which now exists upon the escutcheon of this country. I beg to second the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that in all negotiations which take place between the Governments of Her Majesty and China, having reference to the Duties levied on Opium under the Treaty of Tientsin, the Government of Her Majesty will be pleased to intimate to the Government of China that in any revision of that Treaty, or in any other negotiations on the subject of Opium, the Government of China will be met as that of an independent State, having the full right to arrange its own Import Duties."—(*Sir Joseph Pease.*)

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he did not rise to make a speech upon what might be called the general question; but rather to indicate what was the present position of the negotiations which were known to be proceeding in connection with the opium question, so far as the Foreign Office was concerned. The Seconder of the Motion said he hoped the Government were conscious of the importance of a good understanding with China. Let him assure the hon. Member that the Government were fully aware of the great and transcendant importance of a good understanding with that country. Some years ago it was an open question whether the Empire of China, hard pressed by foreign wars, and harder pressed by internal rebellion, would not fall to pieces, or be at least very much curtailed as to the limits which were under the control of the Central Government. But that day was over. The Chinese Empire in the last few years had shown an extraordinary recuperative power. It had put down the rebellion, had vindicated its ancient limits, and occupied a position in Asia almost equal to that of the most palmy days of its history. His hon. Friend might be sure that the Government thoroughly understood the importance of a good understanding with such a Power. At the same time, he did not urge the desirability of an alliance with China for the reasons adduced by his hon. Friend. He preferred not to contemplate the possibility of such a struggle as that forshadowed by the hon. Member, but to court the alliance of China for commercial reasons only. Passing from that, he desired to indicate to the House the present position of the opium question. Speaking upon the subject two years ago, the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) stated that the negotiations which had taken place within the last three years had been negotiations in which the opium question had been dealt with from the Chinese side, and so far as any change had been made or contemplated, it had been a change proposed by the Chinese to suit their ideas, and it was, therefore, not to be supposed that any step had been taken to increase the opium trade in China; on the contrary, the steps proposed and considered would, if carried into effect, be more likely to decrease it. Now, the language of the President of the Local Government Board was language which he could make use of on this occasion; and it would be desirable to explain to the House more fully that at this moment, so far as any proposal had been made, it was not a proposal by the English Government with the view of forcing the opium trade on the Chinese, but rather a proposal by the Chinese themselves. The Treaty of Tien-Tsin was negotiated in 1858, and immediately afterwards certain Articles were drawn up respecting the rules of the trade, bearing date 8th November, 1858. Among these was an Article which put opium under certain special treatment out of deference to the wishes of the Chinese Government. Under that Article the same facilities were not claimed in regard to opium as to other goods; nor had Her Majesty's Government ever departed from the position then assumed that the internal arrangements of the Chinese Government with regard to opium were matters with which they and nothing to do. By the phrase "internal arrangements" he did not mean Customs duties, but those duties which were levied in the interior of China. In the Chefoo Convention, which it should be borne in mind arose out of special circumstances, there was a clause enacting that merchants must bring their opium to the notice of the Customs officers at the ports, and that the importer must pay the Customs duty and the purchaser the transit duty. But the Chefoo Convention had hardly been drawn up when differences of opinion became manifest about its meaning, and the amount of the likin or transit duty which might be levied under it, and it became apparent that the discontent which it was intended to allay was intensified by it. It had been asked—"Why not ratify the Chefoo Convention at once?" If they were to ratify that Convention as it stood, not much would be done. Though it might be desirable to negotiate on the basis of the Chefoo Convention, it would be dangerous to ratify it as it stood, because no two people could possibly agree as to the meaning of the terms. That view having forced itself upon Her Majesty's Government, negotiations as initiated by his Predecessor had been slowly going on. [*Ironical cheers.*] Hon. Members opposite cheered derisively at the word "slowly." With regard to those cheers he could only say what his hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board said in reply to similar cheers three years ago—that it must be recollected that the Government with which they had to deal, though of remarkable skill and ability, never moved very fast. However, the negotiations with regard to the likin or transit duty were at the present moment reaching a stage which the Government hoped would be fruitful. His hon. Friends had argued on this, as upon other occasions, that the Chinese Government felt itself in the position of a person acting under pressure. He was unable to see anything of the kind in any proposition emanating from the Chinese Government. Sympathizing, as he believed everybody in the House must, with the abstract view that the consumption of opium had, to say the least, never done anybody any good, it was quite another thing to assume, as his hon. Friends had rashly assumed, that there was evidence that the people and Government of China were in any sense united in demanding from the English Government power to prohibit the trade or the production of opium in their own country. He was perfectly willing to grant that there was a party in China in favour of the suppression of the opium traffic, just as in England there was a party in favour of the suppression of the sale and consumption of alcoholic drinks, and that that party comprised within its ranks many men of great power and eminence. But he was unable to see that there was any proof whatever that that party had the ear of the country; or that if the English Government consented to the complete and immediate abrogation of the old Treaties, which, however, was not aimed at by this Motion, there would be any immediate or near prospect of the Chinese Government putting an end to the traffic. All that would be done, therefore, by the Government would be most seriously to embarrass the finances of India without obtaining those objects which were placed before them as inducements for making this great and weighty change. The Government were fully sensible of the importance of the question; and, considering the great interest shown, not only in that House, but out of it, in the matter, when the time approached when the decennial revision of the Treaty of Tien-Tsin would naturally take place, the whole opium question would be certain to be forced upon the attention of the Government. But he was bound to say that at this moment to adopt a Resolution of this kind would not attain the objects which were aimed at by the Mover of the Motion, and, at the same time, it would seriously hamper the Foreign Office in regard to the limited question of the transit duty. Under these circumstances, the Government were unwilling to meet his hon. Friend's Motion with a direct negative, because that would look as if they had no sympathy with the object he had at heart, which was a great and philanthropic object; but feeling, as they did, that the present negotiations would probably only suffer, and that even the general object of his hon. Friend would not itself be in any way promoted in a manner which would be useful or conducive to the Public Service, or to India, the Government would meet the Motion by moving, as he now did, the Previous Question.

Previous Question proposed, "That the Original Question be now put."—(*Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice.*)

Sir JOHN KENNAWAY congratulated his hon. Friends opposite on the fact that the conscience of the country had been very much awakened, and that there was a sincere desire to deal fairly with the Chinese in this matter. The country greatly resented the fact that the execution of the Convention had been so long delayed, and that, as was said by Sir Thomas Wade, while we had entered upon the enjoyment of advantages conferred upon us, we had evaded the fulfilment of corresponding obligations. The whole matter ought to be fairly looked in the face. The growth of native opium in China was, however, very much larger than what we imported, and the drug was very greatly consumed. The Secretary of State for War, when he spoke on the question, hardly agreed with what had been stated by the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, because he showed that opium was largely used, especially by the working classes in China, without doing harm. He believed the point between the Chinese and the British Government was simply as to the amount of duty that should be imposed. It had been proposed, on the part of the Chinese, to raise the duty to something like 130 or 150 taels, which was a very high duty. Sir

Thomas Wade had suggested that 60 or 70 taels might fairly be conceded by this country as the import duty to be paid in to the Central Government through the Customs, because it had properly been said that there should not be such a high duty as would lead to smuggling, and probably to collisions between our authorities and those of the Chinese. That was a point that might fairly be conceded. The demand of the Chinese was for fiscal liberty. He held that we had not the right to interfere with the Chinese in a matter which was essentially connected with their own internal fiscal arrangements. We should resent any dictation on the part of France as to the amount of duty we might choose to impose upon her brandies; and much as we disliked the oppressive tariff of the United States, we should never go to war to force them to admit our goods at a low rate of duty. He was glad that we were arriving at a clearer perception with regard to this question than had formerly prevailed.

Mr. MACFARLANE remarked, that the violent anti-opium tone had disappeared from this annual Resolution, since it had now been reduced to a desire that the Government should inform the Chinese that they were an independent State. He did not defend old proceedings of this country with regard to forcing opium upon China; but he maintained that opium was the most innocent stimulant that man could take. He had never heard of any injuries resulting to other people from the men who took opium. They never heard of the atrocities which were committed in this country to poor women and children through the intoxication caused by the use of our stimulants. It was, moreover, a valuable medicine. In British India the quantities consumed were in exact proportion to the prevalence of fever. In the dry districts, where fever did not exist, opium was scarcely used; whereas in the damp malarious districts it was used to a large extent, and beneficially. He was glad to observe that the discussion had taken a much more commercial than a moral tone. He denied that opium was in itself essentially an immoral drug, and challenged those who had raised this question to take a similar course with regard to spirits, and see what sort of a division they would have in that House.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER, although preferring the Motion on this subject brought forward about the year 1870, by the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), and which he had the honour to second, said, he had on all occasions entered his protest against the system pursued with regard to Indian opium; and believing that the present Motion was a protest against that system, he would go into the Lobby in support of it. At the same time, he regretted that the Motion took attention off the Indian question, and directed it to the secondary point of the negotiations carried on by the Foreign Office with the Chinese Government. Since last Session they had had a very important document presented, which was the answer of the Indian Governmont to the very able indictment made against the opium traffic by the hon. Member for South Durham. The only new point raised by the Government of India on that occasion was that a former Governor (Sir William Muir) of the North-Western Provinces advocated the imposition of a transit duty in place of the existing monopoly; and it was said that on the borders of Malwa it would be comparatively easy to enforce that duty, as the country was mountainous, and the passes could easily be guarded, but that Bengal being an open country the prohibition could not be enforced. But so long as the Indian Revenue was so largely dependent upon opium, he had no fault to find with our negotiations with China. A parallel had been drawn between opium and alcohol. But no such comparison was valid. Most persons considered the use of alcohol to some extent innocent, and healthful; but who ever heard of a doctor prescribing opium? [Sir George Campbell: Laudanum.] But even in the case of alcohol their laws were keenly repressive, and it was not allowed to be sold without special licence. But if the Chancellor of the Exchequer were to abolish all duties on wines and spirits, and to make it allowable for anyone who chose to open a house for their sale, a very large increase of drunkenness would ensue. He regretted that Lord Shaftesbury had not been successful in the efforts which he made in that House 40 years ago to suppress the traffic when it only produced £2,000,000 a-year, and its suppression would have been comparatively easy. He was quite aware of the difficulties which attached to the opium question; but thought that if the people of England felt they were promoting a nefarious trade, they should authorize the House to assist the Revenue of India, and by that means put an end to what he could but regard as one of the great blots in the escutcheon of the people of England.

DR. FARQUHARSON protested against the view that they owed any reparation or confession of wrongdoing to China with respect to the opium question. In 1858, according to the authority of Mr. Laurance Oliphant, the Chinese were given the option of altogether excluding opium. In China, too, much larger districts were devoted to the production of the drug than in India. It ought not to be forgotten that if the monopoly were taken away India would be practically bankrupt. Much misconception, too, prevailed as to the injurious effects of opium. There was a great difference as between smoking and eating opium. Some of the most vigorous races of India — the Sikhs and the Rajpoots—habitually smoked opium. Moderate opium smoking was found to be a wholesome tonic, and it was not narcotic until it was taken in excess. It was also known that it was a valuable prophylactic against fever, and for that purpose it was a good deal used in the Fen districts of England. But opium eating produced disorders of the stomach which were not produced by smoking. Yet distinguished men in this country had been in the habit of eating opium; and it was well known that the illustrious Wilberforce rarely made a great speech in that House without having previously taken an opium pill They had got the evidence of many very eminent authorities, to the effect that opium smoking was not dangerous, but rather beneficial. The Chinese coolies were almost invariably opium smokers; and of the Chinese Army, who were a hardy set of men, 90 per cent were opium smokers. The general condition of China showed it to be quite absurd that we should take the extreme view of the destructive nature of this drug. Many of the people of China who smoked opium were the most learned people in the world. He believed that the number who did smoke opium had been greatly exaggerated. The evidence from the other side seemed to him to be suspiciously vague. He asked whether anyone could produce a single case of real actual damage done by opium smoking *per se?* To his mind there was no evidence whatever that deaths ever did take place from the actual effects of opium smoking *per se*, and it was a point on which evidence was urgently needed. He believed that it was one of the least harmful of stimulants. It was certainly far less harmful than alcohol, from which they in this country derived an annual revenue of £20,000,000. Opium did not produce crime, nor did it produce hereditary disease, both of which were results of alcohol; and he believed it did China very little harm.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he could not agree with the view taken by the hon. Member who had just spoken. He did not think it was proved that opium was worse than whiskey; but he did not think, on the other hand, it was proved that whiskey was worse than opium. No doubt there were limits within which whiskey might do no great harm. He confessed that he himself drank it sometimes; but it was taken to excess and did much harm. The Indian Government did not encourage the growth of opium; but, on the contrary, they restricted it. In fact, they treated opium exactly as we treated whiskey. The view he had always taken was that we who were connected with India should wash our hands of the sin of this matter, if sin there was. So far as the question went of not forcing opium upon the Chinese, he agreed with the Mover of the Resolution; but the question was a very much more difficult one, and could not be treated in that simple way. The House would be glad to hear the Under Secretary of State for India; but the noble Lord who had spoken for the Government had not told them where the negotiations stood now, and what was going to be done. The question was whether they were bound, not only to refrain from forcing opium on the Chinese, but whether they were also bound to take upon themselves to prevent the smuggling of opium into China, if the Chinese could not effect that object themselves? The Chinese seemed to seek to raise as much revenue out of opium as they could. If the Chinese raised their import duty the Indian Revenue must suffer; and if they could do so of their own power, we could not do anything to prevent it. It seemed to him that, practically, when the Treaties were made, the agreement between this country and China amounted to this—that the Chinese agreed to limit the revenue on opium upon the consideration that we should collect the duty for them. But if they raised the revenue, it seemed to him a very debateable question whether we were bound to collect that duty. He rather feared we were trying to buy the acquiescence of the Chinese Government in this trade, by giving them an additional share in the revenue derived from it. The hon. Member for Liverpool had a definite plan. It seemed to him that not only did the hon. Member want to retain the monopoly of this opium traffic in India, but also in China. Pending the result of the negotiations, however, he should vote with the Government for the Previous Question, rather than for the Motion, though, as a matter of principle, he agreed with it.

Question put.

The House *divided:* — Ayes 66; Noes 126: Majority 60.—(Div. List, No. 48.)

CHANNEL TUNNEL—THE JOINT COMMITTEE.—RESOLUTION.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I rise to move—

> "That a Committee of Five Members of this House be appointed to join with a Committee of the House of Lords, to inquire whether it is expedient that Parliamentary sanction should be given to a submarine communication between England and France; and to consider whether any or what conditions should be imposed by Parliament in the event of such communication being sanctioned:—That the Correspondence with reference to the proposed construction of a Channel Tunnel, presented to Parliament in 1882, be referred to the Committee."

Under ordinary circumstances, I should have moved this Resolution as a matter of form, in pursuance of a promise given on the part of the Government last Session, and repeated at the commencement of the present Session; but in view of the Notice of Motion given by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote), the House will probably consider it right that I should state very briefly the position in which the matter stands, in order to put it clearly before the House. I must first call the attention of the House to the steps which have already been taken in the matter, It appears that the subject of the Tunnel between England and France was first raised by an Anglo-French Company, established in 1867; but no practical result followed, for the breaking out of the Franco-Prussian War in 1870 put a stop entirely to the proceedings. In 1871 the matter was again brought up, and a correspondence took place, in the first instance, between the promoters of the French Company on the one hand, and an English Company on the other, and their respective Governments; and, in the second place, between the two Governments of France and England. On the 22nd of June, 1872, Earl Granville, writing to our English Ambassador in Paris, said—

> "With reference to Your Excellency's despatch of the 15th instant, and previous correspondence, I transmit herewith a copy of a letter received from the Channel Tunnel Company, urging the Government to inform them if they have any objection to the Tunnel being made. The Board of Trade have been consulted, and as regards the engineering difficulties the Government offer no opinion; but they consider it a matter for consideration in what way a concession, if granted, should be modified by fixing the manner in which the purchase of the undertaking is to be effected. The Government do not doubt that, assuming the matter undertaken, it ought not to remain a monopoly, and I am to request that Your Excellency will make known to the French Government the present application; but the Government state that, subject to those observations, they have no objection in principle to the proposed Tunnel between France and England."

Well, in 1874, the French Government granted a concession to the French Company, contingent on their being able to make arrangements with the English Company for carrying out the English portion of the undertaking. In the interval, the Government of England had been changed, and the late Government was then in Office. In September of that year the Earl of Derby, who was then at the Foreign Office, communicated to the Board of Trade a despatch received from the French Government, and, in so doing, said—

> "I am to request that you will move their Lordships in order to ascertain their opinion as to the answer to be sent to the French Ambassador."

And, further on, he said—

> "Support would be afforded by the Government to secure such a result as the Board of Trade might desire."

The Board of Trade considered the subject, and made certain suggestions with which I need not trouble the House. In December, 1874, the Earl of Derby wrote to the French Ambassador on behalf of Her Majesty's Government. And in his letter, addressed to Count de Charnac, and dated December 24th, he said—

> "In reply to Your Excellency's communication, I have to say that there appears to be no reason to doubt that the Government will offer no opposition to the scheme, provided they are not asked for a gift, or loan, or guarantee in connection therewith."

Well, now, in 1875, following this communication, a Bill was introduced into the Legislatures of France and England, and both Bills appear to have passed without opposition. In the month of March of the same year, a Joint Anglo-French Commission was appointed to consider the conditions on which the undertaking might be carried out, and this Commission met in Paris and in London. They reported, in 1876, on the question of the management of the traffic, and on the question of jurisdiction in the Tunnel between the two countries, and in favour of certain conditions being carried out, including the right of either Government to suspend the traffic or destroy the communication in case of war or of a threat of war. On behalf of the English Government the following Departments were parties to the Commission:—The Admiralty, presided over by the late Mr. Ward Hunt; the War Office, represented by Viscount Cranbrook; and the Treasury, represented by the right hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith). After the Report of this Joint Commission, nothing was done to give effect to the English Bill, owing to the financial collapse; and the power of the English Company under the Act altogether lapsed. Nothing more was heard of the project till the year 1881, when the South-Eastern Railway Company, which had obtained power in 1874 to spend £70,000 in borings, obtained additional powers to purchase land between Folkestone and Dover. In the autumn of 1881, the House of Commons were called upon to consider the rival projects of the South-Eastern Railway Company and the Channel Tunnel Company, and the Board of Trade appointed a Committee, which was joined by representatives of the War Office and the Admiralty, to consider the conditions which ought to be imposed in reference to the undertaking. The Committee took a great deal of evidence on the subject; and after the inquiries had proceeded for some time, the question was raised, for the first time, whether or not the national security was involved in the establishment of the proposed communication. It was raised, I believe, definitely in a very able document, which was prepared for the Committee by Lord Wolseley, in which he put forward the reasons which induced him to believe that the establishment of the projected Tunnel would constitute a danger to the country. The moment the question was raised it was seen to be one of cardinal importance, and it was at once recognized that it was a matter which could not be properly decided by a mere Departmental Committee, which had been appointed for a very different object. Accordingly, in 1882, the Committee were relieved of their functions, and it was understood that the Government would take the matter into their consideration. The first step taken by the present Government was the appointment of a Military and Engineering Committee to consider if, and how, the Tunnel could be rendered absolutely useless to an enemy in time of war. This Committee also took a great deal of evidence, and made a Report, which appears in a Paper dated May, 1882. Upon the receipt of that Report, the Government considered what further steps it would be their duty to take in the matter, and came to the conclusion that hitherto, at all events, the inquiry had been only partial; that there had been no attempt to exhaust the evidence, favourable or unfavourable, as to the effect of the Tunnel on commerce; that the advantages of greater facilities of communication had not been brought in any prominent way before the Committee previously; that the general military question had not been fully discussed; that it was desirable that further evidence should be taken on the subject; and that the House and the Government should be in a position to weigh the balance of advantages before they were asked to come to any conclusion in the matter. Accordingly, in 1882, the Government announced their intention to ask the House of Lords to join the

House of Commons in the appointment of a Joint Committee to further consider these questions. It may be asked, perhaps, whether the Joint Committee was the best Committee for such a purpose; but that is a comparatively technical point. It appears from Sir Erskine May's book, that Joint Committees, which were common up to the year 1695, were not employed from that time till 1864, in which year there were several proposals in regard to the Metropolitan Railways. The Bills for those Railways, involving questions of very great importance, were referred to a Joint Committee of the House of Lords and House of Commons, and that Committee laid down the general principles upon which such Bills should be dealt with. The Bills were subsequently brought into accordance with the principles then laid down, and were afterwards dealt with upon those principles. Another case was that of the proposals made some years ago for the amalgamation of certain railways, when a similar Committee was appointed and the same course was followed. Another question may be raised as to whether the present subject is properly a matter to be referred to a Committee at all. On that point, I can only say that there is hardly any subject of national interest and importance which has not at some time or another been referred to a Committee. Questions involving the national security have frequently been so treated. For instance, the whole question of the National Defences—a cognate subject—was referred to the consideration of a Committee. I may also refer to the precedent of Mr. Roebuck's Committee, at the time of the Crimean War, when the whole subject of that war was made a question for inquiry. I observe that the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman opposite states that—

> "Before entering upon the questions whether it is expedient that Parliamentary sanction should be given to the establishment of submarine communication between England and France, and upon what conditions (if any) such sanction should be granted, it is desirable that the House should be put in possession of the views of Her Majesty's Government on these subjects."

Now, I must point out to the right hon. Gentleman, and to the House, that two successive Governments which preceded the Government now holding Office have pronounced a pretty decided opinion upon the matter, and have communicated that opinion not only to the House, but also to a Foreign Government; and it is, therefore, rather difficult to see how the present Government, if any continuity of policy is to be observed — [*Ironical cheers*] — I shall be glad to hear from right hon. Gentlemen opposite if they think there are cases in which a continuity of policy should not be observed; but I will go on to say that if any continuity of policy is to be observed, it is difficult to see how the present Government, without the distinct authority of the two Houses of Parliament, and especially of the Representative Chamber, could fly in the face of the decision upon the situation already come to by two previous Administrations. I may say, in sitting down, that it does not seem to me there can be any question upon which the Government can more properly ask the assistance of the whole House than a question which concerns the national security. If the Government are to be called upon, as a Government, for an opinion according to our Parliamentary system, it might make of this matter a Party question. Now, at least, it is not a Party question. It seems to me that it is a question on which the Government have a right to ask the advice of all Parties in the House, and with respect to which it is under a corresponding obligation to consult the opinion of all Parties in both Houses of Parliament. I beg to move the Motion standing in my name.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a Committee of Five Members of this House be appointed to join with a Committee of the House of Lords, to inquire whether it is expedient that Parliamentary sanction should be given to a submarine communication between England and France; and to consider whether any or what conditions should be imposed by Parliament in the event of such communication being sanctioned."—(*Mr. Chamberlain.*)

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I propose to imitate the right hon. Gentleman in being extremely short in the remarks I shall trouble the House with, because the point which, at the present moment, I desire to bring to the notice of the House is one of a minute character, although of great importance. I do not wish to raise the great question of the expediency, or otherwise, of the Channel Tunnel, or of the proper mode of providing for the great interests of the country which may probably be conceivably affected by it. What I challenge is the mode of procedure which the right hon. Gentleman proposes to adopt. Now, it does seem to me that, instead of the Government appealing to the House, the House has rather a right to call upon the Government of the day, the question being one of great and acknowledged importance, to give us, in the first instance, their view of their responsibility in regard to the National safety. I was in hopes, even up to the last moment, that they would have given us some view upon the subject. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade has referred to a statement which had been made by the late Government, and also by the Government which preceded it, in which expressions were contained that the Government saw no objection, in principle, to the proposal, or accepted the proposal in principle. But that had nothing to do with the view which the present Government may take; and for this reason —because, as the right hon. Gentleman fairly and truly said, the great and important question of the making of any Tunnel of this character, which is a question of National defence, has really only been seriously raised in the course of the proceedings a year or two ago. I shall call the attention of the House to what took place on that occasion. It will be found in the Blue Book, at the 14th page of the preliminary statement. We are told that the Board of Trade Committee, consisting of Mr. Farrer, as Chairman, Admiral Phillimore, and Colonel Smith, of the Royal Engineers, was appointed to take evidence as to the rival schemes submitted to it. And on the 1st of February, 1882, the Chairman informed the President of the Board of Trade that, during the course of the inquiry, the effect which such schemes might have on the Military defences of the country had assumed such grave importance, that the Committee desired to have further Naval and Military evidence on the subject. In reply —and this is what I wish to call the attention of the House to—the President of the Board of Trade informed the Chairman that the final decision of a question of such magnitude would not rest with a Departmental Committee, but must be settled upon the responsibility of the Government as a whole, and he would not, therefore, prolong the labours of the Committee. Now, I presume it is the view which the right hon. Gentleman not only had then, but which he holds at the present time; and I wish to know whether the question, which is of such magnitude, has been settled upon the responsibility of the Government as a whole, or whether it has not; whether they are seeking the protection of a Committee of the House of Commons, or a Joint Committee of the two Houses of Parliament, in order to evade a matter which the right hon. Gentleman then estimated to be a matter which lay upon the responsibility of the Government? With regard to the previous proceedings in the matter, I do not think it necessary to enter at length into questions which occurred before the present Government took Office. There were a great many questions discussed, irrespective of the National defences, questions of International Law, for instance, and various other matters, which were fully discussed, but were always discussed with the reservation expressed in some of the proceedings, that a power should be reserved to the Government on each side of the Channel of closing the communication by the Tunnel in the case of war, or in case of national necessity. But, although it was put in general terms, it was never investigated, or thoroughly gone into, until the time to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred. Now, it is obvious that there cannot be a question of greater magnitude or importance, and it is one upon which, no doubt, as the right hon. Gentleman says, Parliament ought to be consulted as a whole; and that is exactly what we want—we want to have Parliament consulted as a whole, and that these matters shall not be referred to a Committee which is to take off the responsibility of the Government, and throw it upon the House. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, in mentioning various questions in which Joint Committees of the two Houses of Parliament have inquired, referred to Mr. Roebuck's Committee at the close of the Crimean War. Undoubtedly, that was a Committee appointed to look into matters of a very serious character; but the right hon. Gentleman will remember what took place when that Committee was appointed. It led to a change of Govern ment, and to the resignation of the Government of the day. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman shakes his head; but it was opposed, at all events, by the Government of the day, on the ground that the House which appointed the Committee were not satisfied with their management of affairs, and that it was necessary that the House, through its Committee, should take into its own hands matters which the Government of the day, according to the opinion of the majority, were mismanaging. Although the right hon. Gentleman shook his head at what I said, the vote which carried the appointment of that Committee was very closely connected with the resignation of Lord Aberdeen, who was the Prime Minister; and, in the second place, with the right hon. Gentleman himself, because—I am speaking now from memory, as I had not thought of the matter until the right hon. Gentleman mentioned it—but my recollection is that when the new Government was formed, with the right hon. Gentleman in it, and it was proposed that that Committee should still go on, and Lord Palmerston agreed to it, the right hon. Gentleman the present Prime Minister thought it his duty to retire from the Government on that ground. I am only mentioning that, to show that the appointment of Mr. Roebuck's Committee was not really a case in point, but rather militated against the proposal of the Government; because, let me ask the right hon. Gentleman this question. Supposing the Government had proceeded with this matter without consulting us, and some Member of the House had got up to move that a Committee should be appointed to inquire into the matter, and had carried such a Motion against the Government, would not the Government naturally say, "There is a want of confidence in us?" Instead of that, they are coming forward now and asking the House to relieve them of a duty which we on this side of the House say belongs to them. If this matter is to be treated as important Private Bills are treated, what should happen? The proper mode would be to have a Bill introduced, when the whole House could consider and discuss it on the second reading; when the considerations for and against it of an important character would be discussed; when the Government would give their opinion; and the House after hearing that opinion, would arrive at a conclusion as to what it was their duty to do. But we are not put in that position; we are not invited to discuss the matter ourselves. We are invited to refer it to a Committee, and no indication whatever has been given as to what the feeling of the Government is. If by the proposal it was intended to refer to a Committee the great question whether it is expedient that the sanction of Parliament should be given to a submarine communication between England and France, simply the second part of the Reference, the matter would be different. If it was simply that a Committee should be appointed to consider whether any, and what, conditions should be imposed by Parliament, there would be a case on which it might be necessary for the Government to obtain advice and take evidence. But it is said the Government are putting upon the Committee a duty they have no right to put upon them, and which they ought to take upon themselves. In submitting the Motion I have placed upon the Paper, I do not desire to discuss the merits of the Channel Tunnel Scheme. No doubt, they are very important, and must and will be discussed at some time or other; but at the present moment I am only challenging the Government's mode of procedure, and I hope the House will take the view I have endeavoured to put before them. The right hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "before entering upon the questions whether it is expedient that Parliamentary sanction should be given to the establishment of submarine communication between England and France, and upon what conditions (if any) such sanction should be granted, it is desirable that the House should be put in possession of the views of Her Majesty's Government on these subjects,"—(*Sir Stafford Northcote,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. GLADSTONE: It will not be necessary for me to detain the House at any length at this late hour, and I will follow the example of the right hon. Gentleman. I will only now say that, in my opinion, the statement of the right hon. Gentleman opposite would, under different circumstances, be a statement of the general rule of Parliament; but, in our view, the general view of Parliamentary conduct, upon which the right hon. Gentleman opposite relies, is wholly inapplicable to the present case. The right hon. Gentleman has left out of his calculations the essential point upon which the case of the Government is founded. Before indicating what that point is, I will refer for a moment to one or two matters upon which the right hon. Gentleman has touched. It is not necessary for me to trouble the House by going at length into the history of the Motion of Mr. Roebuck and the Sebastopol Committee. I may explain, however, that I shook my head from no wish to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman, but because the right hon. Gentleman stated that the Government resigned upon that Motion, which was far from being the fact. Certain Members of the Government, however, did resign. [*A laugh.*] I am surprised that there should be any Gentleman in the House incapable of seeing the difference between the resignation of a Government and the resignation of some of its Members.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: The resignation included the Prime Minister. Lord Aberdeen, who was Prime Minister, was among the Members of the Government who resigned.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Lord Aberdeen did resign, no doubt, and subsequently other Members of the Government resigned, because they were not willing to accept the concession made by Lord Palmerston. But that does not touch the point we really have before us. What was proposed was that the House of Commons should take into its own hands the management of the matter by appointing a Committee; and, secondly, there was a Motion made that the House should adopt the Report submitted by the Chairman of the Committee. I need not, however, dwell further upon the matter, because the case of the Sebastopol Committee does not involve the point which is essential to the present discussion, and which ought to govern our proceedings. The right hon. Gentleman quoted a letter in which my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade stated to Mr. Farrer that the final decision of the question referred to a certain Committee would not rest with that Committee, but must be settled on the responsibility of the Government at large. But the meaning of that was that it was for the Government at large, and not for the Committee or the Department of the Board of Trade, to determine what course should be pursued by the Government. No doubt, a very important question has been brought before us, and our determination was that it was one which it was our duty to refer to the House of Commons without assuming the initiative. No doubt, that decision was a most important decision; and though negative in its character, it was just as important and as responsible as if we had given an affirmative decision, and assumed the initiative. Now, the question is this. Is the present case one with regard to which the Government ought to assume the initiative, or are the Government right in their opinion that it ought to be handed over to Parliament, and especially to the Representative Chamber? The decision of that question, in our view, depends entirely upon the history of what has taken place. It is no longer a National, it has become an International question. When it was first raised, in the time of the last Government, that Government did not shrink from taking the initiative; and I think better of that Government than to suppose that they passed a judgment upon a matter of this kind, without asking themselves, in the first place, what bearing it had upon the question of National defence. The Government of which I was a Member assumed the initiative, and declared that it saw no objection to the principle of the execution of the Tunnel under proper conditions. The Government which followed us again assumed the initiative. It was perfectly free for them to reverse our action. Nothing was done which tendered to fetter its liberty of action, and they arrived at the same conclusion, probably on the same grounds. But the late Government took this further and most important step—it placed itself in communication with the Government of France, and took common action with the Government of France. It appointed a common organ for the two Governments, and each adopted the scheme in principle, discussed and determined the conditions on which it ought to be executed, and recommended that a Treaty should be framed; and the non-conclusion of that Treaty at the time was simply and entirely owing to financial considerations connected with the Money Market. So that the nation, as represented by the Executive Government, had entered into relations with the Government of France, and taken common proceedings upon a common basis of the proposition that the Tunnel was, so far as the two Governments were concerned, to be executed upon certain conditions. What was the next step? After that had taken place, the Executive Government had become bound, and it no longer remained in the proper sphere and competency of the Executive Government to recede from the pledges it had given. Though Parliament was not bound, no one can say that the Treaty did not constitute an engagement binding, not only Parliament, but, in our opinion, binding the Executive Government which had appointed the Commission, and binding likewise any Administration which might follow it in power, because it was pledged—and whether it was a formal or an informal pledge that was given by the Administration to a foreign country, it ought to be respected by the succeeding Administration. Since that time public opinion, in certain quarters, at any rate, has taken a new turn; and to whom are we to look to ascertain the state of public opinion with more propriety than the Houses of Parliament? In our opinion, it does not lie with Her Majesty's Government to take the initiative. We feel we have no right to take the initiative after what has taken place. Speaking for myself, I do not feel myself in a position to go to the French Government and state that I and my Colleagues have determined to recede, on our own responsibility, from an international transaction, in respect of which common proceedings have been taken. There is an authority which is superior to the Executive Government, and it is not bound to recognize the Commission, or the Report of that Commission. It is true that we have been encouraged by the passing of certain Bills through Parliament; but the passing of those Bills did not constitute any pledge to a foreign country. In France it is fully recognized that Parliament is the master of the situation, and has a perfect right to speak on the part of the English nation; and the English nation alone, and not French opinion, can form transactions or bind the English nation. It is Parliament which is the author of legislation for such a purpose; and though, by the proceedings that have taken place, and by the course taken by the late Government, the Executive has ceased to be in a condition of competency according to the rules which govern international transactions, it is not open to the Executive to go to the French Government on its own responsibility and declare, on the part of the country, a difference in the opinion of this country. It would, in the same manner, depart from the honourable and equitable construction of its duty if it were to come to this House and take the initiative in asking the House, or influencing the House, to alter the course and to recede from the transactions into which the English Government has entered in common with the French Government. These are our opinions, and the considerations which make the line of our duty clear. It is not necessary for us now to consider at what time we might feel ourselves liberated from the disabilities under which we now lie, or feel ourselves free to assume that the views of Parliament are clear, or that we are in a position again to suggest or direct the proceedings that should be taken. We should be committing a very serious error, and should have set a precedent of an inexpedient and even of a dangerous character, if we had taken it upon ourselves to break off the series of transactions which had reached such a point in communication with the French Government. We wish to give a large and free interpretation to all our obligations concerning our common international action in the negotiations which have been conducted with France; and, if right in that view, there is no other course open to us but to submit the matter to the judgment of the two Houses of Parliament, and especially of the Representative Chamber, as being now the only free, competent, independent, and legitimate authority to declare the judgment of the country on a matter in which it will be admitted that the judgment of the country ought to be given, whatever that judgment may be.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: This question of the Channel Tunnel was first brought before the House 10 years ago, when the right hon. Gentleman was Prime Minister, and it was referred to a Committee of which I had the honour to be Chairman. The question brought before the Committee was that of establishing a service of large boats to carry passengers between this country and France, and the construction of large harbours on both sides of the Channel for the purpose of making a better communication between the two countries. In that inquiry, for the first time, two propositions were made. One was for making a Tunnel from one side of the Channel to the other; and the other, which was very strongly advocated at the time by very experienced engineers, was that of making a bridge over the Channel. Three propositions were brought before me as Chairman of the Committee, and they were all fully discussed at the time; and I remember perfectly well consulting the Government of the day, including the present Prime Minister, upon the subject: because the question was not only one which closely and materially affected Private Bills, but was an international question, and a national question also; and, therefore, I would not consent to any scheme being passed without first consulting the Government. All the Committee did was to dismiss the bridge scheme, and we thought the Tunnel nearly as wild a scheme. With the consent of the Government, however, we did pass a Bill in favour of a system of steamboats, and that system I consider to be the best now, for it supplies all the necessary communication that is really wanted. Another proposition was that a tram should run from London to the Coast, and be lowered down by powerful hydraulic machinery to the tide level, and run into a hole in the bows of a large ship built for the purpose, and so be carried over to the French Coast. When it got to France it was to be met by another large ship and transferred. That was the scheme passed by the Committee of that day. Now, I think the Prime Minister has put this question on a wrong footing. By-the-bye, I may say that the scheme placed before the Committee was a scheme to provide a large harbour at Folkestone or Dover, and France consented to allow another great harbour to be made at Andreselles on the other side; and the only reason why the scheme was not carried out was that the French Emperor did not give his consent, because he was afraid of ruining the harbours of Calais and Boulogne, and before the matter could be carried into execution the French Empire fell, and thus there was an end of the scheme. I presume it was after that that the question of the Tunnel was brought before the Government, and I think they must have given their assent to that proposition very hastily. I am quite sure of one thing—that they never gave the consideration to it they are now giving, and they never thought at that time what would be the real practical result of the leave they gave to the French Government. I cannot think that any permission subsequently given by the late Government, of which I had the honour to be a Member, was given under the impression that they were bound to give it. At all events, I do not think there can be any quarrel between the responsibility of one Government or the other. I believe there is no question which, from one end of the country to the other, has raised more strong feeling than this question relating to the Channel Tunnel. I have, moreover, had communication with several Ambassadors of foreign countries during their stay in England; and I can only say that it is not in this country alone that the feeling which I have alluded to exists. One and all of those Ambassadors have said, in effect—"What in the world are you thinking of, when, having this silver streak between you and the Continent, you talk of giving up what has hitherto been your protection and safeguard?" When this question comes to be threshed out, I am convinced that this House will emphatically vote against the authorization of the scheme. The question here involved is purely national, and has nothing whatever of a Party character about it. It has been decided by the Secretary of State for War that before the wider question involved in the Channel Tunnel Scheme should be submitted to the Government a Committee should be appointed to inquire into the practicability of closing the Tunnel in time of war. So that, before the scheme is even to be submitted to the Government, we are to have a Committee appointed to inquire into the matter in its relation to the safety of the country. That, I think, shows conclusively that the mind of the Government was not at all made up on this subject; and, therefore, that they were in no respect bound to the Government of France. But the Committee has now reported, and I am certain there is nothing in their Report which will at all diminish the alarm which is felt throughout the country as to the proposal for making this Tunnel. Now, under these circumstances, what do the Government propose to do? I should have thought that, having said—"Before this scheme is submitted to us we will have a Committee of Inquiry," when the Report of that Committee was made to them they would have formed their opinion upon it, and that, having done so, they would have submitted it to the House. They might then have said to the Government of France—"The feeling of the nation has forced us to have this inquiry, and the Report of the Committee has satisfied us that for the purposes of national safety, and also for the purpose of maintaining those friendly relations"—which, I trust, will always exist "between the two countries—we think it very much better that the Tunnel should not be made." The feeling of the country has been expressed by the Prime Minister in a way which cannot be mistaken. Amongst persons of every creed and class in politics, and of every section of society, I believe that the universal feeling is opposed to the scheme of a Channel Tunnel. I am bound to say that it has taken me a great deal by surprise that the Government, having appointed already a Committee for the purpose of inquiry before this question was brought before them, should, apparently deserting their former position, now propose that another Committee—a Joint Committee of the two Houses of Parliament—should be appointed to decide what is really a question of national policy. I should have thought that if any question of international policy were involved, it should not be left to a Committee to decide what is essentially a question for the Government of the day. I say it is essentially for the Government to deal with the Government of France on this question, and that they are bound to give their opinion, and answer Aye or No to the question—"Is it wise for us to allow this matter to go on?" It is their business to advise the House of Commons; and when their advice upon this matter is given, we shall, of course, know how to deal with it. I strongly impress upon the House that the Amendment of my right hon. Friend is perfectly sound and practical; and that neither a Committee of this nor of the other House, nor a Joint Committee of both Houses, should be allowed to take away from the Government the responsibility which belongs to them of stating to the Government of France their belief that the Channel Tunnel should not be made.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON said, they were called upon to appoint a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament to inquire whether it was expedient that Parliamentary sanction should be given to effect a submarine communication between England and France. That was similar to what he supposed a Private Bill Committee would do, had the matter come before them in the shape of a Bill. But the reason why this project has been taken out of the hands of a Private Committee, and placed in the hands of a Committee of the House of Lords and the House of Commons, was because some reasons of policy were involved in it. He did not think a question of high policy ought to be referred to a Committee of that sort; and he did think, if that House had any sense at all, it should decide upon that question itself, without being guided by a Committee of either House of Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had entered somewhat more than might have been expected into the policy of the whole question. Now, it seemed to him that if they objected to communication between France and England, and to increased facilities of intercourse between the two nations, they ought also logically to object to every improved steamer that might be put on, and to oppose any improvements of the harbours on either side of the Channel. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken that there was in the country a strong feeling upon this matter—it had been got up with a great deal of ingenuity and perseverance; but it existed nevertheless. There were two parties who, as far as he could understand, honestly objected to the Tunnel. There was the party who were perpetually talking about "the natural barrier" and "the silver streak," and used phrases of that sort, which meant very little, but were very useful in argument. He could not understand anyone being so anxious to preserve these barriers to communication between one country and another. Why, there was a great natural barrier between Italy and Switzerland a short time ago, which was removed by the construction of the St. Gothard Tunnel. But did the people of those countries go into hysterics because that great natural barrier was going to be removed? Far from it. The Municipal authorities on both sides had special trains, met in the middle of the Tunnel, and, like respectable Christians, had a good drink over the event. One of these days, the greatest deputation ever heard of was going to wait upon the Prime Minister, composed of Irishmen of all creeds and Parties. Why? With the object of improving the communication between England and Ireland. And he was sure he would just as soon improve the communication between England and France as between England and Ireland. But he was not at all surprised at the fear which the right hon. Gentleman opposite so ably represented in that House—the fear of invasion. It was conscience that made cowards of us all; and when they talked of invasion, they had, no doubt, an uneasy conscience, which told them they were making invasions perpetually. Why, every year the Conservative Government invaded some country or another; first, Afghanistan, then the Transvaal, and next Zululand; and when the Liberal Party came into power they straightway went into Egypt. But there was another Party who likewise objected to the Tunnel, and he sympathized rather more with them. Their argument was—"We do not at all object to any number of Frenchmen coming over here; but we know that the people of this country are so stupid that if the Tunnel is made it will become a reason for additional panics, and end in more money being spent on Military and Naval Forces." That was the very reason why the Tory Party ought to support it. But he said, after all, if this was a question of high policy, it was not a question to be left to five Gentlemen of that House, however able they might be, for the purpose of saying what ought to be done. He said, let Parliament decide this matter for itself, and let it say whether it was willing that there should be this submarine communication between England and France. Let them be guided in this matter by the Government. He had immense regard for Her Majesty's Government, and he was sure that their advice would be hailed by every section of the House—the "Fourth Party" included. Let the Government give their opinion and advice, and lay Papers upon the Table; and the House would then be in a position to decide whether this great country was to maintain a policy of isolation and obstruction, or whether it was to promote the means of friendly communication between two great nations.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, if the House were to decide the question immediately before it upon the same considerations as would apply to any other question of equal magnitude, he did not think there could be the smallest doubt as to the result. They were about to refer to a Committee the question as to whether it was expedient that Parliamentary sanction should be given to the construction of a Marine Tunnel between England and France. No one could doubt that this was a question of the first magnitude. It was one which affected the military and commercial position of the country; and it was one, above all others, on which the Government of the country, if they were worthy of the name of a Government, ought to have an opinion. Sooner or later their opinion upon the subject would have to be given. It appeared to him, however, that the Government desired to shirk all responsibility in this matter as far as it possibly could do so, and to avoid arriving at a decision, because it was hopelessly divided in itself, and could not offer an unanimous opinion to the House. They all knew perfectly well the opinion of certain Members of the Government with regard to this question. There was the Secretary to the Treasury, who flirted with it, and connected himself with a public Company for the promotion of the Tunnel. It was, therefore, clear that the Government had not arrived at so unanimous an opinion as to be able to present it to the House at the moment. Supposing the matter were remitted to a Joint Committee, as was proposed, and whether this Committee reported for or against the Tunnel, would the Government accept the Report of the Committee? Did they not know that, whether the Committee reported for or against the Tunnel, the question was one which ultimately the

Government of the country must decide, and which no one but that Government could decide? The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had told them that they had not materials at the present moment which would enable them to come to a conclusion; but he (Mr. Stanhope) was sure that there were materials sufficient for that purpose. The Government had had inquiry after inquiry; they had appointed a Committee to consider the military aspect of the question, and they had the evidence given by the military authorities upon the subject; and therefore, he said, the House was perfectly well able to form a just opinion as to how the question ought to be decided. The right hon. Gentleman, however, said that the Government would not decide the question, and that they would remit it to a Committee of Members of both Houses. He accepted the challenge of the Government; and if it happened that the Amendment of his right hon. Friend, urging that the Government ought to express an opinion upon this subject, were rejected, he, for one, should certainly take the opinion of the House as to the appointment of any Committee at all.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, it had been stated that the Government wished to shrink from all responsibility in the matter. They did nothing of the kind. It would be their duty ultimately to decide whether they would advise the proceeding with the Tunnel or not. His right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) had explained the position in which the Government stood in reference to what had gone before. Under the former Government of the present Prime Minister very little was done in the matter, because the original proposals were interrupted by the Franco-German War. After that war there was very little prospect of any capital being obtained for this purpose; and although, in general terms, the Government had expressed their assent to the scheme, the matter practically dropped out of sight. But in 1874, after it had died away for some considerable time, it was revived by a letter from the Earl of Derby, who, addressing the Board of Trade on the 7th of November of that year, re-opened the whole question, and asked for the opinion of the Board. The Correspondence containing the whole of the inquiries made and decisions arrived at by the late Government covered 160 pages of the Blue Book. These inquiries were most exhaustive, both the Board of Trade and the Military and Naval Departments taking part in them; and after making those inquiries the late Government agreed to the appointment of a Joint Commission, three Members of which were nominated by Her Majesty's Government, and three by the Government of France. They received and considered the Report of that Commission; and then they arrived at the decision, which is recorded in the Blue Book, that negotiations for a Treaty with the French Government on the basis of the Protocols of the Joint Commission should be entered upon. That was the position of affairs when the present Government took Office. They found that the late Government were committed up to the hilt in favour of the project. The present Government opened their own inquiry, in the first instance, through a Committee appointed by the Board of Trade; and then by a larger Committee of Military and Civil Engineers, and Artillery officers, presided over by Sir Archibald Alison. Their Report, which was most instructive, was in the Blue Book; and Her Majesty's Government now came to the House, and said to hon. Gentlemen opposite—"You have practically committed the country up to the hilt to the arrangement with France. Is it not right that Parliament should complete the inquiries, which up to this point have not dealt with important parts of the question, before a decision is taken to break off or to carry on the negotiations?" The late Government's responsibility was absolute; but the questions publicly raised since they left Office placed their successors in great difficulty. They had taken the only course possible under the circumstances. After the Parliamentary inquiry was exhausted the final responsibility of the Government would commence, and they would not shrink from it.

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, he had no intention of detaining the House more than a few minutes. He had, however, an Amendment on the Paper, and he was obliged to say a few words upon this important subject. The appointment of a Committee would be very objectionable indeed, inasmuch as it would prevent many questions being raised which ought to be discussed openly in the House. The remarks made by the President of the Board of Trade to a right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench, who laid particular stress on the question of the possibility of invasion from a military point of view, called for some special reference. He (Captain Aylmer) did not wish to say the possibility of invasion was not a very important point, nor did he propose to discuss the merits of the Bill in the slightest degree; but he wished, before they went to a division—in which, most probably, the Government would have their way—that the President of the Board of Trade would give the House his opinion of the Tunnel from the point of view of the effect it would have on the Mercantile Marine. He had no hesitation in saying that the effect of the Tunnel would be to withdraw the whole trade of the East from our own ports into those of France and the Mediterranean.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 106; Noes 74: Majority 32.—(Div. List, No. 49.)

Main Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 106; Noes 72: Majority 34.—(Div. List, No. 50.)

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I beg to move that the Correspondence with reference to the proposed construction of a Channel Tunnel, presented to Parliament in 1882, be referred to the Committee.

Motion *agreed to*.

Ordered, That the Correspondence with reference to the proposed construction of a Channel Tunnel, presented to Parliament in 1882, be referred to the Committee.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I now move that a Message be sent to the House of Lords presenting the said Resolution.

Motion *agreed to*.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to The Lords to acquaint their Lordships, That this House hath appointed a Committee of Five Members to join with a Committee of The Lords, to inquire whether it is expedient that Parliamentary sanction should be given to a submarine communication between England and France; and to consider whether any or what conditions should be imposed by Parliament in the event of such communication being sanctioned,—And that the Clerk do carry the said Message.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of The LORD ADVOCATE, Bill for the better administration and endowment of the Universities of Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by The LORD ADVOCATE, Secretary Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, and Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL for SCOTLAND.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 131.]

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 4th April, 1883.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Vivisection Abolition [46], *debate adjourned*.

Third Reading—National Gallery (Loan)* [128], and *passed*.

Withdrawn—Universities Committee of Privy Council [15].

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

UNIVERSITIES COMMITTEE OF PRIVY COUNCIL BILL.

(*Mr. Charles Roundell, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Shield, Mr. Thorold Rogers.*)

[BILL 15.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. ROUNDELL, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that its object was to render the Universities Committee of the Privy Council more accessible to the Colleges when they proposed to make changes in their Statutes, and the chief part of the Bill was framed with a view to improve the machinery which was already contained in the Universities Act of 1877. There was only one clause—the 2nd clause—which dealt with any matter of principle; and that clause gave to a certain number of persons in the Universities a power of moving the Universities Committee to make such changes in the Statutes of a College as seemed desirable to them, if that Committee thought fit to do so. He was aware that there was a very widespread feeling of opposition to the clause; but he thought it was based partly on a certain misapprehension of the objects of the framers of the clause. It was said to be an invasion of the independence of the Colleges, and an interference with the normal exercise of the power of the Colleges for self-legislation. He could only say, in reply to that objection, that neither of those objects was at all contemplated by the framers of the Bill. What they had regard to was the possibility of the growth, in some of the smaller Colleges, of grave abuses connected chiefly with what was a new element in the constitution of the Governing Bodies of the Colleges at Oxford and Cambridge—he meant the presence of the married Fellow element. One effect of the changes recently made by the Universities had been to make the small Governing Bodies in most of these Colleges still smaller in number than before, and to throw more power into the hands of married Fellows, who, in the future, would be a formidable element, and have much to do with the administration of the public funds intended for education at the Universities. It was not too much to say that, in these cases, it would often be that there would be a conflict between the interests and the duties of these married Fellows. The clause was carefully guarded by giving full and ample discretion to the Universities Committee. The chief ground on which he submitted the clause to the consideration of the House was that the Colleges would have to choose one of two things—either to accept intervention on the part of the University as proposed, or abuses of a grave kind would grow up, and then they would have to come to Parliament again for another Act. It was, therefore, with the view of preventing, in time, the growing up of those abuses, which there was every reason to expect would arise, that this proposal now was introduced, of giving an independent body in the University a power of moving the University Committee, if they thought fit, to frame a new Statute for a College dealing with any such abuse. For his part, he had always wished the Universities to have a rest and cessation from Parliamentary interference. Within the last 30 years, some three or four Commissions had been appointed, and now everyone felt that time should be given for the changes made to remain in operation; and the object of the framers of the Bill was to secure that rest by resorting to the timely intervention of a friendly authority. But he would at once say that, as the opposition to which he had averted was widely expressed, he would be prepared to omit the clause rather than wreck the Bill. The rest of the Bill would stand unimpaired, being framed with the view of amending the machinery by which the Colleges, when they wished to have a change in their constitution, should seek the intervention of the Privy Council; and these clauses of the Bill had been mainly framed on the lines of the Universities Act of 1877. The object of the Bill, in that respect, was to do two things—first, to prevent changes in the Statutes being made in the dark; and, secondly, to render the Universities Committee more freely accessible to the Colleges. As regarded these matters, there were certain defects in the existing system. By the Act of 1877 there was not adequate provision made for giving publicity to proposed changes in the Statutes of the Colleges—nor for any adequate provision for enabling persons to submit their objections to the Privy Council. Moreover, the Privy Council must either wholly allow or disallow the Statute. This Bill provided an improved machinery to remedy these defects, by requiring that any proposed new Statute should be published by the Vice Chancellor within the University; that objections laid before the Privy Council need not, as now, be signed by one or two counsel; and by bringing to bear upon the Statute, by means of an extended right of objection, a wholesome criticism by those who were best able to judge of the matter—namely, the persons resident in the University. Another important alteration of the existing machinery proposed by the Bill was that, as a matter of course, it practically referred every new Statute to the Universities Committee—a body qualified to give advice on its general bearings. The Bill also empowered the Universities Committee, if they thought fit, to remit the new Statute back to the College with a declaration; and power was also given to the Universities Committee to refer minor matters of detail, involving special University knowledge, to experts, The Bill made no provision for simplifying the rules of procedure before the Universities Committee. That matter was, he thought, better left open to be arranged between the Committee and the Universities, under the power which was given in the Act. The alterations proposed in these clauses of the Bill involved no question of principle; they were of the nature of improvements in machinery, and were intended to simplify the procedure of Colleges when they came to seek for changes in their Statutes; and, therefore, he thought no objection would be offered to them. As he had said, the only portion of the Bill involving any question of principle was the 2nd clause; and, if he had been rightly informed that there was a widespread opposition to that provision, he would be willing to drop it. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Roundell.*)

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY, in rising to move, as an Amendment, that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, he was placed in a position of some embarrassment by the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for Grantham (Mr. Roundell), because hon. Gentlemen who had read one Bill were now asked to consider what was practically another Bill, viewed in the light of a certain statement just made by the hon. Member. They were desirous of knowing who the originators and framers of the Bill were, seeing that the hon. Member had talked about the objects contemplated by them, but had not stated who they were. After diligent communication with members of both the Liberal and Conservative Parties at Oxford, he had been unable to discover that it had originated in that University; and he had authority for saying that the hon. Member for the borough of Cambridge (Mr. Shield), whose name appeared on the back of the Bill, himself dissented from it. The object of the measure appeared to be a simple one; but he (Sir John R. Mowbray), for one, looked upon it as being a very insidious and dangerous measure, starting, as it did, with a perfectly innocent Preamble, and following it up with some most obnoxious clauses. The Bill set forth that it should be read as one with the Act of 1877, the assumption being that it was based on the same principles; but with regard to the 2nd clause, the hon. Member did not even attempt to argue for its being retained in the Bill. He (Sir John R. Mowbray) felt sure that the interests of the Colleges would be compromised if that most obnoxious clause were not struck out. The hon. Gentleman said the clause was intended to provide against abuses arising from married Fellows. If that was so, the Liberal Party, who had promoted the University legislation of the last 30 years, were answerable for those abuses. By the Act of 1877, there was ample protection provided for the Colleges; for it required that when changes were contemplated notice should be given to the Colleges, special meetings were to be called, and two-thirds of the members present must concur in any alteration of the Statutes. The protection, therefore, was complete; but, by the present Bill, no notice would be given. Why were these Colleges to be thus treated? They were an integral part of the University, and he (Sir John R. Mowbray) felt sure that his hon. Friend (Mr. Roundell) was as jealous of the fair fame of Balliol and Merton as he was of the University of Oxford; and he was equally sure that he (Sir John R. Mowbray) and the Prime Minister did not value Oxford less because they had a tender regard for the good estate of Christ Church. With regard to the employment of counsel when objecting to a Statute, that was contingent upon the right of petitioning the Queen in Council. His hon. Friend, again, had forgotten to call the attention of the House to a most remarkable clause in the Bill, which, so far as he could understand, was objected to quite as much as any other, and which was to the effect that the Privy Council, set in motion by 25 members of Convocation, might refer the matter to any one person experienced in University affairs to inquire into it. In other words, those 25 members of Convocation might move an external body to make any change they pleased, free from the restriction imposed by all previous legislation as to vested interests, and without any of the modifying influences of the Act of 1877. His hon. Friend had not deigned to give an Interpretation Clause, and there was nothing to show whether the "person experienced in University affairs" was to be a graduate, or what he was to be; and it seemed to him that even the beadle who preceded the Vice Chancellor, or the "bulldog" who followed the Proctor, was well within the clause. The result was that the Universities Committee, which was headed by such august personages as the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord High Chancellor, the Duke of Devonshire, and the Marquess of Salisbury, was to end in one obscure person experienced in University affairs. "*Desinit in piscem.*" Either the Bill was a very great Bill indeed, or a very small one, and it was trifling with the University to bring in a Bill on such a subject. What was the opinion on the Bill in the University itself? One of the complaints he had received was that his hon. Friend had brought the Bill in at such a time as to make it impossible to obtain an expression of opinion on it from the University. The Hebdomadal Council had passed a resolution last year recording their opinion that the provisions of the Bill were inexpedient. What was the Hebdomadal Council? A body of men well versed in the affairs of the University, the majority of them being Liberals, and not a body of Tories who objected to all changes. If the hon. Member had not yet made up his mind as to what his Bill was to be, he had far better withdraw it, in order that he might afterwards introduce a measure more in accordance with the views the hon. Gentleman entertained. There was no demand for immediate legislation this year. Full effect had not yet been given to all the Ordinances under the Act of 1854; and, as regarded the Act of 1877, it must be said it did not begin to operate till October last, and it was impossible to point out any deficiency in so short a time. He begged to move the rejection of the Bill.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Sir John R. Mowbray.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, it would appear that his hon. Friend the Member for Grantham (Mr. Roundell) had introduced this Bill because he thought certain difficulties and evils were likely to accrue in consequence of recent reforms in the University scheme. That was not a satisfactory result to put forward so late in the day. He (Sir William Harcourt) did not say, however, that he differed from his hon. Friend at all. He had never been a great admirer of the introduction of the married principle into the Colleges of the University. He had protested in that House at the time against filling the great Court of Trinity with perambulators, as being by no means an improvement of the traditions of that place. It was quite enough that Professors should have the privilege of being married; but to promote an extension of the principle seemed to him not altogether favourable to University life. Then, again, there was no doubt they had rejected in the Protestant decrees the celibacy of the clergy, and they had regarded a wife and a number of children—perhaps to the extent of one-third of the number of those Articles—as a protection to the Protestant faith. But he did not think they had always required that as a guarantee of learning and research. Whether that was so or not, it was too early yet to enter into action against the married Fellows whom they had so recently constituted. They must wait to see the results of those marriages. They need not be in such a hurry on that matter. He was very glad, therefore, that his hon. Friend was not going to insist on the 2nd clause of the Bill, because it would not be a wise or a safe proceeding to have 25 roving gentlemen attacking any College by model schemes which might recommend themselves to the minds of those 25 gentlemen. He was sure the College to which he had the honour to belong would not care about it. The proposal, indeed, would not bear discussion. He agreed, however, with his hon. Friend in his desire to give greater efficiency to the Universities Committee of the Privy Council; and he believed that, to a certain extent, the Representatives of the Universities would not differ from him in that view. Indeed, the Government considered that the institution of a scheme for making the Universities Committee an efficient body for carrying out, from time to time, minor reforms in a University was a very useful thing, and one that ought to be accomplished. There was nothing worse for a University than accumulating an arrear of small abuses that led to the issue of Commissions which very much disturbed University life. He was very glad to hear his hon. Friend recognize that the one thing which the Universities wanted was repose. But that ought not to prevent necessary reform. He knew very well that both Universities had suffered inconvenience and some mischief, for the last five or six years, from everything being hung up in consequence of the University Commission. Nobody knew what was going to happen. That was very injurious to those studious retreats. There arose, from time to time, inconveniences, abuses, and faults; and it would be a very great advantage to have a trustworthy body, such as the University Committee of the Privy Council, to whom those matters might be referred without issuing a Commission to redress those grievances and reform those abuses. He would, therefore, join with the right hon. Gentleman (Sir John R. Mowbray) in suggesting to his hon. Friend that, in conjunction with the Universities, he should prepare a scheme—no man, from his knowledge of and interest in the Universities, was better fitted to do it—which would make the Universities Committee of the Privy Council more effectual for the purpose to which he had alluded. That was to say, that it might be a body by which reform might be carried out, not in a violent or aggressive spirit, which ill became the feeling of those learned bodies. From his (Sir William Harcourt's) experience of both Universities, there was not amongst the resident members of the University any indisposition to effect reforms, from time to time, which were calculated to make the Universities of greater utility and advantage to the public. If they had that feeling, and had a body like the Universities Committee of the Privy Council, there ought not to be any great difficulty in framing a measure which would make the Universities Committee a practical body for carrying out that which was desired in the Universities themselves—namely, that they should become in the greatest degree useful to the higher education of the country. If his hon. Friend preferred that view, he would recommend him to withdraw the Bill and reconsider the matter, with a view to the introduction, next year, of a more satisfactory one, which should have the objects in view to which he had ventured to allude.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE said, that the debate need not be a protracted one. On behalf of the University of Cambridge, he rose to support what seemed to him the very wise and reasonable proposal of his right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department. The speech of the hon. Member for Grantham (Mr. Roundell), in which he sought to commend the Bill to the House, reminded him very much of one who invited his friends to partake of a haunch of venison at dinner, but who, on discovering that venison was not in season, asked his Friends to be satisfied with the currant jelly instead. The hon. Member wished to offer the currant jelly, and leave the haunch out. Now, this Bill, with the 2nd clause and other clauses knocked out, and the others entirely remodelled and transmuted, might be made a workable Bill; but it would not be a satisfactory or dignified proceeding to legislate after that fashion. People would not like it. They would say it was a patch-up, a make-shift Bill. He thought his hon. Friend would save time by withdrawing his Bill; for what all of them wanted was, indeed, to set things right, if there was anything wrong in the Universities, but, above and before all things, to secure that peace and repose for which those great bodies had been for so many years longing, but which would be vitally affected if there were any attempt to force this Bill through the House. If he withdrew it, then all the parties concerned would be able really to apply their minds to the question. By all means give the Committee of the Privy Council more power to call up evidence if it did not possess sufficient at present; but do not set its members aside altogether, as seemed to be aimed at by the provisions of the Bill, which, if they had any meaning at all, pointed to the creation of an unknown and impossible hybrid, not exactly assessor and not exactly witness.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS hoped his hon. Friend (Mr. Roundell) would take the advice given him by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and postpone the consideration of this measure. At the same time, he thought the principle of the clause objected to was good. Although the Bill of 1877 was a just and good measure, it had been very badly administered; and he could not help thinking there were occasions when 25 members might initiate a very necessary and important reform. He did not think that a movement on the part of 25 responsible persons would be unimportant, or other than of great value to the deliberations of the Committee of the Privy Council. The same remark applied to the experts who might be appointed to advise the Committee of the Privy Council on questions connected with the University. Such advice was contemplated by the Act of 1877. He did not, therefore, think that this motive force of 25 members ought to have been treated, as it had been, with contempt by the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The principle, he maintained, was sound, rational, proper, and suitable to the circumstances as anything could be. He could not but see that the changes introduced of late years would, under the present system, end, as far as Oxford was concerned, in very serious abuses.

Mr. RAIKES said, he thought there was very little use in prolonging the debate after the expression of opinion that had fallen from the Treasury Bench. It was very probable that the speech which they had just heard from the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) would be the only real defence of those parts of the Bill to which objection had been taken, and which were not seriously defended even by the hon. Member for Grantham (Mr. Roundell) himself. He (Mr. Raikes) had heard the second reading of a good many Bills moved, but never one before in so apologetic a speech. He agreed with those hon. Members who had urged objection against the constitution of what had been rather unjustly described as a roaming body of critics of the sort proposed by the Bill; but he also believed that the objections to a residentiary body of the kind were almost equally strong. The Bill also contained no provision for giving notice to the University, or to a College, of any Statutes which were to be considered on the initiation of such a body. That was a singular omission in such a Bill. Then, as to the question of assessors, they were so-called, apparently, because they were not to sit with those to whom they were to be assessors. They were to be a sort of Sub-Commissioners, perpetually present in the Universities for the purpose of holding those inquiries. If the Bill of the hon. Member, when it came on, had been confined to Clauses 8 and 9, it would have had his support. He thought it desirable that some such power should be given to the Universities Committee of dealing with the Statutes, and he believed there was a consensus of opinion on the point. However, he thought that with these preposterous clauses at the beginning and the end of the Bill it was impossible to assent to its second reading. If the Bill were passed as it stood all the crotchet-mongers and Gentlemen anxious to tinker the University system and constitution would naturally come together, and there would be a sort of tinkers' association, for the purpose of perpetually receiving the accounts of any grievances which might reach them, and holding over the heads of every College in the University the terror of their probable interposition. He did not think the House was anxious to reform the constitution of the Universities again, merely to create a number of accidental posts for academic travellers or University bagmen. The draftsmanship of the Bill was very faulty; and if it became law it would cause considerable injustice. He hoped that the Bill would be withdrawn, and that, when it was next introduced, it would be in such a form that it could be properly discussed.

Mr. LYULPH STANLEY said, that, after the friendly discussion they had had that day, his hon. Friend (Mr. Roundell) would do well if he withdrew the measure under notice, and next year they might have a Bill embodying some of the practical suggestions made in the discussion, and omitting all that was crude in the present Bill. He did not concur in some of the observations of the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers). He (Mr. Lyulph Stanley) believed that the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge were desirous of doing their duty and applying their funds to the best educational advantage; therefore, he could not say he liked the main part of this Bill. He did not think it desirable to extend the powers of an external body, such as the Universities Committee of the Privy Council. He believed that it was the wish of Parliament, in passing the late Act, to give greater importance to the University than to the Colleges; and, accordingly, there were provisions in that Act enabling the University to investigate the accounts of the Colleges and to modify the College Statutes. He thought that the decision of all questions should be left to a body of recognized authority and not to a casual clique. Such a body they already had in the Council of the University, and that was the body in which any initiative power should be vested. He did not think the Colleges should be left to their own initiative in these matters. The intention of Parliament, as expressed by the Act of 1877, being to give greater power to the Universities as against the Colleges, a reasonable machinery might surely be devised, at some subsequent time, for occasional modifications in matters of detail. He acknowledged the fair manner in which the question had been dealt with by the Members for both Universities, and also by the Secretary of State for the Home Department. In his opinion, what the Universities required was a period of rest, in order to see how the present Statutes worked.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT said, he thought the discussion had done more good than harm; and the discussion, on the whole, had been satisfactory, although the spirit in which the speech of the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) was conceived was one unworthy of the occasion. The hon. Member had stated that the opponents of the Bill had not answered the Bill by argument; but the obvious reply to the charge was that the most important part of the Bill—Clause 2—had been abandoned by its authors. He (Mr. J. G. Talbot) certainly thought it very unsafe to entrust such powers to 25 unknown persons. He wished the Secretary of State for the Home Department had, in his admirable speech, added a word of warning to his hon. Friend behind him (Mr. Roundell). The practice which had lately sprung up, and which was rapidly growing on the House, of the author of a Bill making important alterations in it when it came on for the second reading, so that it became impossible for hon. Members to see what the object of the Bill really was, was most objectionable, and a most un-Parliamentary proceeding. It now frequently happened that, as soon as the discussion of a Bill began, the person who introduced the Bill and was supposed to know most about it withdrew the most important part of it. In no business assembly would such a thing be permitted for a moment; and surely it ought not to be permitted in such an Assembly as the House of Commons. In the present instance, the most important clause of the whole Bill had been summarily abandoned. Being of opinion that the Universities Committee of the Privy Council was not at all satisfactorily constituted, he earnestly trusted that the Government would direct their attention to the matter. Such a subject as that deserved both their serious attention and that of the House. At present it did not contain a single member who need be a member of either University, with the exception—if it was an exception—of the Chancellor. He hoped, before the next Bill was introduced, its proposals would be placed before the Universities. It would be a great advantage to have a Committee composed under the authority of the Government, to which the Universities might give cordial support, and from which, from time to time, valuable and useful suggestions might emanate.

Mr. BRYCE said, that hon. and right hon. Members for the Universities who opposed the Bill had confined themselves to objections, and had not suggested what reforms they would consent to, though they did not deny that the Universities Committee of the Privy Council was unsatisfactory. It would greatly facilitate the settlement of this question if these Members for the Universities would indicate the line which they thought that a reform of the admitted evils should take. Though his name was on the back of the Bill, he would acknowledge that he disliked Clause 12; and as regarded Clause 2, he thought his hon. Friend (Mr. Roundell) would have done better had he adhered to his proposal of last year, and left the initiative with the Hebdomadal Council. But the provisions between Clauses 2 and 12 he thought useful and valuable. The Committee of the Privy Council, as now constituted, was very unsuitable for its purpose. It consisted of very distinguished, eminent, and exalted persons, who, from the very eminence they had attained, were not fit to discharge the duties imposed on them. They had taken their degrees 40 or 50 years ago, and were not acquainted with the present state of things in the Universities. Two remedies were possible. The one was the addition of specially qualified assessors to the Committee. The other and better method was the constitution of a permanent body, connected with, but forming a part of, the administrative government, to replace this Committee of the Privy Council. Such a body would contain not only such exalted persons as now formed the Committee, but others less exalted and more experienced in educational matters, who would be able to deal with questions which called for reform; and it could, with great advantage, undertake other functions in connection with other Universities and with the endowed foundations of the country, educational and charitable.

Mr. ROUNDELL said, he must express his acknowledgments to the Members for the Universities and the Secretary of State for the Home Department for the way in which they had met the Bill, and for the valuable suggestions which had fallen from them. He understood that the Motion for the rejection of the Bill would be withdrawn, and in that case he would move that the Order for the Second Reading be discharged.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Bill *withdrawn.*

VIVISECTION ABOLITION BILL.

(*Mr. R. T. Reid, Sir Eardley Wilmot, Mr. Samuel Morley, Mr. Firth.*)

[BILL 46.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. R. T. REID, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said: I rise, Sir, for the purpose of moving the second reading of a Bill for the Abolition of the Practice of Vivisection; and I must say, at the outset, that I regret it has not been practicable, in the limited number of men in this House, for someone to make the Motion who has a large scientific knowledge—because I believe there are many persons of large scientific knowledge who strongly object to this practice. Inasmuch, however, as it has not been practicable to get any hon. Gentleman of that character, I have been obliged myself to bring the matter forward. There have been many Petitions presented in favour of the Bill. There is a very strong and a very growing feeling in the country that vivisection, involving as it does frightful cruelty to animals, cannot be justified, and ought no longer to be tolerated. This is a small social question; but with regard to it, from one Society alone, in the course of the present year, we have had Petitions signed by 38,000 persons, including many medical men. There are other places in which Petitions have been got up, and other gentlemen who have signed them. So much by way of preface upon matters on which I do not intend to dwell any longer. It will be in the recollection of the House that a Royal Commission sat to consider this subject some years ago, and sat for a considerable time. From the proceedings of that Commission, and the evidence elicited by it, it appeared that cruelties of a very sad and most painful character had been perpetrated, and were being perpetrated, especially on the Continent, but also in England. I will not refer to them. I assure the House it is not my intention to endeavour to thrill them with horror; but any hon. Gentleman who will take the trouble to read the proceedings of that Royal Commission, and the evidence taken before it, will find enough to make his blood run cold, at the horrors and cruelties perpetrated on the wretched victims of experiments. Sir, the feeling raised by that Royal Commission was such that it was necessary to bring in a Bill on the subject. Accordingly, a measure was brought in in 1876, and passed; several were introduced, but this was brought in and passed. Under that Bill it became necessary that before these experiments were—I will not use the word "perpetrated," I will say performed—I do not wish to use language that can pain any hon. Gentleman's feelings—before these experiments were performed, the person performing them should have a licence from the Secretary of State for the Home Department. It was also provided that the Secretary of State might authorize the performance of experiments without anæsthetics; but the scope of the Act was that anæsthetics should be used where practicable. I know that some persons have been in the habit of saying and thinking that this Act of Parliament has had a deleterious effect. I do not agree with that. It is said it has a deleterious effect, because it sanctions this practice, although in a limited form. I do not entertain that opinion at all, and I think that the country, and all who feel sympathy with these wretched animals, owe a debt of gratitude to the right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir R. Assheton Cross), and to those who assisted him in passing this Bill. It has done much good, and I think it has brought about a state of things infinitely preferable to that which existed before. But, then, none the less, that Act has had an evil effect, which could not have been avoided by its authors, and for which they are in no sense responsible. It has encouraged the public to believe that, by reason of the use of chloroform and other similar anæsthetics, experiments practically are carried out without pain. The idea is prevalent that the horrors which take place abroad, and with which everyone who has studied the question is familiar, do not occur in England. It is not the fact that, in England, the use of anæsthetics is either required by law, or is systematically or invariably applied. I am very sorry that I should be obliged to any extent to refer to the actual experiments that are going on, or that have gone on; but, inasmuch as it is constantly asserted that England is different from other countries, and that these horrible experiments are not performed in England, and as people are in the habit of believing it, I feel it to be my duty to refer to one or two examples—and I will make them very few—for my own sake, as well as for the sake of the House. I will show that these things have been done in England, and done since the passing of the Act of 1876. Allow me to make this observation in the first instance—I do not suggest that these gentlemen who have practised these experiments, and whose names I am going to mention to the House, are cruel men, in the sense that they are doing what they believe to be wrong, nor do I wish to say a word to give pain unnecessarily to them or their friends; but I shall not scruple to say what I think about the things they have done. I will take one instance from certain experiments performed by Professor Rutherford, and reported in *The British Medical Journal.* I refer to the series of experiments commenced December 14, 1878. These experiments were 31 in number; no doubt, there were hundreds of dogs sacrificed upon other series of experiments; but now I am only referring to one particular set, beginning, as I say, on the 14th of December, 1878. There were, in this set, 31 experiments; but, no doubt, many more than 31 dogs were sacrificed. All were performed on dogs, and the nature of them was this—the dogs were starved for many hours. They were then fastened down; the abdomen was cut open; the bile duct was dissected out and cut; a glass tube was tied into the bile duct, and brought outside the body. The duct leading to the gall-bladder was then closed by a clamp, and various drugs was placed into the intestines at its upper part. The result of these experiments was simply nothing at all; I mean it led no increase of knowledge whatever, and no one can be astonished at that, because these wretched beasts were placed in such circumstances—their condition was so abnormal—that the ordinary and universally recognized effect of well-known drugs was not produced. These experiments were performed without anæsthetics; the animals were experimented upon under the influence of a drug called curari.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: In what year was it the hon. and learned Member says?

Mr. R. T. REID: In the year 1878, and I would tell the right hon. Gentleman that, if I am wrong in any of my facts, I shall be very glad to be corrected, and shall sincerely regret if anything I say should in any way mislead the House. If I am wrong in any statement, I shall be very happy to withdraw it. In the report which appears in *The British Medical Journal*, there is no record whatever of any anæsthetics having been used except curari. I say, anæsthetics could not be used in these experiments, and in support of that statement I quote from the report in *The British Medical Journal* relating to another set of the same experiments in which it is set forth—

> "It may be well to state that in these experiments anæsthetics were not administered, because of their disturbing influence on the biliary secretion."

All were on the subject of the biliary secretion. Well, I say, they were made without the use of any anæsthetics except curari. Now curari is a fearful drug, of a character which I will describe to the House not in my own language, but in the language of the Report of the Royal Commission, and in the language of eminent practitioners themselves. The Report of the Royal Commission says—

> "This poison is very convenient to an operator, since it paralyzes the motor nerves and keeps the animal quiet. It has, however, been positively stated by, perhaps, the highest authority on such a subject, Claud Bernard, to have no effect in producing insensibility to pain. This opinion is now beginning to be disputed; but we think that until the question shall be much better settled than at present, this poison ought not to be regarded as an anæsthetic by those who administer the law in respect of experiments on animals."

I am sure hon. and right hon. Gentlemen will agree with me that it ought not to be so regarded.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Yes; that is my opinion, and the Act of 1876 so requires.

MR. R. T. REID: I am much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for making that statement. The Act of Parliament, which interprets our view of the law in the matter, says it shall not be regarded as an anæsthetic. Well, Claud Bernard says, speaking of death under curari—

> "If, in fact, we pursue the essential part of our subject by means of experiments into the organic analysis of vital extinction, we discover that this death, which appears to steal on in so gentle a manner, and so exempt from pain, is, on the contrary, accompanied by the most atrocious sufferings that the imagination of man can conceive. In this motionless body, behind that glazing eye, and with all the appearance of death, sensitiveness and intelligence persist in their entirety. The corpse before us hears and distinguishes all that is done around it. It suffers when pinched or irritated; in a word, it has still consciousness and volition; but it has lost the instruments which serve to manifest them."

The experiments I have referred to, made by Professor Rutherford, were carried out without anæsthetics and with the use only of this terrible drug. Let me refer to another matter. I have told the House I desire to shorten the subject as much as possible, and I will keep my word. Let me refer to what has been done by Dr. Roy in 1880, partly in the physiological laboratory at Cambridge, and partly in the Leipsic Institute, the experiments being carried out on rabbits, cats, and dogs. The animal was placed under curari, artificial respiration was used—that is to say, a tube was pushed down the animal's windpipe, and worked by an engine in regular puffs, in order to keep the blood oxygenated. Then the back, skull, chest, and abdomen were opened. I do not suppose these were always opened in one animal, as, in many cases, the animal would have died. No doubt, sometimes part of the experiment took place on one, and sometimes on another. The various organs were dissected out. The principal nerves, such as the sciatic nerve and so on, were tied in two places, and cut. This lasted for many hours. It is stated the animal was under the influence of anæsthetics; but the use of curari is admitted. In the most scientific opinion, when curari is used, it neutralizes the use of the anæsthetic. I feel myself at a great disadvantage in treating of these matters, as compared with the Gentlemen beside me; but, if I am making a mistake, I trust I may be corrected. In this instance, however, I believe I am right. Curari creates paralysis, it paralyzes the muscles, and prevents the animal resisting or showing the symptoms by which alone the existence of anæsthesia can be tested. Let me just refer, lastly, to some other experiments of a most terrible character. It is said that the use of anæsthetics is the means of preventing these kind of operations from causing pain. It must be borne in mind, constantly, that there are many kinds of operations. Some of them are of such a character that they last for days and weeks, and even months. Although, in the first instance, an animal may be under the influence of anæsthetics, you cannot keep up a protracted comatose condition for days or weeks, or months; and, therefore, it is perfectly idle to suggest that the horror of the operations is at all diminished. As I have made up my mind to deal with the cases out of the mouths of those who have operated themselves, I now refer to the Croonian Lecture, dealing with experiments on the brain of monkeys, by David Ferrier, Professor of Forensic Medicine, at King's College. These were performed before the Act was passed in 1876. The object with which I make these quotations is to show that, in scientific inquiries of this character, from the very nature of the experiments, you cannot rely on anæsthetics giving relief. [An hon. Member: What is the date?] The date in which they were performed is immaterial; but they were performed, I think, in 1875, and they were all embodied in the lecture which I hold in my hand. The document contains the minutest details of the experiments, together with diagrams of the brains operated upon. [Sir R. Assheton Cross: 1875. Before the passing of the Act?] Yes; my purpose, in quoting these experiments, is not to criticize the actual working of the Act, but to show that there are many kinds of experiments which, even under the influence of anæsthetics, cannot be performed without fearful pain to the animal. In these experiments, a hole was made in the top of the head of a monkey. The operation was performed under chloroform; but, the hole having been made, hot wires were put down the hole, and these hot wires were worked about in the brain, so as to destroy this or that portion of the brain as might be desired. There are several ways of destroying the brain. Sometimes they cut away a slice of the brain with a knife. Sometimes an ingenious Professor uses a squirt to throw water in the brain and wash it away. This gentleman selected hot wires. He said—

> "By means of hot wires the temporo-spheroidal lobe was divided transversely in this region."

I will not read further on that point; but the Professor goes on to say—

> "The operation was completed at 4.0 p.m; and at 4.30 p.m. the animal has recovered from its chloroform stupor and moves about rather unsteadily. It evidently retained its sight, as it directed its course to the fireplace, where it sat down to warm itself; 5.0 p.m., drank a dish of tea offered to it. It sits still, with its head bent on the floor, and seems disinclined to move. It has no muscular paralysis, and can hold on by both feet and hands. Sits, however, very unsteadily when perched on the back of a chair. Gives no sign of hearing when called to as it used."

There are many kinds of results that ensued, and they are carefully reported here; at one time, deafness ensues; at another, blindness, or this or that portion of the body is paralyzed. There is another interesting paragraph, which will show the kind of way in which these animals are treated after being operated on.

> "There is distinct re-action with the application of a hot iron to any part of its body, though there seems somewhat less re-action on the right side as compared with the left."

At 8 p.m. the next day it was reported that—

> "On being tested with a red-hot iron, there was the entire absence of re-action on the right, The left side seems to re-act somewhat less than before. The animal was struggling when acetic acid was placed in its nostrils; it moved all four limbs; but it fell repeatedly while trying to get rid of the irritation."

This animal, having had its brain destroyed by red-hot irons and been subjected to other horrible torture, actually moved its four limbs! I will not trouble the House by any further reference to this experiment. The next experiment to which I will refer to is No. 19. The brain was destroyed by a stilette with expanding wings being passed through the canula or tube thrust down through the hole made in the skull. The operation was completed at 5.30 p.m., and at 5.50 p.m. it was reported—

> "The animal looks quite active and intelligent. Can move about pretty freely, but seems weak in the left side. Does not use the right in taking hold of anything presented to it. A hot iron applied to the left hand caused the animal to wince and rub the part touched."

A hot iron was applied in this case, and amongst other experiments—

> "The animal was placed on the floor and surrounded by a circle of battery jars. It turned round and round, knocking its head against them, and apparently unable to find its way out between them."

Next we find that a "lively and active monkey, but of rather a timid disposition, and unwilling to be handled," was operated upon. It was operated upon March 18th; but by the 10th of April, after receiving nourishing food, "it had, however, entirely recovered from the effects of the operation," and the economic Professor used it for another experiment, notwithstanding the horrible torture it had previously undergone. I must say that I think this poor brute had, by its previous sufferings, deserved death. I do not wish to say anything more with reference to these matters. I am glad to have done with the illustrations of these horrible operations. They have been performed by gentlemen who believe they were doing their duty. In my humble opinion, it is a painful fact that men, intelligent and high-minded, and men of real feeling, should be so enslaved by the customs and habits of a mistaken science, as to perform these experiments, which, in calm moments, must be revolting to them. I think that anæsthetics are no protection where animals are kept in suffering for weeks; and I ask, what security have we, when there is no public inspection over the operation as it is performed—what security have we that these anæsthetics are actually applied, and that their application is properly maintained? The House can have but one desire, and it is to prevent unnecessary cruelty; but what security is there that in the excitement of the operation the anæsthetics are carefully applied? I have seen it asked in papers, and I have been asked by medical men—"How is it you attack us, when you do not attack sport?" They know that sport is very popular in the country and in the House, and endeavour to divert the attention of the public from these spectacles by attempting to compare them to sport. I am not a sportsman; I have given up sport for some time, for reasons with which I do not desire to trouble the House; but I contend it is a libel to compare sport to the kind of operations I am bringing under notice. When the sportsman takes away the life of an animal, he does it, or endeavours to do it, in the most expeditious and most ready way that comes to his hand. I do not say all do it so. At all events, what they all do is to give the animal a chance; they do not tie it down, and operate upon it in the manner I have shown. But, whether sport is right or wrong, I entirely decline to be drawn away from the just consideration of this subject by any analogy of this sort. Two wrongs do not make a right, and the reason why I am attacking this practice is this—that it is the practice of gentlemen standing high before the country—the higher the men, the sooner they ought to be attacked when a wrong thing is done. They are men of education, who can measure the exact degree of torture or pain to which they subject the animal. How can we justly punish the poor who ill-treat animals, if we are afraid to attack worse cruelties on the part of men of high position? The only possible justification from any point of view that can be advanced for this practice is that it is necessary for the benefit of science. That is the plea which is advanced by the gentlemen who perform the operations, by gentlemen who say they are as anxious as I am to see good done to the cause of animals. They say vivisection is necessary in the interest of science; but let me remind the House of the value of this miserable contention. Formerly, it was considered that the manner in which science could really be advanced was by studying recorded experiences; but no sooner were these iniquities of vivisection exposed and denounced, than, all of a sudden, we heard the merits of vivisection as a scientific method extolled beyond all belief. I suppose it is only natural that, whenever any body or class of men think they are attacked, they should close their ranks and defend all their doings. Certainly, in this instance, many eminent medical men have treated us as if they were resenting a personal imputation, rather than calmly maintaining a scientific truth. I should be sorry to have it thought that the measure was intended as an attack upon the Medical Profession. It is not intended as an attack upon the Profession, and I shall refrain from saying anything that can be even twisted into a reflection upon that eminent body of men; but when I find that the authority of Medical Congresses and medical practitioners are paraded as conclusive against this measure, I must take the liberty of stating why I do not attach any undue importance to their views. It is the necessity of medical men that they should be familiar with scenes of pain. I suppose it would be impossible that they could properly discharge their duties without first acquiring some degree of insensibility. Now, I do not believe that men who are long and often accustomed to witness human suffering, and whose privilege and duty it is to seek for any means of alleviating it, are the proper judges of a morality which seeks to limit their field of search. They are impelled by humanity to find a remedy for human maladies; ambition lends an additional incentive, while habit deadens that tenderness towards suffering which is implanted in our breasts as the best safeguard against cruelty. And it is possible, too, that they have been assailed with acrimony, perhaps with unwisdom, by those whose strong and deep indignation has escaped control. The result has been most unfortunate, for severity, on the one side, has produced undisguised resentment on the other, and has enlisted on the side of their professional brethren many who, in calmer moments, would have judged otherwise, though at all times loth to condemn a practice in which they may have themselves taken part. That is the way in which I account for the extraordinary crop of exaggerations we hear on the subject of the benefits derived from vivisection. Now, Sir, by no means all medical men are in favour of this practice, or believe in its utility. I will quote the opinions of two or three eminent men of science, to show that, in their judgment, no advantage whatever has accrued by this practice at any time. The first and the most conspicuous is Sir William Fergusson, who is well known as a gentleman of the highest scientific position. He is dead now; but he did hold the highest scientific position, and I am satisfied we shall not hear anything against the weight or authority of his opinion. I will not trouble the House with all he says on the point; but, amongst other things, he says—

> "I have reason to believe that sufferings incidental to such operations are protracted in a very shocking manner. . . . Mr. Syme lived to express an abhorrence of such operations."

Hon. Members round me know who Mr. Syme was. He was a gentleman in the highest position in Edinburgh, and one of the foremost opponents of this practice. Sir William Fergusson proceeded—

> "His (Mr. Syme's) ultimate authority was strongly against them. . . . I do not go in with that view, which is very prevalent, that these experiments may now be permitted, because we have got anæsthesia to prevent the pain. You cannot make a perfect experiment on the animal until it is in its normal condition. . . . I am not aware of any of these experiments on the lower animals having led to the mitigation of pain, or to improvement as regards surgical details. . . . I have thought it over and over again, and I have not been able to come to a conclusion in my own mind that there is any single operation in surgery which had been initiated by something like it on the lower animals."

Mr. Taylor is a gentleman of high authority, and he speaks strongly on this subject. He speaks, indeed, more strongly than Sir William Fergusson; but I need not trouble the House by reading his words. Sir Charles Bell, another great authority, in his work on the nervous system, says—

> "For my own part, I cannot believe that Providence should intend that the secrets of nature are to be discovered by means of cruelty. And I am sure that those who are guilty of protracted cruelties do not possess minds capable of appreciating the laws of nature. Anatomy is already looked upon with prejudice by the thoughtless and ignorant. Let not its professors unnecessarily fear the censures of the humane. Experiments have never been the means of discovery, and a survey of what has been attempted of late years in physiology will prove that the opening of living animals has done more to perpetuate error than to confirm the just views taken from the study of anatomy and natural notions."

I have other opinions here; but I will not engage the House by reading them. I do not in the least seek to ignore the existence of authority on the other side, nor do I seek to ignore the weight of that authority. I deeply grieve at the weight of that authority. If I had chosen to trouble the House, or if I thought that the House would take upon itself to decide between conflicting scientific opinion, I could have produced many other authorities of weight against the practice. Let us just see what this business is. For 2,000 years the presence of vivisection has more or less prevailed; and at the end of 2,000 years we find this situation—that men like Sir William Fergusson, Sir Charles Bell, Mr. Syme, and another, whom I ought to have referred to, Mr. Lawson Tait, a most eminent practitioner of the present day, are of opinion that no advantage has accrued to science, but that positive evil has been produced by it. I contend that before this House sanctions a practice so fearful as that which I have illustrated, it is, at least, necessary that it should be shown to be absolutely essential to human beings. Will any unbiassed man say, in the face of these opinions, that that affirmative has been made out? The period of probation is long enough—20 centuries—probably many millions of animals have been sacrificed—there is not a part of their body, there is not a nerve, muscle, or bone that has not been experimented upon. Is it possible that if, by these ghastly records, knowledge has really been advanced, there should still be room for controversy? If vivisection has really been of use, is it possible that men like Fergusson and Syme, Bell and Lawson Tait, should be so hardy as to deny the result? I must briefly advert to another argument. It is said that, under the provisions of the present Act, we have a guarantee that no unnecessary pain will be inflicted; and I have been referred to the Returns made under the Act by the Inspector, Mr. Busk, as proving that there is, in fact, no cruelty in England at present. Have we reason to be satisfied that that is so? The Returns before the House are compiled by Mr. Busk; and that gentleman certifies that, in his opinion, no appreciable amount of pain has been inflicted. Let me explain how these Returns are got up. A gentleman gets a licence to perform operations. He performs them in secret, or, if in the presence of others, in the presence of persons who hold no position of authority. The accounts of the operations are forwarded to Mr. Busk; and he, in his Return to Parliament, gives no clue to the operations, but simply records his opinion as to their nature, and gives a list of the licencees. Now, in the case of any other things that we might licence under exceptional circumstances, would it be reasonable to make the licencees the judges as to how they used their power? And is it reasonable, in this matter, to make the person who has to perform the operation the judge as to how far the operation he performs is painful? Mr. Busk is a gentleman of honour; but he is a great partizan against the agitation in which I take a humble part. Therefore, I say upon that, we have not got an accurate means of ascertaining what is being done, what the nature of the experiments is. But really this is immaterial to my contention. The law at present existing allows licences to be given for performing these experiments. It is that law I am endeavouring to alter. The law allows painful experiments without anæsthetics; and when I complain of that law, it is no answer to my complaint to tell me that, in fact, no pain is now inflicted. It may be inflicted, and that is enough for me. I do not desire to put before the House a balance of scientific testimony. There is another and different ground on which I proceed. If all the Medical Profession were to say, in one voice, that this practice were beneficial to human nature, I am bound to say I would not follow them. I believe, and many others believe, that the torture of dumb animals is not justifiable, come of it what may; that it is opposed to the mild spirit of religion, and to the unperverted instincts of our common nature. I should like to say what the tendency and effect of this practice is. We all know there have been different Statutes passed for the purpose of relieving animals from suffering. We have passed Statutes protecting them; and everybody was hoping that we should, by degrees, have got a better state of things as regards the treatment of animals, when we were suddenly awakened to find that a new school of physiology had arisen. The old doctor, as I said before, relied upon other methods; but now chemistry and other branches of science are making advances. Accordingly, advances were sought in the field of experimental physiology. Professor Humphrey, in August, 1881, said—

> "What we may call dead structure is pretty much worked out; it is living processes that need to be investigated."

Hon. Members will understand the significance of these words. *The Lancet* says—

> "Vivisection has been practised in all ages, and in all countries, more or less extensively. It is the analytical method applied to the study of organic life, just as the demolition of the earth's crust by the geologist's hammer is the analytical method applied to inorganic nature. The fact that the living animal feels is an unfortunate contingency; but it cannot qualify the major consideration."

What does that mean? It means that we are only at the beginning of this system; it means that every poison has to be tried on every kind of animal, and that, whenever any theory is propounded by any sciolist, that theory has to be tested by torture. I know there are some hon. Gentlemen—I suppose the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Cartwright) for one—will call us sentimentalists, possibly sickly sentimentalists. I do not think men of sense and firmness need trouble themselves about accusations of that kind. This is an old weapon, which has been brought down from the shelf on any occasion on which any reform has been advocated by an appeal to the better feelings of our nature. It was used when it was sought to amend the Penal Laws, when the agitation was carried on against the Slave Trade; and I have no doubt that it has been often used against Lord Shaftesbury, while, in the course of his long and philanthropic career, endeavouring to promote measures for the improvement of the condition of the people. And this is essentially a matter on which an appeal ought to be made to our better feelings. These animals are entirely at our mercy. They are dumb and powerless to resist; there is no kind of brutality that we cannot, at our pleasure, inflict upon them. I say that the whole current of human traditions and customs is opposed to the practice of vivisection. Men will not be cruel if you leave them to themselves. It is only when you appeal to their selfish fear of disease or death that you will induce them to condone what they really condemn, in the false hope that they may escape pain themselves by inflicting it upon unoffending animals. I do not know in what sense the House may regard this measure; but I am glad to learn that the younger men and students in hospitals are generally acquiring an aversion to vivisection. I can only say that, although it is hopeless to endeavour to alter the opinion of the older practitioners, whom inveterate custom has blunted past redemption, I hope that when these young men come to inherit the authority and position of their predecessors they will make a nobler use of their power. But what I chiefly rely on is the steady growth of public opinion in regard to this matter, which I am sure will no sooner appreciate what is sought to be done in the name of science, than we shall see the last of this most odious and most useless form of cruelty. I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. R. T. Reid.*)

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL and Mr. CARTWRIGHT rose together.

MR. SPEAKER called upon the last-named Gentleman.

MR. CARTWRIGHT, in moving, as an Amendment, that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said: Sir, although I rise to differ from the views just laid down by the hon. and learned Member for Hereford (Mr. R. T. Reid), I beg to say, at the outset, that no one can take exception to the temper, and tone, and straightforward manner in which he has brought the subject forward. Making every allowance for what the hon. and learned Member has said, I still remain of opinion, and I hope the House will remain of opinion, that the case which he has submitted for the judgment of the House is not warranted by evidence and not supported by facts. Sir, the facts in reference to this question have been most singularly obscured by the reckless and random statements indulged in by the inveighers against physiological experiment, many of which the hon. and learned Member has invoked. The hon. and learned Gentleman said he did not wish to cast a slur upon the Medical Profession; but he threw out the insinuation that they were men who were so accustomed to see pain and suffering as to be indifferent to theirs, and that, therefore, they ought not to be regarded as judges as to the cruelty of experiments on living animals. When we are constantly hearing statements of that kind—statements put forward with high authority—I am bound to say we cannot altogether disassociate this agitation from an attack upon the Profession. The Bill, I must say, appears to me to be an inconsistent and illogical one. It prohibits all operations for scientific, physiological, or medical purposes; and those who denounce vivisection from a high moral standpoint say that, if all the scientific men united to proclaim the necessity and importance of such practices, they would still agitate against them. The promoters of this measure are guilty of inconsistency, because they say nothing against other practices perpetrated wholesale which are quite as cruel and quite as painful, and which are done for the gratification of the palate, or the pecuniary benefit of those who trade in agriculture. The Bill proclaims, nevertheless, and asks the House of Commons and Parliament to proclaim, that, though done for the purpose of relieving intense human pain and promoting research, and performed under all known appliances for lightening the sufferings of the animals under the operations, all experiments on living animals are to be under a ban and absolutely prohibited, though the number of such operations is infinitesimal, while those done for gratification of the palate are to be counted by millions. It seems to me, if the moral argument is to be received, and is to be good for anything, the moral argument in regard to these particular practices should extend further than it is pushed in this Bill. I observe there is a clause in it—Clause 8, I think—in which a whole class of animals are excluded from the benefit of the prohibition in the 2nd clause. I would ask my hon. and learned Friend to explain the grounds upon which he proposes to introduce this class of exemption. It can only be because the invertebrate animals are proved to be, in his opinion, and in the opinion of those who act with him, animals of an inferior sensitiveness; but I will ask the hon. and learned Member, under whose authority and testimony he knows this to be so? He can only know it under the authority of physiologists; and if the hon. and learned Member considered the testimony of physiologists credible in regard to excluding a whole class of animals from the advantage of his proposed legislation, the testimony of physiologists should also be believed in regard to other matters connected with vivisection on which they have spoken with confidence. Throughout the speech of the hon. and learned Member, not only was there no attention paid to the testimony of physiologists, when it was given in support of the practices of vivisection, but when it came into conflict with his sentiments it was immediately put out of Court and pronounced worthless. But to proceed to the subject-matter before the House. I will not discuss it from a scientific point of view. I am not a man of science; but I venture to make an appeal to the common sense of the House and the country, against the passionate and fanatical statements of persons who style themselves philanthropists, against a practice for which so much is to be said. The hon. and learned Member, and those who agree with him, make statements with which it is not quite easy to grapple. They bring together facts from divers sources, and relating to divers periods—they present an array of random statements and passionate allegations which are singularly bewildering, and are very difficult to sift. It is well, I think, to take as a standpoint what has been proved by evidence in this country, and what is permitted under the law as it exists. The habit of going to foreign countries and drawing upon the records of foreign practices is not one calculated to illustrate the truth in regard to what alone concerns us—namely, English practice. It seems to me to be misleading, and not to the point. In the remarks I have to offer to the House against the Bill, it will be my duty to confine myself strictly to that which applies to this country—to what has been practised in this country—under the existing limitations. The hon. and learned Member has thrown out, in the course of his speech, that the Statute passed in 1876 is not kept in the letter, still less in the spirit; but I will give my reasons for thinking why the hon. and learned Member has not made out his case, and I will support these reasons by what I consider irrefutable official evidence. The hon. and learned Member began by drawing a frightful picture of the horrible things which have been practised by physiologists in this country, and he went back to a period prior to the existing Act; but I think he failed wholly to prove his case. There is one thing I should like the House to bear in mind; and it is, that, when vivisection was unrestrained by any legislation, the British Medical Association, in 1871, passed a number of resolutions concerning it; and specifically enjoined that it was desirable, and not only desirable, but incumbent, that anæsthetics should be applied in all operations where they possibly could be applied. The hon. and learned Member has dilated upon what he calls horrible practices which had prevailed before 1876. Well, before the Act was passed, a Royal Commission sat, some of the evidence taken before which has been quoted by the hon. and learned Member. Amongst that evidence not quoted by him was that of an eminent gentleman, who certainly had no sympathy with vivisection; and he—Mr. Colam, Secretary to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals—said he knew of no case in which wanton cruelty had been performed in this country by an English experimenter. The Royal Commission made a Report, and subsequently the Bill was brought in. That measure went beyond the spirit, and intention, and the recommendations of the Royal Commission; but it has been loyally accepted, and strictly observed by the practitioners of this country. Reference has been made to experiments carried out by Dr. Ferrier, and it has been insinuated that the legislation of 1876 was evaded by him. The hon. and learned Member should have said something about the attempted prosecution of Dr. Ferrier for having evaded the Act. He does not do that—

he has wisely given the go-by to it, for that prosecution lamentably failed altogether, and ignominiously broke down. The charge brought against Dr. Ferrier was, that he operated without a licence, and infringed the law, by doing those things to which the hon. and learned Member referred; but the charge was not supported by one tittle of evidence, and had to be abandoned. Now, I wish to say a few words with regard to the legislation of 1876, because, after the statements of the hon. and learned Member, it may really be supposed that great liberty and latitude is allowed to experimenters. The Act of 1876, under which all experiments are regulated, is one which falls into two parts—the first being general regulations; and the second containing administrative provisions for the enforcement of the Act. The part which has relation to the general regulation of experiments and of restriction is of the following nature:—In the first place, by one clause—the 2nd clause—no person is allowed to perform any experiment calculated to give pain, unless subject to the stringent restrictions enjoined in the 3rd clause. These restrictions are such that they require the experiments to be performed with a view to the advancement of some new discovery in physiological knowledge, or with a view to the prolongation of life, or the alleviation of suffering. It is provided that experiments can only be carried out by persons possessed of licences, and that the animals operated upon shall, during the whole of the experiments, be under the influence of anæsthetics. Beyond that, it is provided that no exception can be made to this regulation, except in cases where specific certificates are granted, which have to be endorsed by certain scheduled persons of standing in the scientific world; and they are, furthermore, subject to the approval of the Secretary of State for the Home Department. Moreover, after obtaining the licence or certificate, persons in the possession of such licences or certificates are strictly limited with regard to the kind of animals that are to be operated upon. No cat, dog, horse, ass, or mule can be operated upon without a specific certificate for the purpose, and then only on the approval of the Secretary of State, after considering the testimony of two scientific and professional endorsers of the certificate, to the effect that it is necessary that the experiments shall be performed on that class of animal. But, stringent as these provisions are, they are made more stringent by the method in which the Act has been administered. The Act gives the Secretary of State virtually an unlimited power, either to grant, or to refuse, the licence, or to attach to it conditions which he may consider necessary. Moreover, the Secretary of State may, if he thinks fit, enjoin that the experiments which are made under the certificate shall be carried out in a registered and public place. I believe—and the hon. and learned Gentleman who has moved the second reading of this Bill has not contradicted the assertion—that all the facultative provisions of this Act have practically been made obligatory by the Secretary of State, who has acted as a vigilant reviewing judge throughout of all applications for licences, though backed by the highest scientific authorities. I will point out to those who are inveighing against the Act, and those also who are contending that the operations it was framed to prevent are clandestinely carried out, and that the law is being evaded, that the provisions of the measure are construed by the Secretary of State in a far more stringent spirit than they were conceived. I know that the demands for licences and for certificates signed by the highest authorities in this country have been refused by the Secretary of State, because he thought the experiments it was intended to carry out were not sufficiently interesting or necessary for the advancement of science; and when I find that there are such stringent provisions in the Act, such great limitations, and that no cases of infringement of the law have been made out by those who are in favour of this Bill, and are such vigilant observers of what is going on, I am bound to say I consider the case of the hon. and learned Gentleman has broken down. Some better reason than that which has yet been brought forward by the hon. and learned Member or his Friends should be given, before they ask that the settlement of 1876, which has been loyally acquiesced in by the Medical Profession, should bo disturbed. I hope I have made clear the position in which experimenters in this branch of medical science are placed by existing legislation, hampered and fettered by the provisions of the Act of 1876, and still more so by the manner in which that Act is administered. The hon. and learned Member merely glanced at the question of whether the results of experiments made on living animals have been important and really conducive to the material advancement of medical science. The hon. and learned Member says he would not quote the opinions of the Medical Association. Well, as to that, I must say I do not think opinions of this kind should be made light of. I should like to ask the hon. and learned Member whether he would make light of the opinions of legal gentlemen in connection with a professional question, and refer only to the views of those who do not belong to the Profession? For my own part, I think the greatest weight should be attached to the deliberate expression of opinion of those serious professional men who, having devoted themselves to the earnest pursuit of medical science, have given a deliberate opinion with regard to the special matters they have studied. The first opinion of really great importance seems to me to be the one which was expressed at the Medical Congress, which met in London in 1881. That Congress was one which, I believe, in regard to its numbers and the character of its constitution, was the greatest assembly of the kind which ever met in Europe. It was attended by 3,000 medical men, 2,000 of whom were English. These gentlemen met, and amongst the other subjects they discussed was the question of the discoveries resulting from experiments on living animals. They passed a resolution, giving their opinion of the importance of the results of these experiments. The words in which they did so were these. They—

> "Recorded their conviction that experiments on living animals had proved of the utmost service to the science of medicine in the past, and were indispensable to all future progress."

Now, that resolution was put on record in this great assembly of 3,000 distinguished medical men without one dissentient voice; and, subsequently to that, the British Medical Association—the most representative Medical Body, not of England, nor of Scotland, nor of Ireland alone, but of the whole United Kingdom, at its meeting in the Isle of Wight—passed a somewhat similar resolution with only one dissentient voice. Well, I have explained what the provisions of the Act regulating this matter are, and the manner in which they have been carried out; and I would now just like to touch upon the experiments which have been performed since the passing of the Act. The hon. and learned Gentleman stated that these practices have been characterized by an enormous amount of cruelty—that they have been such as are calculated to excite horror and indignation in all human beings. He could not say that they were very numerous, though his words might leave that impression. I will give some statistics in this matter; and I will say this—that if the figures I give are incorrect, great blame lies with the hon. and learned Member and his Friends for not having brought out the fact before this. With all their agitation, and all their Petitions, and with all their argumentation, they have entirely refrained, except in one case—that of Professor Ferrier — from bringing cases before the public, by prosecuting experimenters for evasions of the Act, and in that one case they signally failed. What is the enormous amount of cruel practices? I have gone to the trouble to put down the number of licences which have been granted every year since the passing of the Act. I find that the highest number that ever were granted in any one year was 32 in the year 1879 to 1880. The number of licences for the first year were 23; for the second, 28; for the third, 32; for the fourth, 30; for the fifth, 26; and for the last, 28. The number of licences for operations without anæsthetics were, in the first year, one; in the second, four; in the third and fourth, seven; and in the last two, only three. Now, anyone who can do a reasonably simple sum in addition will be able to find out, from those figures, the number of people who have been allowed to perform operations without anæsthetics. In the case of those animals, to experiment upon which a specific licence is necessary, the number of licences issued was, in the first year, none; the second, four; the third, six; the fourth and fifth, none; and last year only one. I do not know whether anyone who speaks hereafter will be able to inveigh against the authenticity of these Returns. So long as they remain undisproved, I think I am justified—and I think, in this, public opinion will back me up—in referring to these Returns as authentic, and in offering them against the passionate, fanatical, and unreasonable statements of the opponents of vivisection. There are many fallacious opinions held, and many fallacious statements made, by the friends of this Bill; and great capital was made by the hon. and learned Member out of certain experiments made by Professor Rutherford with dogs. I should like to meet him in regard to this allegation. He spoke of countless dogs having been used. [Mr. R. T. REID: I said hundreds.] Well, hundreds. If he had looked carefully at the evidence of the Royal Commission, he would have found testimony there which would have weakened his faith as to the truth of the allegations he has lent himself to disseminate. Professor Rutherford did practise on dogs, in connection with a matter as to which medical men in the highest walks of the Profession consider there should be the greatest research. He made experiments for a number of years. He made experiments before the Royal Commission sat, and when it sat he gave evidence in respect of these experiments. He told the Commission frankly that in one year—in the year 1874—he had experimented upon 40 animals. That was not what he did every year; and when he published his statement in regard to the experiments he had made that ranged over a whole series of years, he referred them to the cumulative experiments. The way in which the hon. and learned Member and his Friends have dealt with this subject is an illustration of the uncritical mode and manner—I might almost say a dexterous want of criticism—which the advocates of this Bill put forward in many of their speeches and publications. When Professor Rutherford was asked if this 40 dogs had been the largest number he had ever used, he said—

> "The whole five years I was in London I did not use more than 10 dogs in this matter. Forty dogs was quite an exceptional thing."

But Professor Rutherford continued his experiments after the passing of the Act of 1876. Dr. Rutherford is a man of high honour, and he has stated that, so far from having practised upon 40 dogs, or anything like it, the whole of his experiments have been confined to 12 dogs in one year. This was necessarily the case, because he was restricted by his licence, and he abided by his licence strictly and loyally. But has any substantial good resulted from these particular experiments? It is the opinion of professional men, and those who are the most eminent men of the Profession, that the amount of benefit to the whole human race acquired through knowledge of alleviation of suffering in one of the most painful of human ailments from these experiments of Dr. Rutherford is incalculable; and it is a noteworthy fact that so perfectly were these experiments made, that there has been no call in any laboratory of the world to test them by repetition. I should just like to say one thing more. An appeal has been made to us to prevent the sacrifice of so many animals for the relief and alleviation of human pain. The hon. and learned Gentleman has entirely kept out of view the fact that a number of these experiments have been made for the alleviation of pain among animals. Twenty-nine experiments were made in one year with reference to the nature and treatment of that most serious disease splenic fever; and yet the hon. and learned Member has harked on the allegation that these experiments are made solely for the benefit of man. The hon. and learned Member referred to some scientific evidence in support of his case, quoting the opinions of Mr. Lawson Tait and Sir William Fergusson. But, although Sir William Fergusson gave expression to an opinion not in favour of these experiments, at the same time, before the Royal Commission, he intimated that he did not think these experiments ought to be restrained by legislation. He would, therefore, not have supported a Bill like this, which does not go to limit certain experiments, but really prohibits their practice entirely. I think, after what has been said in question of any serious addition to our knowledge which has been derived from these experiments, a few words as to what has really been accomplished through them, and as to the manner in which the present Act has worked, may not be out of place. I believe that no one in this House who has any knowledge of the subject will deny that the three most important additions to the Pharmacopœia—namely, pepsine, chloral, and amyl—in the last 25 years have been due to experiments of this kind. But I would draw attention to the fact how the present Act, which it is affirmed is not severe enough, has, for some time, operated, and may continue to operate, dangerously in restraint of medical discovery. I will take the case of that most eminent man, Professor Lister. It is in the knowledge of everyone that that gentleman's discoveries have really revolutionized surgical science; and, in the opinion of those who are best acquainted with the subject, he has reduced the mortality of man by 7 or 8 per cent. The initial step in these discoveries was one which could not have been taken by him if the Bill of 1876 had been in force at the time. While on a vacation tour an idea occurred to him, and he at once tested it on an animal, and out of that grew a great and beneficial discovery—the discovery of the antiseptic treatment. If he had been unable to make this test, the initial step would not have been taken; and who can say that when back at practice he would have had the time to make the experiment? Now, had the Act of 1876 been in force, Professor Lister could not have tested his idea off-hand, for he would have had to obtain a special licence in order to practise on the particular animal requisite. It may be said that this statement of mine is a little fanciful and overstrained. But look at what has happened to Professor Lister, not as an unknown man, but with all his reputation for acquired knowledge of science. Being in London, and being desirous of prosecuting further the discovery with which he had already made so much progress, in consequence of the provisions of the present Act he has been obliged to go abroad to prosecute his investigations, because he could not make in his own house the needful observations; but by the construction put upon the Act it was incumbent on him to operate in a public laboratory, which was quite unsuitable to his purpose. Thus, a man of such European and universal reputation has been obliged, in consequence of the provision of the Act which makes it impossible to operate except in a public place and under close conditions, to go abroad, in order to perform an operation which will probably be for the immense further benefit of the human race. There is another case which I will quote. It is brought repeatedly within the knowledge of everyone that poisons—and especially organic poisons—are very dangerous things to deal with. Nevertheless, it is the case that an eminent practitioner, who was desirous of testing a new poison from Africa, was refused a certificate for testing its nature on an animal. Those who have been in India know the vast number of deaths that take place annually in that Empire from snake-poisoning. The Government of India have long been giving grants for the promotion of experiments with the view of providing an antidote for the poison of snakes. In this country there is a most eminent man, Dr. Brunton, who has devoted himself greatly to this branch of medical science; but such are the difficulties of carrying on his operations in England, that he has been on the point of going to America, in order to continue the prosecution of his researches. His investigations have been hindered in one instance, because, having obtained some of the poisonous snakes, during the prolonged delay in granting a certificate, they died; and I do not know whether he succeeded in getting others to replace them. But there is a case which brings the matter nearer home. I refer to a great trial which took place not long ago. In the Bill of 1876, it is enacted that, for judicial purposes, it shall be within the power of a Judge, when he thinks it necessary for the conviction of crime, to give a certificate for experiments on animals. Well, we all remember the great trial for poisoning known as the Lamson case, which took place about 18 months ago. The clinching evidence for that man's conviction was only obtained through an experiment upon a living animal. Eighteen days, however, elapsed before the individual who had to test the poison could obtain his certificate; and, during that time, there was imminent peril of the implicating matter being decomposed. When such a long delay has taken place in a case of that kind, how many cases of poisoning may not escape detection? I myself have received a letter written by a great practitioner—a man whose name I have no authority to disclose; but which, if I could mention it, would carry weight with the House and with the country—and he says that, in a case in which there was every reason to believe that poison was being employed to destroy a human life, it was impossible for him to apply the indispensable test of experiment on an animal, because he could not obtain a certificate; and the patient died, without inquest or inquiry, to the probable advantage of a great and unconvicted criminal. Is not that a proof that there is ground, at least, for not going beyond the present legislation, and for not entirely doing away with the means of bringing conviction home in cases of this kind? Surely the hon. and learned Member, if he was at the bedside of some person who was dear to him, and who was suffering from a complaint which could not be cured, unless there were means of testing the remedy to be applied, would not say let that person die rather than that the means of saving him should be obtained by experiment on an animal. A case of this kind occurred in an infirmary with which I am connected. A person was suffering from lock-jaw. The practitioner, a man of great eminence, wished to apply a certain drug—curari—and the drug was to hand. But it is difficult—I believe it is impossible—to ascertain the actual strength of a preparation of that drug without testing it on an animal. The patient was lying at the door of death. There was nothing for it but to break the law, and apply the test without a certificate, which the physician did. Can the hon. and learned Member say he ought not to have done so? In conclusion, I would only say a few words in regard to what would be the action of this Bill if it were to become law. Although the hon. and learned Gentleman is very tender-hearted where the lives of a few animals are concerned, he does not seem to concern himself that, if this Bill passed into law, the few experiments now made on animals would have to be made constantly on human frames, and made in the cruellest form, because they would be experiments on persons at the point of death, and a mistake would be fatal. We know that England is the land of free letters, and the birth-place of experimental philosophy; but now, in the 19th century, the hon. and learned Gentleman and his Friends ask us to prohibit investigation, to annihilate inquiry, and to say that science is a thing which must be persecuted. The proposition need only be stated to demonstrate its absurdity. Where you have no liberty of the Press, you have clandestine publications; and if you try to dam up science, you will find that men will secretly practise that which it is necessary, in the interests of their Profession as well as of humanity, they should practise. I think it is only necessary to state the impossibility of carrying into practise a Bill of this kind, to make the House and the country feel that it would be folly to enact it. I feel confident that England, which for 15 years has been steadily fostering education, is not going to put under a ban a large class of its most enlightened and educated men, whose inquiries are conducted for the benefit of humanity. I therefore beg to move the rejection of the Bill.

Mr. LYON PLAYFAIR: I am glad, Sir, that the rejection of this Bill has been moved by my hon. Friend the Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Cartwright), who is entirely unconnected with the Medical Profession, and I second his Amendment, because I am intimately connected with it, having many hundred medical constituents, and representing, as I do, the largest medical University in the world. Now, I will try to avoid the subjects so ably treated by my hon. Friend. I would, however, emphasize what he has said. This Bill does not only deal with vivisection in the abstract, but it seeks to repeal the Act passed in 1876 for regulating vivisection, so as to produce either no suffering, or the minimum amount of suffering, in animals experimented upon. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Hereford (Mr. Reid) proposes to abolish all experiments on vertebrate animals for the purposes of physiology, medicine, or science. The experiments prohibited are not confined to painful ones. Under the plain interpretation of his Bill, a man could not stroke the back of a cat, to show a student that electricity was developed, without committing a crime, and could not give to a constipated patient a dose of castor oil, as an experiment, to see whether he would do without a drastic dose of croton oil. This is positively the case, unless my hon. and learned Friend is prepared to deny that man is a vertebrate animal, so that the Bill not only repeals the regulating Act of 1876, but it renders all experiments on animals illegal, for the purposes of physiology, medicine, and science, even if they are wholly innocent and painless. A physiologist, after this Bill becomes law, could not put the web of a living frog under a microscope to show the circulation of the blood. Now, my hon. Friend the Member for Oxfordshire has explained the nature of the Act which it is proposed to repeal. It provides that all painful experiments, with the rarest exceptions, must be made when the animals are unconscious with anæsthetics. As a matter of fact, only 1 per cent of all the experiments made under the Act is as painful as a surgical operation. Of the 300 experiments made last year, only 10 were attended with real pain. The Reports of the Government Inspector for Great Britian, Dr. Busk, and of Dr. Stokes for Ireland, are quite conclusive on this point. The question is not only whether vivisection, in the abstract, may or may not be right, but whether a regulating Act, which was passed in the year 1876, and which the Government Inspectors assure us works so admirably as to prevent pain in the animals experimented upon, is to be repealed. The hon. Member for Hereford cited experiments made before the regulating Act was passed, to prove that experiments were cruel. He described, in terms which, to those unacquainted with physiology, appear horrible, some experiments made on the brains of cats and monkeys by my constituent, Dr. Ferrier. But he did not explain that the animals on which these experiments were made were wholly unconscious, and not susceptible to pain. This is fully proved in the evidence before the Royal Commission. The hon. Member for Oxfordshire has, however, answered these allegations, as well as those against Professor Rutherford, so I will not repeat the answer to these statements. With these exceptions, the hon. and learned Member for Hereford, and the societies which back his efforts to prevent vivisection, chiefly rely on cases of foreign cruelties, although they are impossible under the present law in England, and are now, as they have been at all times, repugnant to the spirit of the English physiologists. That some of the old experiments, made before anæsthesia was discovered, were carried on in France and other foreign countries, with an indifference to animal suffering that was truly horrible, I entirely admit. That they are still carried on in foreign countries without due regard to the use of anæsthetics, I fear, is only too true, although to a much less extent than formerly. We are not called upon to legislate for foreign countries; but we are asked to repeal an Act which has worked well in England, and to substitute for it another Act, which prohibits all physiological experiments in this country, although the evidence is conclusive that English physiologists have always been remarkable for the careful and humane consideration with which such experiments have been made. The hon. and learned Member for Hereford does not care for proofs that experiments on animals have been carefully and humanely practised in England. His Bill proposes to abolish them altogether as being opposed to the moral law. I at once make the admission to my hon. and learned Friend that I am bound to traverse this argument, and not to shelter myself under the fact that he is attacking a mere microscopical point in the field of animal suffering. It is no sound argument against his Bill to say that, because only 10 out of the 300 animals experimented on last year suffered considerable pain, therefore it is right to continue such experiments. The real question is, whether there is a justification for sacrificing or inflicting suffering on any animals with a view to benefit man? You do not doubt this in the case of noxious animals. Last year, in India, we hunted down, without mercy, 6,000 tigers and leopards, besides many wolves, and we paid for killing 300,000 snakes. And what was our justification? It consisted in the fact that they had killed more than 20,000 of the Natives of India. The justification is that man's duty to man is greater than man's duty to beasts. The benefit to man is, in fact, our only justification for a vast amount of pain which we are constantly inflicting on animals during their lives. How otherwise can the farmer justify the cruel mutilation of oxen, sheep, or swine, to improve their condition for food, or, of horses, to fit them for labour? How otherwise could we justify the cruel and continued punishment of animals when we employ them in labour? Even the prophet of God, when he beat his ass, was so cruel that the angel had to intercede. If I thought that a comparative argument as to cruelty had much force, I could allude to the continued sufferings of the horses, mules, and camels in the Afghan and Egyptian Wars, in terms which would be too horrible and terrible for this

House even to listen to. But even in the relation of man to man, how, otherwise than by a common or national benefit, could we justify the sacrifice of whole battalions in assaulting a fortified position? Or even how could we justify the frightful suffering which a surgeon inflicts when he excises a joint, or cuts out a huge tumour? How otherwise could you justify a parent when he flogs a child, or the State when it flogs a garotter? It is not the mere, or even continuous, infliction of pain which is an offence against moral law, but the unnecessary infliction of pain without an adequate motive to benefit mankind by the act. It is not the mere act, but the motive for that act, which either makes it an offence against morality, or which gives to it a justification. Still, you may grant the motive, but deny the necessity. I need say little as to the motive. Unquestionably the motive is a high one which seeks to extend our knowledge of life and disease, so as, by a few experiments on animals, to ameliorate disease and suffering, not only in the whole human race, but also in all the animals which come in direct relation to man. This is so clear that it requires no argument in its support. The opponents of vivisection, however, deny its utility under all circumstances, because they assert that experiments on animals give no results comparable as to the human body. This is only one of the ordinary appeals to human vanity which seeks to find a wide abyss between man and other animals. This is altogether contradicted by the discoveries of modern science. Except in regard to his highly developed brain, man does not differ widely in his bodily functions from other animals. As Aristotle has truly said—"Nature never marches by leaps." There is a continuous chain, with slowly diminishing links, from man to the lowest animal. If you place the blood or flesh of a man and the blood or flesh of a sheep in the most expert chemist's hands, he can detect no difference between them. The same kind of heart, lungs, liver, and spleen are found upon the animals experimented upon as in man; and the same anæsthetics, the same drugs or poisons, and the same parasites, act upon man and such animals in the same way. It is quite certain that the observations made upon animals can be applied by physiology to man, for man physiologically is only the king of all animals. But I deny altogether that an unskilled public can form an adequate judgment on these points. The utility and the necessity for such experiments are most important considerations; but they must be determined by the opinion of experts. I do not mean by the few experimentalists, not above 40 or 50 in number, but by the whole body of medical men, who devote themselves to the cure and amelioration of disease. They are the qualified judges as to the utility and need of making such experiments, from the results of which they benefit. Outsiders, who have no knowledge of the requirements of surgical and medical science, are not even witnesses who have a right to be heard in such a case. Now, among 24,000 medical men in this country you will, no doubt, find a few, like Mr. Lawson Tait, who deny the utility of such experiments. But the vast majority of the Medical Profession are emphatic in their testimony. In August, 1881, there was a great International Congress of medical men in London, and the Congress passed the following resolution:—

> "That this Congress records its conviction that experiments on living animals have proved of the utmost service to medicine in the past, and are indispensable to its future progress; that, accordingly, while strongly deprecating the infliction of unnecessary pain, it is of opinion, alike in the interest of man and of animals, that it is not desirable to restrict competent persons in the performance of such experiments."

This Congress was remarkably representative of all countries, both from the Continent of Europe and of America. But lest you should think it tainted by the presence of foreign experimentalists, I may cite the testimony of the British Medical Association, which, on the 10th of August, in the same year, passed the following resolution:—

> "That this Association desires to express its deep sense of the importance of vivisection to the advancement of medical science, and the belief that the further prohibition of it would be attended with serious injury to the community, by preventing investigations which are calculated to promote the better knowledge and treatment of disease in animals as well as man."

I cannot conceive that the House would reject such testimony, coming from the great body of medical men, and including such names as Jenner, Owen, Paget, Darwin, Carpenter, Sanderson, Huxley, Gull, and a host of others, whose scientific knowledge is only equalled by their broad humanity. While the House will admit the weight of such testimony, it has a right to know what is the nature of the knowledge acquired which has produced this conviction on the minds of the great body of the Medical Profession. There are three classes of experiments made upon animals. The first class aims at acquiring knowledge of the processes of, or of the nature of, disease; the second as to the action of drugs or poisons; and the third of the actual production of disease. The first class seeks for knowledge of vital processes, or diseased conditions. Such experiments were made by the ancients, and, since medicine became a science by physiologists, in our own country. The great discovery of the circulation of the blood by Harvey was determined by experiments on a variety of animals, and was ultimately demonstrated before Charles I. and the Princesses upon a living animal. In the progress of such experiments by men like Harvey, Halley, Hunter, Bell, and many others, great and leading discoveries, such as the circulation of the blood, the lacteal and lymphatic system of vessels, and the compound function of the spinal nerves were established. Such experiments, probably, often originated in the love of knowledge only, without immediate reference to its application to the amelioration of human or animal existence. Nothing is more shortsighted than the *cui bono* cry of the ignorant against investigators in science. It is as superficial as the remark of Savarin, when he said—"He who invents a new dish does more for humanity than he who discovers a star," forgetting that to astronomy we owe navigation. But exactly as navigation is an outcome of astronomy, or as bleaching or dyeing is an outcome of chemistry, or as engineering is an application of mathematics, so is medicine an outcome of the sciences of physiology and pathology. To strangle these sciences, by refusing to them the only modes of research which render their progress possible, would be to relegate the medicine of the future to empiricism and quackery. Indeed, nothing is more established in science than the fact that every abstract truth given to the world constantly leads to the most unexpected and most useful applications to humanity. Thus, when Galvani put a copper hook through the spine of live frogs, and hung them on the iron rails of his balcony at Bologna, in order to study the muscular contractions which were thus produced, who could have predicated that this experiment was to establish the science of galvanism and lead to the discovery of the electric telegraph, to the electric light, to new motors for our machinery, and to the important use of electricity in the cure of disease and relief of human suffering? So is it with other discoveries in physiology, which, even when they appear remote from practical application, constantly lead to the most important benefits. Thus, when Pasteur and Lister made experiments on the minute organisms which appear during fermentation and putrefaction, who could have predicated that the experiments of the former philosopher would have opened up to us such a wide field of promise in the treatment of diseases which afflict our flocks and herds, or that the observations of Lister would give us that admirable method of antiseptic treatment which now ranks as one of the greatest improvements of modern surgery? And yet Lister had to go abroad to perform a few experiments on animals, as the present Act was too restrictive for him to perform them in this country, though the pain inflicted was no greater than the healing of some slight wound. When you recollect the horrible pain which used to be inflicted after a surgical operation, by burning the bleeding vessels with a red-hot iron, the successive steps in surgery that have attended experiments in the healing of wounds, and which have culminated in the antiseptic treatment of Lister, have surely justified the small amount of brute suffering by giving comparative safety to the most formidable surgical operation in the case of man. The second class of experiments, with drugs or poisons, are sometimes absolutely necessary, not only in the interests of medical science, but in the cause of justice. The promoters of this Bill would not even allow experiments in the cause of justice. For myself, although formerly a Professor of Chemistry in the greatest medical school of this country, I am only responsible for the deaths of two rabbits by poison; and I ask the attention of the House to the case, as showing a strong justification for experiments on animals, although I would have been treated as a criminal, even under the present Act, had it then existed. Sir James Simpson, who introduced chloroform—that great alleviator of animal suffering—was then alive, and in constant quest of new anæsthetics. He came to my laboratory one day to see if I had any new substances likely to suit his purpose. I showed to him a liquid which had just been discovered by one of my assistants; and Sir James Simpson, who was bold to rashness in experimenting on himself, desired immediately to inhale it in my private room. I refused to give him any of the liquid, unless it was first tried upon rabbits. Two rabbits accordingly were made to inhale it, and quickly passed into anæsthesia, but soon recovered, though, from an after action of the poison, they both died in a few hours. Now, was this not a justifiable experiment on animals; and was the sacrifice of two rabbits not worth saving the life of the most distinguished physician of his time, and who, by the introduction of chloroform, had done so much to mitigate animal suffering? Would that an experiment of a like kind on a rabbit or guinea-pig had been used by John Hunter, who probably shortened his own noble life by experimenting on himself with the ignoble poison of syphilis. Let me give one other instance, in which two valuable lives were sacrificed from want of such experiments. A few years ago two young German chemists were assistants in a London laboratory. They were experimenting upon a poison which I will not even name, for its properties are so terrible. It is postponed in its action, and then produces idiotcy or death. An experiment on a mouse or a rabbit would have taught them the danger of this frightful poison; but, in ignorance of its subtle properties, they became its unhappy victims, for one died and the other suffered intellectual death. Yet the promoters of this Bill would not suffer us to make any experiments on the lower animals which would protect man from such catastrophes. It is by experiments on animals that medicine has not only learned the remedial, but also has been taught how to avoid the dangers of such potent drugs as chloroform, chloral, morphia, and bromide of potassium. The third class of experiments is in the production of disease. At the first blush, this would appear to be the infliction of animal suffering without a beneficent motive. But this is the exact reverse of the truth, for no one can know how to prevent disease without knowing how to cause it. Prevention of disease is a much higher aim of medical science than its amelioration or cure. Now, in this class of experiments, the greatest progress has been made in recent years by the sacrifice of a few of the lower animals. A large class of disease, both in man and animals, is now ascertained to arise from the introduction into their system of self-multiplying and destructive germs of a very low class of living organisms. The promoters of this Bill would not deny this, but would say—"Observe the necessary facts when disease occurs, and draw your deductions from them, without experimenting upon animals." So you may, if you are content with the sacrifice of hecatombs of human beings to obtain knowledge which the sacrifice of a few mice or guinea-pigs would equally give you. Take an instance in point. A foreign experimentalist—Thiersch—by sacrificing 14 mice, found that the germs in choleraic discharges, imbibed through water, reproduced cholera with certainty. The same fact, it is true, was suspected in the cholera epidemics of 1848-9, and of 1853-4, when the Southwark and Vauxhall, as well as the Lambeth Water Companies, supplied water tainted with choleraic evacuations to about 500,000 of their consumers. In the case of Lambeth, during the first of the epidemics 125 out of every 10,000 of the population died; but in the second epidemic only 37, for, in the interval, the quality of the water was improved. But the Southwark and Vauxhall Company made no such improvement, and the cholera deaths were 118 to 10,000 in the first, and 130 in the second epidemic. These experiments with water, charged with fœcal matter, on 500,000 human beings were valuable to medical science, but not in the least more valuable than Thiersch's recent experiments on 56 mice, of which 44 took the disease, and 14 died. Had these been made anterior to the cholera epidemics, the great mortality might have been averted. It is thus constantly that much needless experimentation on man is saved by a few experiments on animals. The recent experiments made for producing disease in animals are full of promise for the future prevention and amelioration of disease in man, especially in the case of consumption, which is accountable for one-seventh of the total deaths, and for one-third of those persons who die young. But time does not allow me to describe these. I will only mention one fact—that the milk of consumptive cows is found to produce tubercolosis in animals. As milk of such cows is freely distributed, it is surely wise to make some experiments on animals, rather than to parody them on some thousand men and women before the danger is either negatived or affirmed. The House will perceive that numerous consequences must flow from the establishment of the fact that many diseases of animals arise from the planting in their blood of minute germs of alien life. Take one instance merely. Since the time when in Egypt there was a grievous murrain, "the breaking forth of blains upon man and beast throughout all the land of Egypt," the same disease *anthrax*, or splenic fever, has desolated the flocks and herds of all countries, from the reindeer in Lapland to the Cavalry horses in India. In France, this fever kills sheep to the value of 20,000,000 francs annually. Pasteur has shown how the baccillus, which produces it, may, in a milder form, mitigate its virulence, so as to render it as protective and innocuous as vaccine virus. Large flocks of sheep are now protected by it in France. I do not like quotations from the Bible in this House; but I cannot help recollecting that He who was all-merciful once exclaimed—"How much better, then, is man than a sheep." If we extend such protection to man against the attacks of many maladies which are produced by similar germs, the sacrifice of a few mice or guinea-pigs, which would only suffer a short and scarcely sensible pain in inoculation, would surely be justifiable in obtaining a lasting boon to humanity. How much more limited is this infliction of suffering than that of our daily intercourse with animals. If the House do not wish to interfere with the cruel operations on cattle to fit them for human food or labour, if it do not wish to stop the inoculations which have produced such important consequences in splenic fever and chicken cholera, in protecting cattle and poultry, why should we be asked to prevent the extension of knowledge for the benefit of the human race? I am much indebted to the House for listening to me so long on a subject which requires so much scientific explanation; but to my medical constituents, who are numbered by thousands, the decision of the House this day will either carry dismay or satisfaction. I must remind you what the Royal Commission told us would be the consequences of passing a Bill of this kind. They said to prohibit experiments on living animals—

> "Would inevitably lead either to a general evasion of the law, or to an universal flight of medical and physiological investigators to foreign schools and laboratories, and that, by this means, the general treatment of animals would certainly not be altered for the better."

You may retard, but you cannot arrest the progress of science. Even the burning of the Alexandrian Library did not stop the growth of literature. By passing this Bill you might produce the result which the Royal Commission so much deplores. This House has already passed an Act to regulate experiments on living animals, and I have shown how successful that Act has been in its operation. You might increase its restrictions; but these are already too tightly drawn, and increased restriction might be followed by evasion. The present Act excludes the unqualified from making such experiments, and entrusts them, with suitable precautions, to the skilled physiologist. Why should you show increased distrust, when there is no evidence of any breach of the existing law? The general presumption of law is, that well-qualified medical men may be trusted for their skill, and for their humanity even with human life. You allow to a medical man to judge whether, in certain cases of childbirth, he may kill the child in order to save the mother, and we are asked to distrust the few and the most specially qualified of that profession to judge whether a mouse, a guinea-pig, or a frog may be sacrificed for the benefit of the human race. You cannot be surprised that, as a Representative of a great medical constituency, I should speak warmly on this subject. That Profession has always been marked for its self-sacrifice and devotion to the interests of humanity, and they naturally resent the imputations of cruelty which are made upon them, because they desire that knowledge should be extended in the only way which is possible. I do not at all undervalue the humane feelings and sentiments of many of the promoters of this Bill. But I think that the out-of-door agitation in regard to it has been got up in a spirit of unthinking and aggressive ignorance. I claim for physiology higher humanity than that of the opponents of vivisection. Its aim is to mitigate the sufferings of humanity, by studying the processes of life and of disease. The only way in which it can prosecute its aims is to experiment on living beings, and not on dead corpses. The total number of laboratories in the whole world engaged in studying the laws of life, with a view of lessening the immense amount of suffering among all animated beings, are but few in number. Those in this country are conducted and regulated under an Act which has given statutory effect to the pervading spirit of English physiologists, that the experiments on animals should be made with a minimum amount of suffering. I cannot believe that this House will give a second reading to the Bill, which would drive English physiologists to foreign countries, or make them work secretly to evade an unjust law, and thus brand as criminals men whose whole object is to ameliorate the condition of suffering humanity. Limited as is the scope of this Bill, its purpose is to repeal an Act under which the official Inspectors assure us scarcely 10 animals in the year suffer sensible pain; but it would take no account whatever of the torture or cruelty perpetrated upon animals out of the most wanton and purposeless malignity. [MR. R. T. REID: That is a crime already.] I beg your pardon. It is not a crime already. It is a crime only in the case of domestic animals. I say, it is only experiments made with the noble motive of relieving the ills of suffering humanity with which you interfere. The existing Cruelty to Animals Act, called Martin's Act, is confined to domestic animals only. All other vertebrate animals are excluded from the operation of that Act. If this Bill passes into law, no more protection is given to them, however wantonly, wickedly, and cruelly any boy or man may experiment upon such animals. It would be a complete defence under this Bill to say that the experiments were made out of pure malignity, and without any reference to the promotion of physiology, medicine, or science. But as soon as the motive is high, noble, and humane, you propose to brand those who experiment as criminals. I cannot believe that this House will consent to pass a Bill that has originated with philanthropy, but in a philanthropy wholly indiscriminate, and which, I believe, will infinitely augment the animal suffering that it ignorantly seeks to alleviate.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Cartwright.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I do not rise, Sir, to argue the general question at this time of the afternoon, when so little space remains for the debate. Indeed, I could hope to add nothing to the powerful argument we have just heard—an argument reinforced by the practical knowledge of my right hon. Friend behind me (Mr. Lyon Playfair), than whom there is no one who has a greater right to speak on the subject. But I think the House would expect to know something of the practical action of the existing Acts at present in force in this country. I observe that that is a subject which has been entirely avoided, and I think absolutely excluded from the speech of my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. R. T. Reid) in the introduction of this Bill. He said a great deal upon the general principles of vivisection; he said much upon experiments abroad, upon experiments before the passing of the present Act; but he did not lay any foundation whatever for the measure he proposes to the House, in the way of proof of existing cruelties by experiments for scientific purposes in this country. It is my duty to state my firm conviction that no such cruelty exists at all under the operation of the existing Act. I cannot agree with my hon. and learned Friend, who says—"Cruelty or no cruelty, advantage or no advantage, I am against the system altogether." I, of course, respect the opinion of my hon. and learned Friend, but I do not share it. I hold, and I think the great majority of this House hold, that for the benefit of mankind, man as the superior has a right to use, and does use the inferior animals. How can we deny that, we who live upon meat; how can we deny that, we who employ animals in labour, to them very often painful and irksome; we, who perform upon them, for our advantage, as painful an operation as any to which my hon. and learned Friend has referred—perform upon oxen and wethers to the amount of thousands and hundreds of thousands, in order that our horses may be more quiet in our carriages, and that our meat may be fatter and more tender? My hon. and learned Friend does not interfere with operations of that character. After his Bill, as before, it will be permitted for man to lay strychnine and arsenic and phosphorus for rats. Far greater tortures are inflicted upon animals of that kind, which men destroy in that manner, than upon the animals which are the subjects of vivisection. But the experiments upon the rats are protected, because they are not for the promotion of science or medicine. Therefore, I cannot argue upon that ground with the hon. and learned Gentleman. For me there is only one question—are these experiments necessary for the benefit of mankind? If they are so, it is my opinion they are experiments you have a right to make, and which you ought to make; and, so far from discouraging, you ought to encourage; and you ought, as was the object of the existing Act, to take care that they are not made wantonly; that they are not made by inexperienced people, in whose hands they will be useless; that they have adequate objects and are made with proper safeguards. That was the object of the existing legislation, and I am perfectly prepared to defend the principles upon which that legislation was founded. The only thing I have to ask myself is—has that legislation succeeded in the objects to which it was directed? What is the state of the case? I have before me successive Reports from the Inspector. Does my hon. and learned Friend say that he believes there is cruelty exercised under the certificates given under this Act? If experiments are made outside the certificate, the law will reach the case; but does my hon. and learned Friend affirm that the men who, year after year, are nominated in these Returns, who have certificates of the most specific character, by relating the experiments they are to perform, do inflict unnecessary cruelty without adequate objects upon these animals? My hon. and learned Friend will not attempt to affirm that.

Mr. R. T. REID: I said all these experiments were unnecessary, and I gave instances of the most cruel experiments.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I listened most attentively, and I never heard one. All I can say is, that in my opinion, and upon these Returns, and under these certificates, I entirely and totally differ from my hon. and learned Friend. There is one class of experiments which, by a misnomer, are called vivisection, and which are performed without anæsthetics—inoculation experiments. They are by far the most numerous class; but the cases in which experiments are permitted, with the exception of inoculation experiments, without anæsthetics, are extremely rare. Now, does anybody condemn inoculation for the purpose of seeing the effect of contagious diseases on the lower animals? At least, I do not; and I do not think they can be, or ought to be, condemned. Let me remind the House what are the safeguards. In the first place, no man can have a certificate to experiment at all, unless he has the recommendation of most eminent and experienced persons. That is the first security. Then he gets his certificate. The places which are registered for the performance of the experiments are subject to being visited; and I should like to mention to the House an additional security that I have been able to obtain. The House is probably aware that there was established last year in this country an Association for the Advancement of Medicine by Research. I believe the Association is of the greatest possible value, and has produced, and is likely to produce, the greatest benefits to mankind. In that Association are the most distinguished men of science, medical and other science, in the country—Sir William Jenner, Sir James Paget, Lister, and others. I have had several interviews with these gentlemen, and they have convinced me—though I did not need convincing—that experiments of this sort are of the highest value. They said that the existing Act required to be worked with discrimination and with care, with which I entirely agreed; and they offered me their assistance in seeing that it was carried out. I accepted that assistance with satisfaction, and I said—

> "Now, will you undertake the responsibility—a responsibility, indeed, for which I personally would have been extremely unfit? I cannot judge whether a particular experiment is necessary and useful, and whether a particular individual is the proper person to make it. You have a knowledge of the Profession; you have a knowledge of the state of science; you can say whether such and such a man ought to perform the experiment, and whether it will be useful and necessary. And I said, if you will undertake the task of reporting to me upon such experiments, I shall undertake that no certificate shall be granted, except upon previous recommendation by you of the operator and of the experiment."

Well, Sir, I believe that this Association has accepted the proposition; and, therefore, we have a double security—first of all, that no licence will be issued by the Home Office, except upon the guarantee of the first men of science in the country, that the operators are fit to be intrusted with the power, and that the experiment is one that ought to be made. And in the next place, there is a security that the experiments will be properly carried out under the inspection of an officer specially appointed by the Home Office. I do not see how it is possible to have better security that the right should not be abused. I must, however, leave the House to judge of that matter, and I simply say that that is the condition of things under which the law now stands. Perhaps I may be permitted to refer to the last Report of the Home Office Inspector, which is not yet in the hands of the House. It is, however, being printed, and will be presented immediately. In that Report the Inspector says—

> "That the names of the 42 persons who held licences during any part of the year 1882 are given in the table subjoined, in which are the names of 26 licencees who performed experiments."

Consequently, in England, 26 persons alone performed experiments of this kind. Twenty-six persons were engaged in making experiments for the benefit of a population of 30,000,000 of people; and not for those 30,000,000 alone, but, in reality, for the benefit of the whole civilized world. My right hon. Friend behind me has referred to a great danger, of which it is well that the House should be aware—namely, that of making your laws such that you cannot have an intelligent and educated School of Medicine in the country, and compelling medical students to go and learn elsewhere. I am sorry to say that, to some extent, that is the case already, and the foreign Schools of Medicine are supposed to be superior to our own. Perhaps the House will permit me to say that one of the gentlemen interested in this question came to see me personally. He was an eminent oculist, and he said that a lady had brought to him her child, who had sustained an accident to her eye. He believed he could perform an operation which would save the child's sight; but, in order to be on the safe side, he wished to try the experiment first on a rabbit. He did not wish to try it on the child for fear of risking the sight of the child. Would any man say that, in such a case, an experiment ought not to be made? Should we interpose such delays and difficulties that the sight of the child would be entirely destroyed before leave was obtained to try the experiment upon a rabbit? We should have been guilty, in my opinion, of enormous cruelty if we had refused to allow the experiment to be made. It was far truer humanity to allow the experiment to be tried; and I am inclined to agree with my right hon. Friend behind me, that among those who made these experiments may be found some of the most tender-hearted members of society. I have no wish unnecessarily to delay the House, because I know there are other hon. Gentlemen who wish to address it upon the subject; but I have thought it my duty to tell the House exactly how the matter stands under the administration of the present law. Personally, I dislike, as much as anyone in this House, the infliction of pain upon animals; but I am perfectly satisfied that, under the existing administration of the law, very little pain is inflicted. Whatever pain there is is inflicted under certain securities, which afford a guarantee that no pain is wantonly inflicted; and I believe that these experiments are abundantly justified by the interests of humanity at large.

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: I find myself, Sir, under considerable disadvantage in having to reply, at this late period, to three successive speeches on one side, including that of the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Cartwright) which was delivered at preposterous length.

The reply of the right hon. Gentleman the ex-Chairman of Committees (Mr. Lyon Playfair) was contained within much narrower limits; but many of the analogies which it contained strike me as being altogether misleading. I fail to see what analogy there is between vivisection and the killing of tigers in India, unless it can be shown that the dogs and rabbits operated upon would devour the vivisector unless the experiments were performed. Then, again, the analogy of the flogging of the garrotter also breaks down, because the garotter has been guilty of antecedent crime, for which flogging is inflicted as a punishment. Nobody says that the wretched dogs and rabbits have been guilty of crime, and that these cruelties are inflicted by way of punishment for that crime. It is generally held that man has a right to inflict pain on the lower animals within certain limits; but the common sense of humanity exacts three conditions—first, the object must be the benefit of the human race; secondly, that the infliction of pain should be reasonably calculated to produce the end in view; and, thirdly, that it should be inflicted as sparingly, as slightly, and for as brief a time as is consistent with the object in view. Now, I venture to say that these conditions are not observed in the case of vivisection. There is a glaring hypocrisy about the whole thing. We are told that the first object is the benefit of the human race; but on the Continent, where the truth is more boldly spoken than by English physiologists, we are told that the experiments are undertaken in the interests of research; that discovery is the first object, and that to relieve suffering is not the primary object kept in view by the vivisectors. In the second place, it is not proved that the pain inflicted is certain to attain the object of the operation, even if that object is the relief of human suffering. And there is a considerable difference of opinion among medical men as to the probable benefit resulting to mankind from vivisection. I have been told that Mr. Lawson Tait, of Birmingham, has received 200 letters from medical men, condemning the practice of vivisection; but he is not able to give the names of the writers, owing to the *esprit de corps*, and a tendency to "Boycott" a man for his convictions which prevails even in learned Professions. The third condition is, that pain should be inflicted as seldom, as sparingly, and for as brief a time as is consistent with the attainment of the object. Now I think that the legislation of 1876 has failed to secure this end, and that it has not exempted the animals which are operated upon from the most extreme agonies. It is in the power of the Home Office to license physiologists for experiments without anæsthetics. No doubt, the present Secretary of State has tender feelings towards animals; but, as has been well said, in dealing with the Roman Empire we cannot act as if there would always be a Marcus Aurelius on the throne. We decline altogether to trust the possible Successor of the right hon. and learned Gentleman with this absolute power over the sufferings of the brute creation. Even in regard to the right hon. and learned Gentleman, himself, I am afraid there is about him a smattering of science which inclines him to regard laymen like myself as scarcely deserving attention. He relies on the testimony of his Inspector as to the cruelties inflicted on animals. I do not doubt that the Inspector is a man of honour; but he is advanced in years, and imperfectly acquainted with the latest developments of scientific cruelty; he is a simple, honest, and confiding man, but not endowed with those detective-like qualities which would enable him to judge for himself. He has to rely, of course, on the testimony of the vivisectors themselves; and a man whose moral sense has become so decayed that he can bring himself to perform these awful cruelties on unoffending creatures cannot be expected to feel very keenly about the moral heinousness of equivocation and evasion. I make no accusation against these men, beyond what is borne out by the fact that the right hon. Gentleman the ex-Chairman of Committees calmly contemplates the arrival of the day when, if vivisection be prohibited, the whole Profession will violate the law, and carry on the practice in secret. I cannot, at this hour of the evening, read any of the large numbers of cases of horrible cruelty with which I have fortified myself — [Mr. LYON PLAYFAIR: Are they cases which have occurred since the Act?] The right hon. Gentleman corrects me; I have collected them from all parts of England

and the Continent. They cannot be practised here without a licence. But when once the licence has been granted, the vivisector can import into his English laboratory as many horrors as he chooses from the other side of the Channel. If the Secretary of State has a right to dispense with the use of anæsthetics, surely we have a right to ask whether the inspection is a searching one. It is an insult to our common sense to tell us that there is any comparison between vivisection and the sports of the field. In the latter case, skill and endurance are the main objects to be gained, and the pain is only an incident—[An hon. MEMBER: No!]—an hon. Member contradicts me. The hon. Member is a fox-hunter and a pigeon-shot; but he is not accustomed, like the vivisectors, to the sensation of seeing his victims writhing in excruciating agony beneath his knife. Despatch is of much less consequence to the physiologist; on the contrary, I quote from a physiologist, and say—

> "It has even its disadvantages, for he has to seize in passing all the manifestations of the vital activity which occur under his eyes during the course of the experiment, since all the circumstances, which for the surgeon are but accessories, serve to advance the physiologist on the path of exploration and sometimes of new discovery."

There are moral objections to the Bill which cannot be dismissed in one word. We object to it because, even granting that vivisection may under circumstances be permissible, it is used again and again not in order to discover fresh truths, but only for the demonstration of acknowledged truths to students.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Under the Act?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: Since the date of the Act, under the Act.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Under the Act these demonstrations are prohibited.

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: Except by licence. The Act itself, which I dare say the right hon. and learned Gentleman has in his hand, will bear out what I say. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman is not convinced, I, with so few minutes left me, must decline the hopeless task of convincing him. With regard to the operations themselves, I contend that they are misleading. Sometimes they produce no result; constantly, when practised by different men of science, they lead to opposite results—frequently to erroneous results; and, instead of being a source of benefit to the human race, they have been a source of positive mischief. Dr. Rutherford placed 36 dogs for eight hours under the influence of curari, which paralyzes voluntary motion while it heightens sensation, in order to test the effect of certain drugs; but Dr. Rutherford himself assured the Royal Commission that these experiments would certainly not afford any evidence of what the effect would be on human beings. In others, the experiment was useless; and, according to Dr. Rutherford, after the slow torture of his 36 dogs was consummated, "it must also be tried upon men before a conclusion can be drawn." And to that state of things we are rapidly tending, and there seems to be no reason why this torture should not be tried on human beings as well as animals. There is a life beyond for a human being, who has a soul that will live after the death, and the argument, therefore, seems to go the other way, because, at any rate, it implies the idea of compensations after death for extra misery endured in this world. The garotter, or the murderer, or any person lying under sentence of death for the commission of a great crime, may be regarded as a fit subject for the fit experiments of vivisection. Then there are physically defective people, whose existence only tends to deteriorate the race. It might be regarded as a public service to sweep away such people, and in doing so to make them the subjects of vivisection. It has been said to-night that it is not unlikely, if the vivisectors be prohibited from trying their experiments, that they will be tried by the medical men who attend us on our sick beds, and therefore it is another reason why we should not encourage "the sleeping devil that is in the heart of every man." Certainly it is a horrible outlook, if we are to find our medical men treading in their paths of devilish cold-blooded cruelty, and then have to call them in to the assistance of our wives, our children, and our sisters. These experiments are exhibited before the young lady students at Cambridge, and thus we try to destroy all those traits of humanity in the female character which have done so much to ameliorate the condition of the world. We are told again that we may come to a compromise on the matter. The time for compromise is passed. A compromise was sought to be effected by the Bill of 1876; but compromise has completely broken down. We cannot compromise with men, who, like the vivisectors, meet you only with the language of scorn, insolent defiance and contempt, and speak of you as sentimental, pusillanimous, hysterical, effeminate, and irrational. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Hereford (Mr. R. T. Reid) is certainly a very good specimen of these hysterical, sentimental, and effeminate reformers. We claim that, until the whole of the scientific Medical Profession come to us with a united and unanimous voice, so that there can be no mistake about it, the practice of vivisection should be forbidden. Let them make it clear to reason that it is likely to conduce to the good of the human race; but we claim that they should make their appeal clear to the understanding of laymen and non-professional men. We ought not to permit affairs of conscience and morals to be ruled by the arbitrary edicts of the scientific priesthood which is arrogating to itself a power which our fathers, when it was exercised by a religious priesthood, would not endure. It is due, I will not say to our Christianity, but to our civilization, to humanity, to that moral sense which it is the first duty of a State to educate, to terminate the sufferings undergone by the most helpless of God's creatures. Nor less do we owe it to our material prosperity to check the insolent cruelty of modern science before it has begun to demand for its enjoyment the deeper music of a human agony.

Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA: It appears to me, Sir, as if the hon. and learned Gentleman who has introduced this Bill (Mr. R. T. Reid) desired to pose as the only friend of humanity in this country. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] I have not the slightest objection to a division being taken upon this Bill, except that I believe it would be taken upon a false issue—upon the statements of would-be humanitarians, which are more likely to injure the cause of humanity towards the brute creation than to serve it. Since the Act of 1876 was passed, there is no proof that the experiments in the United Kingdom have been cruel. [*Loud cries of* "Divide!"] I have no objection to a division, if the House thinks fit to demand one; but I think that it ought to be taken on the question of adjourning the debate. It is impossible for a division upon the Bill at the present moment to prove anything; and you will be afforded, by an adjournment, another opportunity of going into the question. The hon. and learned Gentleman who moved the second reading of the Bill adduced, in support of it, a number of fallacious arguments. Indeed, I think there can be nothing more calculated to injure the cause which the advocates of the Bill profess to have at heart than the arguments which have been brought forward. Under the Bill before us a Justice of the Peace is to be bound to issue his warrant for an examination of the premises in which any vivisector is suspected of an intention to operate, and any contravention of the Act is visited with heavy penalties. Let me call to mind one fact. We afford no such protection to the human race. If anyone suspected that another was about to murder his wife, and it was only a mere suspicion, he might go into fits before the Justice of Peace would issue a warrant for the entry of the premises. He must produce evidence on oath of facts to justify the magistrates in assuming that a breach of the law is intended, and a mere suspicion of murder would not be sufficient to put the law in motion. What I venture to say in this case is, that if we allow the second reading of a Bill like this to be decided upon now, it will do more injury to the cause of humanity in regard to the lower animals than if the Bill stood over now, and were brought in upon some other day in an amended form.

And it being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at Ten minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 5th April, 1883.

MINUTES.]—*Sat First in Parliament*—The Lord Egerton, after the death of his father; The Lord Vaux of Harrowden, after the death of his grandfather.

Public Bills—*First Reading*—Tithe Rent-charge* (22).
Second Reading — Medical Act Amendment (16); Consolidated Fund (No. 2).

CHANNEL TUNNEL—THE JOINT COMMITTEE.

Message from the Commons, That they have appointed a Committee, to consist of five Members, to join with a Committee of their Lordships to inquire whether it is expedient that Parliamentary sanction should be given to a sub marine communication between England and France; and to consider whether any or what conditions should be imposed by Parliament in the event of such communication being sanctioned; and to request that their Lordships will be pleased to appoint an equal number of Lords to be joined with the Members of that House.

Ordered, That the said Message be taken into consideration *To-morrow*.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

QUESTION.

Lord ORANMORE and BROWNE asked the Lord President of the Council, When further Returns as to the Land Act and Returns as to the working of the Arrears Act would be presented to the House?

Lord CARLINGFORD (Lord President of the Council): My Lords, I only received my noble Friend's note a short time ago, and have made what inquiry I could. With respect to the Returns of the Land Commission, further Returns are already on the Table, and will be printed in a few days. As to the Returns relating to the operations under the Arrears Act, the officials are so hardly pressed in order to get through that work that it would be very hard upon them and very disadvantageous to all the interests concerned if they were required just now to prepare those Returns. I think that is the appeal they would make, and it is one that will commend itself to the noble Lord. As soon as possible full Returns on that subject shall be presented.

MEDICAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Lord Carlingford.*)

(No. 16.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord CARLINGFORD (Lord President of the Council), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he had to ask their Lordships to consider a Bill relating to the important subject of the system of medical education and registration throughout the country. The question had been long before Parliament and the country, and before the Medical Profession itself, and it was generally agreed that it ought, if possible, to be settled by legislation. He did not know whether he should be more fortunate than his Predecessors who had attempted to deal with the subject; but he would, at all events, have the advantage of the strong feeling of the Profession in his favour, as well as the Report of the Royal Commission which had been appointed by the present Government to consider this subject. That Commission, presided over by his noble Friend behind him (the Earl of Camperdown), was composed of a number of eminent men, who took a large amount of important evidence, and whose names he need not trouble the House with except one, that of the great Judge whom the country had just lost, Sir George Jessel, who took a keen interest in the inquiry, and was a party to the recommendations of the Commission. He need not remind their Lordships of what had already happened in regard to this subject. The Act which now regulated the Medical Profession was that of 1858, a very important and useful Act, but before many years had passed it was felt that the system it adopted was a very imperfect one and that some improvement was necessary. A Bill was accordingly introduced by Lord Ripon, which passed their Lordships' House, but failed to pass the House of Commons in consequence of one particular question which he hoped would not now be a matter of serious difficulty—the direct representation of the Medical Profession upon the Medical Council. The subject was afterwards taken up by the Duke of Richmond in 1878, but with the same result. A similar Bill was introduced in 1879, and referred to a Select Committee of the House of Commons which obtained a great deal of evidence on the subject; but in 1880 legislation was stopped by the Dissolution which then took place. Since that time a Royal Commission had been appointed, and their Report was before the House. Under those circumstances, it was clearly the duty of the Government to endeavour to deal with the question upon the lines of the Report, so far as it commended itself to their judgment, and in that way the Bill had been framed. There were many important matters treated by the Bill; but now, as heretofore, the great evil to be dealt with by legislation lay in the fact of the multiplicity and variety and uncertainty, and often the insufficiency, of medical licences, which admitted men upon the Medical Register with all the rights of practising, thereby causing a want of security to the public that every man so admitted should be ascertained to be competent before he was allowed to deal with their lives and limbs as a medical man. That great evil was universally recognized, and the only mode of effectively dealing with it appeared to them, as it had to their Predecessors and to the Royal Commission, to be the constitution in each of the three Divisions of the United Kingdom of a Board, consisting of members of the present licensing bodies, which Board alone should have the right of testifying to the competence of those who were to have the legal right to practise. It might be convenient to the House for him to state in outline the provisions of the Bill. The Bill provided, first, that any person, male or female, passing the final examination, and no other persons, with certain exceptions, would be entitled to be placed upon the Register, or be allowed to practice. For the purpose of holding these examinations, and for educational purposes, the Bill constituted a Medical Board in England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively. The plan was, in fact, that known as the Conjoint Boards plan. The Bill provided that each of these Medical Boards should frame schemes, not only for the final examination, but for the previous qualification and training of the candidates, both in general and professional knowledge, and that these schemes should come into effect when they had received the approval of the Medical Council and the Privy Council. The Bill also provided that the Boards should aim at a uniform standard and uniform conditions, though he confessed that upon that point the words of the Bill were not so clear as he could desire; but he entirely recognized the importance of the matters, and would take care to secure that the three Medical Boards should, so far as possible, secure uniformity in all essential matters. Then, the Bill, as to the Medical Council, proposed to enlarge its powers and importance, improve its constitution, and lessen its numbers, which in itself was a matter of no small importance. It was proposed to form it in the following manner. There would be six nominees of the Crown, eight members chosen by the Medical Boards, and four members elected by the general body of medical practitioners of the United Kingdom. The Council would be renewed every five years, and its duties would be to inquire into the efficiency of the examinations conducted by the Medical Boards, and to exercise a general superintendence over those Boards. The next part of the Bill referred to medical education, and required the Board of each Division, not only to conduct the final examinations, but to take care that there had been a sufficient training and curriculum pursued by the candidates. All that was carried out would have to be done under the sanction of the Medical Council and the Privy Council. The third part dealt with the question of Colonial practitioners, which had long been in abeyance, but which it was very desirable to settle. For that purpose, the Council, at its discretion, would be enabled to recognize any sufficient Colonial or foreign qualification. He trusted the result of that would be that our countrymen in the Colonies and in foreign parts would obtain a favourable reciprocity instead of that unfavourable reciprocity to which they were now exposed by our own inhospitable conduct. The fourth part referred to the question of medical titles, which was a thorny question, on which he had no doubt a great deal might be said in Committee. It was, at all events, necessary that there should be some method for preventing the assumption of fraudulent and deceiving titles by persons who had in reality no right to them; and the next part of the measure referred to expenses and fees, which was likewise a subject of very considerable difficulty. The rest of the Bill consisted of details as to procedure with which he need not trouble the House. There were only two or three essential points on which he need dwell a little further. The first was the constitution, powers, and functions of the Medical Council, which they hoped to make more important and useful than it had ever yet been. One change would be the admission in a moderate form of the direct representation of the whole body of the medical practitioners of the country. That was the subject of an old controversy waged fiercely for some years; but it was now nearly extinct. He agreed with the Report, that the whole body of the Profession should have some direct connection with the Council. The next change proposed by the Bill in the constitution of the Medical Council was that the members upon that Council, representing or derived from the medical licensing authorities, should not be directly chosen one by one by each of these authorities, but should be chosen by the Medical Board of each Division of the United Kingdom, these Boards comprising representatives of these authorities. There was a great weight of evidence before the Royal Commission in favour of that course. Most important evidence was given to show that it would be better for the authority and independence of the Central Council that the members coming from these quarters should be chosen in the way the Bill proposed. In that way the Council would be best able to perform its functions, one of which would be to stand between these medical bodies and the public. Another reason was that the Council was too large already, and that, without some such change, the tendency would be to enlarge its numbers in the future. One way of avoiding a multiplicity of members lay in the very inconvenient plan of grafting two bodies together for the purpose of representation. That plan had been tried in Scotland, but with very unsatisfactory results. It might be known to their Lordships that four Scottish Universities were grouped together in couples at this moment in the representation upon the Medical Council, and that nothing could be more unsatisfactory than the way in which that system worked. He thought the House would consider that an important body like the Edinburgh University, for instance, ought not to be coupled with any other body for that purpose. Then we came to the Medical Boards. They were, in fact, the Conjoint Boards which had been over and over again recommended by the highest medical authorities in the country. The only serious difficulty which would arise was as to the proportionate numbers of the representatives of the different medical authorities upon these Boards. This was an important matter, and many statements that appeared to him to have great weight had been made upon the subject, and ample time would be given, before the Committee, of considering them. The duty of the Medical Boards under the Bill was one which, he was bound to say, was the very essence of the Bill—namely, the obtaining in each country, under the superintendence of the Medical Council, one common examination for admission to the Medical Register. He looked upon this, and he thought the House would agree with him, as the essence of the Bill, because their Lordships had already adopted three Bills containing that principle, and it had, moreover, been strongly supported by the Report of the Royal Commission. He knew that objections had been made to it, and that these objections came from some of the very best medical authorities in the land—namely, the Universities of Scotland and of Ireland. He asked these bodies to assist in attaining the common end that was in view. He should like to point out to them that their objections were of a vital kind, and would, if persisted in, make it impossible for any measure to be passed, because, if once exceptions were made in their favour, it would be idle to require the other medical bodies to come into a joint scheme. For the interest of the public generally, it would be necessary that the assent of these distinguished bodies should be obtained; and he might remark that the plan of a single common examination had been some time since adopted by all the medical authorities of England, and by a majority of the Irish authorities. The Universities of Scotland were favourable to the plan so far as it concerned the Medical Corporations of Scotland, although they refused it for themselves; but all these plans had necessarily and inevitably come to nothing, because there was no power of enforcing them and carrying them out throughout the United Kingdom, without which the thing was imimpossible. Another question was affiliation, and that was a matter of no little difficulty. There was no provision for compulsory affiliation to the medical bodies in the Bill of Lord Ripon, nor was there any such provisions in the first

Bill of the Duke of Richmond as it left their Lordships' House. In the second Bill of the Duke of Richmond there was a provision requiring affiliation to some one or other of the medical bodies. The Royal Commission had, however, given its opinion against that plan, as not being advisable or necessary, and the present Bill was based upon that view. The Report said that the absence from the Bill of a system of compulsory affiliation would not seriously affect the medical bodies, or, at least, the best, the most important, and the most useful of them. The Royal Commission was of opinion that young medical men would feel it to be their interest to attach themselves to those medical authorities which had a high reputation, and especially to those which were able to afford a good medical education. It was a matter not without difficulty, but one which was not of the essence of the measure, and he would be very ready to consider any proposals made on the subject before the next stage of the Bill, with the hope of being able to deal with it in a satisfactory way. As to the teaching bodies, he did not see it could make any difference to them, because, under the stringent rules which would regulate the new examination, their value would be greater than ever they had been before. The Bill contained a great many points which could not be fully gone into at that stage. It was highly expedient that the question, if possible, should now be settled. Four years ago the Medical Council adopted a resolution, which certainly had as much force now as it had then, to the effect—

> "That the continued uncertainty of legislation retards the improvement of medical education, and is contrary to the interests of the profession and the public."

And that was perfectly true. The public was largely interested in the present measure; and in asking the House to grant the second reading, he did so feeling that all who engaged the services of medical men should have full security that they were competent to discharge the important duties that devolved upon them.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Carlingford.*)

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN said, that up to the present time very little had been heard of the presentations of Petitions against, and of objections made to, the Bill; but that might be accounted for by the fact that it was not printed until early in March, and that the public could not get copies until the 15th of that month. There had accordingly been very little time given for the formulation of opinions, and for representations to the House. He observed that Petitions from the Royal College of Surgeons in England, and also from that in Ireland, had been presented, objecting to certain propositions in the Bill. He was aware that in Scotland there was a good deal of feeling to the same effect. He need only refer to the Scottish Schools of Medicine, which were very important, and especially that of Edinburgh, which was the most important. He had received a telegram from the Principal of the University of Aberdeen, in which he stated his conviction that there was a unanimous feeling on the part of the Governing Body of that University that considerable amendments in the measure were necessary before the Bill was allowed to become law. Reference had been made to the Report of the Royal Commission; but he would remind the noble Lord who had made that reference that the Commission was not unanimous. For his own part, he did not claim extended acquaintance with the Bill, but he thought the final examination under the Bill was open to some objections; it would include that species of examination called the clinical examination, a process which might be called a form of vivisection of the human frame, and, considering the length of time which that part took, it was quite clear that, unless some special provision were made, considerable inconvenience would arise. He was glad of the statement that the Committee would not meet for a fortnight, as in the meantime there would be plenty of opportunity for those who were interested to make representations as to the Bill, which was certainly a most important one.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, that though the Bill proposed to sweep away certain rights and powers, without any compensation, which had been exercised for the benefit of the public for more than 100 years, they were so much accustomed of late years in Ireland to that species of legislation that they hardly ventured to complain on that ground; but there were certain points which the Irish College of Surgeons wished to impress upon their Lordships, the first of which was uniformity of education. The noble Lord (Lord Carlingford) had intimated that that was extremely desirable; but there were some clauses in the Bill which were totally inconsistent with it—notably Clause 20. The next question with which the Irish Colleges dealt was that of affiliation, which was a question of considerable importance and which would obviate some of the difficulties which appeared on the face of the Bill. It was very desirable that some Body should exercise a controlling power over medical practitioners, such as that exercised by the Benches of the Inns of Court over the Bar. A third point taken by the Irish Colleges was the disposition of the surplus fund, for which no provision had been made in the Bill; and another grievance was the annual registration of all practitioners, which was unnecessary and vexatious, and would apply to some 35,000 medical men who had paid to be put upon the Register, and were yet now asked to pay a yearly sum to be allowed to remain on the Register. He also objected to the admission of laymen to the Medical Board, as proposed by the Bill, and did not think that Apothecaries' Hall, which was a trading institution merely, was entitled to representation; and he ventured to suggest that that vote should be given to the great University of Dublin. He might add that Clause 47 appeared to him to involve an illegal interference with the rights of the Colonial Legislatures, and would, if persevered with, lead to considerable difficulties.

EARL CAIRNS said, he was disposed to hope, with the Lord President, that the Bill, with necessary modification, would pass into law, because he thought it dealt with a subject upon which public opinion had been maturing for some time, and especially since the Report of the Royal Commission. All would agree that nothing could be worse than that, in place of uniformity of education and qualification, there should be competition, not to give the best education, but to secure the greatest number of students. The main object of the Bill, he understood, was to prevent that result. There were one or two provisions which might appear at first sight to be matters of detail, but which in reality went to the root of the Bill, and he wished to call attention to it as it would in its present form affect University education in Ireland. Medical education in Ireland and Scotland differed, as their Lordships were aware, from that of England. As compared with Ireland and Scotland, only a comparatively small number of English graduates entered the Medical Profession—in Ireland the number was very large. Speaking in round figures, during the past five years 40 or 50 per cent of those on the Medical Register in Ireland and Scotland took their position in respect of their University education. They did not come upon the Register with their medical qualification alone, but with the proof that they had a thorough general education. Nothing, he thought, would be further from their Lordships' wish than to injure a system which had been productive of such excellent results. The Bill in one sense took away a considerable amount of the protection which the Universities had. At present the Irish and Scotch Universities were able to give a medical degree which entitled the person who received it at once to come upon the Register as a practitioner, and the Bill proposed that the practitioner should not come upon the Register until he had undergone an examination by the Medical Board. That was an enormous sacrifice to call upon the Universities to make, and they might well say in surrendering their authority that care should be taken that no unnecessary injustice should be done to them. There was one thing, and only one, which would keep the Universities in the position which they would sacrifice, and that was by giving them a strong position on the Medical Board; otherwise University education would be put under the control of persons outside the medical bodies. He could not help thinking there had been an oversight in another respect. As the Bill stood the Universities of Ireland were in a perfectly different position from those of England and Scotland. What was the power which the English Universities had on the English Board? There were 15 members on the English Board, and the Universities had eight out of the 15, and, therefore, the Universities had a preponderating influence on that Board. The Scotch Board had 11 members, and out of the 11 the Universities had eight

—three for Edinburgh, two for Glasgow, two for Aberdeen, and one for the University of St. Andrews. The Irish Board, however, like the Scotch, consisted of 11 members, but the Universities had only four out of the 11. Surely that must be a mistake. Now, it had been strongly urged by the Scottish Universities that an exception should be made in their favour with regard to the final examination, and that such examination should be made a University examination, and that it should give a title to students to be placed on the Register. The Report said—

> "We cannot make any exception in the case of Scotland. It must not be supposed that we are transferring power to a central authority where they will have no share. On the Scottish Board the Scottish Universities will receive a preponderating influence, and send the majority of the members."

The Irishmen, it appeared, were more moderate than the Scotch, for they did not ask for more than a bare majority, and that was a proposal which might very well be agreed to. He observed in page 5 of the Bill that there were three very important sub-sections, the effect of which would be to hand over the composition of the Board in the future, however much they were satisfied with its original composition, not to any body over which Parliament had any control, but in reality to the Executive Council for the time being. Therefore, a fear was justly entertained that the Government of the day would be able to make any arrangement they liked as to the number of bodies represented. He did not mean to suggest that it was improper to have some means for altering the hard-and-fast line now drawn; but it was obvious that that should be done by an Order in Council in the ordinary way, and certainly not in the manner suggested in the Bill. Subject to these alterations he should have no objection to the Bill; but he could not say that he should be glad to see it pass into law in its present form.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK said, he desired to call attention to a penal enactment of a very severe kind on an *ex post facto* offence which the Bill contained, and which seemed to him to be wrong in principle. The Bill proposed, under a penalty of £20, to prohibit the use of foreign medical titles. It was no uncommon thing, as he understood, for practitioners possessing the licence of the College of Physicians or the College of Surgeons to take a degree from some foreign University, and frequently it was only given after severe examination. It might be quite right not to permit any person to register the title of Doctor thus obtained; but it was rather a strong measure to put a penalty for using it on one who had been in practice under the title for years. It would simply mean that they should say to their friends and patients—"You must not call me Doctor any longer, or I shall be liable to a penalty of £20."

LORD BALFOUR said, he wished to remind the House of the important effects this measure was likely to have upon the Scottish Universities. The noble Lord (Lord Carlingford) appeared to think that if those Universities were not in a state of perfect security, they were in at least as good a position as they had a right to expect under this Bill. He need scarcely explain to their Lordships how great the interests of the Scottish Universities were in this matter. The fame of the Scottish medical schools was known all over the world, and at the present moment nearly 3,000 students were undergoing a course of study in medicine in those institutions. Charges had been made against various Licensing Bodies, whose degrees entitled gentlemen to be placed on the Register as medical practitioners; but whatever charges might be made against other bodies, he was quite sure that they could not be preferred against the Scottish Universities. The practice of giving diplomas for one of the three great branches of medical science was almost, if not entirely, unknown to them, and was now absolutely prevented. No one who took a degree in Surgery or in Medicine in any of the Scottish Universities could get that degree without undergoing a satisfactory examination in all the branches of medical science. The noble Lord, in introducing the Bill, spoke of what the Scottish Universities were asked to give up as a mere sacrifice of feeling. He wished to show that the sacrifice involved something far more material than feeling, and he was sure their Lordships would agree with this, that even if some of the Licensing Bodies had committed errors in the past, it was not fair to strip those which were not guilty of the rights and privileges which they now enjoyed. It was not correct to say that the Report of the Royal Commission was unanimous. Two or three of those who were best qualified to judge dissented from some of its principal recommendations. Professor Huxley considered there was no justification for Parliament to strip the Scottish Universities of those rights and privileges, which it could be shown they had used wisely and well. Mr. Bryce, a Member of the other House of Parliament, also considered that it would be a serious misfortune, not only to Scotland, but to the whole country, if anything were done to interfere with the efficiency of those Universities by cramping the teaching. The only reference to these opinions in the main body of the Report was a passage acknowledging what the Scottish Universities had done for medical teaching and examination, and stating that the Commission would hesitate to make any recommendations that in their belief would interfere in any way with their prosperity. It was a very different thing to require a concession from the English Universities which gave degrees to about 50 medical students in the course of a year, and to require such a concession from Universities which this year comprised 3,000 students. The noble and learned Earl on the Front Bench below (Earl Cairns) appeared to think that the Scottish Universities had their interests perfectly guarded by the constitution of the Medical Board. It was no doubt the case that on that Board the Universities placed eight Representatives out of 11; but it should be remembered that the Medical Board was not supreme in these matters. The Medical Board of Scotland was entirely under the control of the Medical Council for the whole Kingdom. It was tied hand-and-foot to the Medical Council in every department. Its examinations were entirely under the control of the Medical Council, as were also the medical titles. And yet on that Council there were only three or four Scottish representatives. It was perfectly absurd to say that the interests of the Scottish Universities were safeguarded by the mere provision of their sending representatives to the Medical Board. He wished to allude to the very suspicious provisions, to which also the noble and learned Earl (Earl Cairns) had alluded, with regard to the enormous powers given to the Privy Council to alter the main provisions of this Act. If it were the case that Scottish Universities must give up those rights which they had hitherto enjoyed, he certainly thought that their Lordships ought to say that those interests, when given up, should not be wholly sacrificed, and that they should have some better safeguard than was at present provided for them in the Bill. The Bill would have the effect of providing an examination which would qualify for a place on the Register, under the guidance and sanction of the Privy Council, and this being the only examination which would qualify for a place on the Register, it would necessarily be of the nature of a minimum. It would minimize the demand made on those who wanted to practise in medicine. He should be very much afraid that a position on the Register being acquired by this minimum, very few indeed would be induced to take the University degrees as they now did. The result would therefore be that, instead of raising the merit and qualifications of the general practitioners throughout the country, this degree of Licentiate of the Medical Council would actually lower the general standard of medical practitioners all over the country. Then the interests of the Scottish Universities would be entirely handed over to the Medical Council with regard to another point. There was no assurance given that the very highest degrees given by the Universities in Scotland would be regarded by the Medical Council as what were called "higher titles." All medical schools were to be at the mercy of the Medical Council; and he, for one, looked with the greatest possible jealousy upon such a provision as that. It would have been very satisfactory to their Lordships if the noble Lord had indicated what would be the nature of the new examination. Was it to be in addition to the present one? If so, he would like to ask if the noble Lord contemplated that it would be an examination in all departments in which degree examinations were now held? If so, it would embrace an examination in clinical surgery. That examination at present, in all the Scottish Universities, occupied some weeks. In the University of Edinburgh the examination of the large number of students sometimes extended over as long a period as two months. He asked their Lordships how it was possible to establish a duplicate of those examinations? In the first place, the appliances at the command of the Medical Council and the Medical Board in Scotland would be totally insufficient for any such purpose. It would be quite impossible to conduct a second clinical examination, and the result would be that this examination for the Licentiate of the Medical Council would be a mere examination in book-learning, and would not command the respect which the Degree examinations did at present. On the other hand, if it was contemplated that the new examination was to be an examination in all departments, the same as the one now existing, the cost to the students would be most serious, and would present a most serious bar to many of the poorer men. He considered this additional examination was quite unnecessary, and suggested that the Government should revert to a proposal which was made on a former occasion, and which provided that the Medical Council should, instead of holding an examination of their own, appoint Inspectors or additional Examiners to sit along with the Examiners, and carry out both the purposes which the Government had in view. This would be quite as satisfactory as the proposals of the Government, and would have the effect of causing little or no injury whatever to the interests of the Universities. He sincerely hoped that this view would receive the attention and consideration of Her Majesty's Government. He felt he could not say enough to impress upon their Lordships the magnitude of the interests involved. If the Bill were to pass in anything like its present form, it would in no sense involve a sacrifice of feeling, but would involve a sacrifice of the very highest privileges now in the possession of the Scottish Universities.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, that on his own account as Chairman of the Royal Commission which recently sat on this subject, and on behalf of his fellow-Commissioners, he fully endorsed the observations of the Lord President of the Council as to the invaluable assistance given by the late Master of the Rolls, Sir George Jessel. Nothwithstanding the pressure of his judicial duties, he (Sir George Jessel) had never failed to attend the meetings of the Commission, and he regretted the great loss the country had sustained by his death. He was committing no breach of confidence when he asserted that the decisions of the Commission met with his unqualified approval. He hoped this Bill would prove a successful attempt to deal with a question which had perplexed so many Governments. The unsatisfactory position of medical licensing was universally recognized. When the Government of the day gave up the question in despair, it was taken up by the medical authorities, who brought it forward again. There was one still stronger reason why it was impossible to leave this question alone, and that was at the present time new Universities were coming into existence, of which the Victoria University was the most notable instance. They were claiming to give medical degrees, and they would claim representation on the Medical Council. It was, indeed, difficult to see in the circumstances how the present system was to be defended. They must either allow the number of licensing authorities to be increased indefinitely, or else they must make up their minds to restrict the number. This Bill proposed the second method. He denied that the creation of the Board was a step in the direction of centralization. There would be, for one change, the introduction to the Council of representatives of the general body of the Profession. As to the Scotch Universities, it was quite impossible to grant what was asked for without giving up the principle of the Bill; and it was not to be supposed that if the Scotch Universities insisted on their claims, Ireland and England would not put forward similar demands. He might understand it if the practice was limited to Scotland, but some years ago the Scotch Profession was placed in the same position as the English and Irish. As a Scotchman, he would not ask for anything that would injure the Universities of his own country. The influence of the Universities on the Board would be of a preponderating character.

LORD BALFOUR: But not on the Council.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, he was sure the House would not think the eminent men who formed the Royal Commission had combined together for the purpose of degrading the Scottish Universities. Throughout the proceedings of the Commission, they had only one desire, which was to be strictly fair and impartial between all these important interests, and he looked forward with some confidence to the pasing of a measure which would lull to sleep, at least for some time, this much-vexed question.

Lord CARLINGFORD (Lord President of the Council) asked the noble Lord opposite (Lord Balfour), who had spoken for the Scotch Universities, to consider before the Committee was reached whether there there was a shadow of foundation for the fears he expressed. He could assure the noble Lord that such fears were groundless. As to degrees obtained abroad, he intended to propose a clause in the Bill which would have the effect of not interfering with qualifications under which persons were legally practising at the time of the passing of the measure.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* the 19*th instant.*

ISLAND OF CYPRUS—THE CURRENCY PROCLAMATION OF 3RD MAY, 1882.

OBSERVATIONS.

Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY, in calling the attention of the House to the proclamation of the 3rd May, 1882, respecting the currency of the Island of Cyprus and to the exportation of silver coin notwithstanding the deficiency of it in this country, said, by a proclamation dated the 3rd of May last year a certain value was given to English silver coins, as compared with silver Medjidieh piastres, which were the currency of Cyprus, and in which the accounts for revenue and taxation were kept. English silver had been taken out to Cyprus when the British authorities first took possession of the Island, and according to a statement in Mr. Hepworth Dixon's book one of the British officers, charged with announcing to the inhabitants the transfer of the Island, had acted like the "Man in the Moon" at a borough election, and had brought bags of English silver coin for distribution. Since that English silver had been sent at various times to Cyprus for the payment of the English troops. He objected to this exportation of English silver coin, and to the proclamation on three grounds. First, because English silver coin was a debased coinage, intended only for small change, and not, like French silver coin, a standard of value, and the introduction of it in large quantities into Cyprus, and by that means into the Levant, must disturb the markets and cause loss eventually to various persons. These English coins were made to bear a fictitious value in Cyprus, which would not follow them into the Levant, and whilst the French and other European silver coins could be used by silversmiths, these English coins could not be used for that purpose. A friend of his had told him that he had obtained 23*s.* for a sovereign in Ceylon; and if the number of shillings had been as great there, as it would be in Cyprus, the difference of exchange would probably be greater. Ceylon might also claim that the example of Cyprus should be followed, and a similar proclamation issued for Ceylon. The second objection was that as the currency of the Island consisted of silver piastres, and the accounts were kept in piastres, the more natural course to have adopted, if more small change was required, would have been to have asked leave of the Porte and to have coined a supply of silver piastres of the same value and standard as the good silver piastres. By doing that no disturbance would have been effected in the monetary circulation of Cyprus and the adjoining ports, and at the same time a complimentary and friendly act would have been done, which would have been highly appreciated by the Sublime Porte: and such a course would have been more in accordance with what was lawful under the circumstances of our tenure of Cyprus. Lastly, there was little doubt that for a long time there had been a scarcity of silver coin in this country, and the people of this country, who were suffering from the want of small change, had a right to complain if their wants were disregarded for the purpose of supplying the wants of a new dependency; and if it should prove, as he feared, that this introduction of English silver coin into Cyprus was an injury to the Cypriotes, they would bear with less patience having so long to wait for that increased issue of silver change which the increase of population had made necessary. Perhaps the Government would state what amount per head of population of silver coinage was allowed for in this country when the annual accounts were published.

The Earl of DERBY said, he could not admit that British silver passed at a fictitious value in Cyprus. He believed, on the other hand, that the proclamation to which his noble Friend objected had been issued on a careful calculation of the relative value of the various coins used in the Island; and it contained a statement of the rate at which the piastre would be taken in comparison with the English coin. The proclamation dealt with a question the difficulty of which was much enhanced by the fluctuating value of the coin previously current in Cyprus. His noble Friend had suggested the desirability of maintaining the native currency of piastres; but he would perceive, if he read the proclamation, that the piastre, which was taken at the rate of 180 to the pound sterling, was the basis of the new arrangement. As far as he was aware there was no special convenience in keeping the accounts of the Island in piastres rather than in pounds and shillings. His noble Friend could hardly be serious in his complaint that the exportation of silver to Cyprus had inflicted any inconvenience on England. The amount exported, which was not more than £40,000 or £50,000, was in no way adequate to produce such a result; and though last year there might have been a deficiency of silver in consequence of the temporary suspension of work at the Mint, the issue of silver had now for some months been resumed.

ARMY—LINE BATTALIONS—TRAINING OF MEN AS MOUNTED INFANTRY.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Viscount ST. VINCENT asked the Under Secretary of State for War, Whether, in view of recent experience, it is proposed to take any steps to inquire into the advisability of giving officers in command of some of our Line battalions an opportunity of having a small proportion of their men taught, in peace, the work that, as Mounted Infantry, they would have to do in war. The utility of Mounted Infantry in the general operations of war had been proved by the experience of the late campaigns, which showed that the services rendered by them could not be performed either by Infantry or Cavalry. He might remind the House that the Boers of the Transvaal were a fine example—probably the finest in the world—of Mounted Infantry. We could not expect so much from our own Infantry, who could not be constantly in the saddle as the Boers were; but it was to be hoped that something more than an inconsiderable fraction of our men might be formed into an efficient force of Mounted Infantry by proper training in time of peace.

Lord CHELMSFORD said, he regretted that the House was so thinly attended when a question was being discussed to which recent wars had given importance and prominence. Considering that Mounted Infantry was a recognized arm in modern warfare, it could not be right that England should not possess a body of mounted men trained at home and capable of being despatched on foreign service at short notice. He hoped to hear from the noble Earl the Under Secretary of State for War that the subject was being considered by the War Office, and that it was intended to give systematic instruction in the duties of a Mounted Infantry soldier. In his opinion, however, it was not desirable to give this instruction to mere recruits, but to train for this purpose men of at least three years' service, after making them expert marksmen. It would be useless, he thought, only to have a depôt; but if 60 or 80 Mounted Infantry could be permanently stationed at, say Aldershot, to take part in all the manœuvres there, there would be opportunities for developing that nucleus into a really efficient Force.

The Earl of MORLEY said, he shared in the regret expressed by the noble and gallant Lord who had just sat down, at the small attendance of noble Lords interested in this question. The employment of Mounted Infantry was a subject on which the noble and gallant Viscount (Viscount St. Vincent), from his experience in more than one campaign, was peculiarly qualified to express an opinion. It was generally admitted to be undesirable to keep up permanently a body of Mounted Infantry in this country, because such a force would inevitably, sooner or later, be turned into Cavalry. Some such scheme as that of the noble and gallant Viscount, which would probably have a better result, had for some time been under the consideration of the authorities, and arrangements had been made for the equipment of such a Corps when it was needed. He could only assure the House that the authorities were quite alive to the importance of the subject, the services performed by Mounted Infantry in South Africa having brought the whole question prominently before their notice.

TITHE RENTCHARGE BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the Law as to Tithe Rentcharge — Was *presented* by The Earl Stanhope; read 1ª. (No. 22.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 5th April, 1883.

MINUTES.]—Ways and Means—*considered in Committee*—Financial Statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Private Bills (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—South London Tramways*; Warrington Tramways, *put off.*

Public Bills—*Ordered—First Reading*—Union Officers' Superannuation (Ireland)* [132]; Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Northumberland, &c.)* [133]; Leaseholders (Facilities for Purchase of Fee Simple)* [134].

Second Reading—Crown Lands* [122].

Committee—Report—Army (Annual) [123].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

WARRINGTON TRAMSWAYS BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. RYLANDS said, he rose to move the second reading of this Bill on behalf of his hon. Friend the Member for Warrington (Mr. M'Minnies), who, owing to suffering from a severe cold, was not able to address the House. He did so under somewhat peculiar circumstances, because he found that his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade had given Notice of opposition to the Bill. He wished to point out that this was a very unusual course to take on the part of the Board of Trade; because, although the Board claimed to have a right of making representations to a Select Committtee in regard to any point contained in a Private Bill, yet it had never been the practice for a leading Member of the Government, and the Head of a Department, to come down to the House in order to move the rejection of a Private Bill. His right hon. Friend would probably tell the House that the promoters of the Bill had applied to the Board of Trade for a Provisional Order, and that that Order, on certain grounds, was refused; and that it was for that reason he was taking the unusual course of opposing the second reading of the present Bill. But he (Mr. Rylands) contended that there were no circumstances which justified the exceptional course pursued in regard to the Bill; and he thought the House should not allow the Board of Trade to have such an absolute command over the local business of the country; that because the Board refused to grant a Provisional Order, Parliament should be debarred from entertaining any project that might be brought before them, or the promoters of Private Bills be debarred from submitting their case to the House of Commons. He understood that the objection of the Board of Trade to this Bill was, that certain streets in the town of Warrington, through which it was proposed to carry tramways, were narrower than the requirements of the Board of Trade demanded. If that were so, he would not feel disposed to suggest that it was not reasonable for the Board of Trade to bring under the attention of a Select Committee of the House of Commons, in the event of the Bill being referred to a Committee, the arrangement proposed to be carried out by the Bill. But he was informed by the promoters that if the Bill was sent to a Select Committee, they would be prepared to submit certain modifications of the measure for the approval of the Committee which would, in their opinion, have the effect of removing the objections entertained to the Bill by the Board of Trade. He was not at all advocating that the Bill should be adopted in the exact form in which it would be submitted to a Select Committee. What he complained of, on behalf of the House, was, that when the promoters brought forward a Bill, with the consent of the Corporation of the Borough of Warrington, in which borough it was proposed that these tramways should be constructed, the House of Commons ought not, by refusing the second reading of the Bill, at the instance of the Board of Trade, to prevent the Select Committee from having before them the whole facts of the case, and from coming to such a conclusion as they might deem most desirable. If the Bill were sent to a Committee upstairs, they would pass it with modifications of such a character as would meet the objections of the Board of Trade, or they would reject the Bill altogether, in which case there would be an end of the matter. But he must say that he looked with extreme jealousy on any action of the Board of Trade that went beyond this. It was their duty to give every information to a Select Committee of the House with regard to Private Bills; but he should look with jealousy at the action of the Board of Trade if they brought their influence to bear on the House in order to reject the Bill. Therefore, simply on the ground that he thought this Bill ought to be referred to a Select Committee, and that a Select Committee would be able to deal with it, he would move the second reading, and he hoped that the House would accept the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Rylands.*)

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, in moving that the Bill be read a second time upon that day six months, said, he agreed with his hon. Friend that the course he was going to take was somewhat unusual, and was only to be justified by the exceptional circumstances under which the Bill was brought before the House. His hon. Friend was quite mistaken if he supposed that this was in any sense a question between the Board of Trade, on the part of the Government, and the promoters of the Bill. The Board of Trade were acting only Ministerially in the matter; and what they were endeavouring to do was simply to give effect to the decision and intention of both Houses of Parliament. The Bill raised a question not altogether dissimilar from that which excited considerable interest a little while ago in reference to railway rates. It was then pointed out that, in spite of the evident intention of the Legislature, it had been possible for the railway interests to promote Private Bills which had passed Committees upstair *per in curiam*, and which introduced modifications of the general principle and intention of the House and Parliament. In the same way, he contended, in regard to this Bill, that if it were allowed to pass the House of Commons, Parliament would stultify itself. They had been at great pains to appoint a Committee, and laid down the general principles on which this legislation should proceed, and they had instructed a Department of the Government to watch and see that the regulations laid down were observed. If they allowed any private persons interested in the promotion of Private Bills to put aside with contempt the regulations laid down by Parliament, and trust to the possibility of their terms being accepted, owing, perhaps, to the inattention of a Committee upstairs, Parliament would be stultified, and it would be futile in future to appoint Committees to lay down any principle on which Private Bills were to be conducted. The House would, perhaps, allow him to give an illustration of what might happen. Only last Session both Houses passed an Electric Lighting Bill. It was a new enterprize, and it was a question of great importance to decide whether private authorities and public companies should be allowed to carry out electric lighting in the cities and large towns of the Kingdom. A Select Committee was appointed by the House, which went into the whole matter with the greatest care, taking evidence and laying down certain principles. Those principles were embodied in a Bill, and the Bill was adopted by the House of Commons; but when the Board of Trade, who were instructed to carry out the Bill, came to put it in force, they were met, almost in the very first stage, by one of the parties promoting a measure for electric lighting, with the threat that if they did not consent to certain provisions of the Bill, they would be carried before a Committee upstairs, notwithstanding the fact, that, after a careful inquiry, such provisions had been refused by a Special Committee, and it had been decided that they should not be included in any Act of Parliament relating to the subject. He sent word to the promoters, that if they did anything of the sort he certainly should move the rejection of their Bill in the House of Commons, and should further ask the question whether the House wished its legislation to be rendered null in that way. The present case was precisely of the same kind. There were several previous Committees; but in 1879 there was a very important Committee of the House of Lords, of which the Marquess of Ripon was Chairman, to consider upon what conditions tramway enterprize should be allowed to be conducted. That Committee laid down a number of regulations, and among them the minimum width of the streets through which these tramways were to pass was fixed at 24 feet. That was not made a matter of absolute obligation; but the Committee recommended that the Board of Trade should be allowed to exercise a discretion in the matter, and, on inquiry, declare whether any less width would be sufficient. The Warrington Tramway Company had applied to the Board of Trade for a Provisional Order, and they asked to be allowed to construct tramways in streets which were only 13½ feet wide instead of 24. The Board of Trade sent down an officer to inquire into the matter; and, in the opinion of the Board of Trade Inspector, the construction of tramways as proposed, in streets so narrow, would be a public nuisance, and a source of public danger. The Inspector reported accordingly to the Board of Trade; whereupon the Board of Trade said they would only sanction tramways in streets which were 16 feet wide, that being eight feet less than the minimum suggested by the House of Lords. But in such a case they also required that the cars must be of a width not exceeding five feet, and that the tramway rails should be laid at a distance not exceeding three feet. After considerable discussion with the promoters, the promoters declined to go on with the Provisional Order upon those terms; and they now came before the House with a Private Bill altogether contrary to, and in flagrant contradiction of, the recommendations of the Committee of the House of Lords. Under these circumstances, it was his duty to call the attention of the House to the matter, and to raise the question by moving that the Bill be read a second time upon that day six months.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Chamberlain.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. DODDS ventured to think that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had not made out a case for the rejection of the Bill upon the second reading. The right hon. Gentleman had himself pointed out that the regulations of the House of Lords would have been contravened if the Provisional Order the Board of Trade consented to grant had been accepted. Now, what had the Board of Trade done in this case? They sent down an Inspector to Warrington, who reported against the width of the streets in which it was proposed to construct tramways, and in favour of a width of 16 feet. Now, he could understand the opposition of the right hon. Gentleman if the proposal of the Tramway Company at Warrington had been opposed by the Corporation of Warrington; but the Corporation of Warrington, consisting of a body of gentlemen elected by the ratepayers of Warrington, consented to the Bill; and they were, in his humble judgment, the best judges of the question, whether or not the proposed tramways would be, as the right hon. Gentleman had described them, a public nuisance and a public danger. Surely, if the Corporation of Warrington, and the people of Warrington, did not object to the construction of these tramways, it was not unreasonable, at all events, to allow the Bill to go to a Select Committee upstairs, in order that the whole question might be considered. It was not very likely that in such a case as this a Select Committee, owing to inattention, would pass a measure which might become a public nuisance and a public danger; because he had no doubt that the Board of Trade would exercise its proper function of calling the attention of the Committee specially to the circumstances of the case. Having done that, it seemed to him that the Board of Trade would have fully discharged its duty; and any future question should be left to the consideration of the Committee, when full evidence was brought before them by the promoters, supported by the Corporation on the one hand, and the opponents, if there were any, on the other. The Committee would decide upon that evidence, and the result of their decision would come down to the House; and, notwithstanding all that might have taken place, it would still be open to the right hon. Gentleman to move the rejection of the Bill. He thought, on the present occasion, that the House would do well to allow the Bill to be referred to the ordinary Private Bill Committee upstairs, where such observations as the Board of Trade might think it their duty to lay before the Committee, in order that there might be no limitation to the inquiry of the Committee, could be presented, and the subject would be fully discussed. Upon these grounds, he should support the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) if he carried it to a division.

Mr. LABOUCHERE supported the views expressed by his hon. Friends the Members for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) and Stockton (Mr. Dodds), on the ground of local self-government. They were told that the Corporation were in favour of the Bill. His hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), who knew Warrington intimately, and the hon. Member for Warrington (Mr. M'Minnies), were also advocates of the Bill; and he would point out to the President of the Board of Trade that the view of the right hon. Gentleman in regard to tramways not passing through streets that were not of a particular width was not one that was acceptable everywhere. In America it frequently happened that tramways were run expressly through the smaller streets, where there were scarcely any foot passengers, as the most simple means of getting rid of the block which might be occasioned in the large thoroughfares. It really did seem to him that hon. Members sitting in that House could know nothing as to what was the best tramway to run in the town of Warrington. Surely the people of Warrington were not fools; they must themselves know whether they wanted a tramway. The Corporation of Warrington represented the town, and the Corporation were in favour of the Bill. He, therefore, trusted that his hon. Friend would go to a division, and that he would obtain sufficient support to enable the Bill to be read a second time.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY said, he thought that this was an exaggerated outcry on the part of the Board of Trade. The Board of Trade had the power absolutely to prevent any tramway being made by means of a Provisional Order; but it certainly never was intended that the Board of Trade, or any other Government Department, should have the power of preventing the tramways being made by an Act of Parliament, if Parliament chose to sanction it. He should support the Board of Trade and the Government most decidedly in preventing this scheme from going forward if it was proposed to be done by means of a Provisional Order. But to prevent the Bill from being read a second time when they had the tribunal of that House, which had considered Bills of a much more important character, was contrary to the recognized practice of the House, and it appeared to him to be an abuse of the powers of the Government. He should, therefore, on general principles, support the second reading of the Bill. There would be an end of all principle of local self-government if Bills of this kind were not allowed to go before Select Committees to be threshed out properly upstairs, especially when it was known that they had the support of the Corporate authorities.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 68; Noes 123: Majority 55.—(Div. List, No. 51.)

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Second Reading *put off* for six months.

QUESTIONS.

—:0:—

INDIA—THE INDIAN LEGISLATURE.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Secretary of State has considered the inconvenience arising from the migratory character of the Indian Legislature, and the constantly decreasing fraction of the year during which the Government and Legislature are at the nominal Capital; so that, in the present year, after a Legislative Session of barely three months at Calcutta, it has been necessary to hang up for eight or nine months a petty measure, the discussion of which gives rise to a continually increasing irritation between Europeans and Natives, and a very important Land Bill, the main features of which have already been discussed for years; and, whether there is any probability of a decision being arrived at which may make some one place the real headquarters of the offices of the Government of India; and, whether the Secretary of State's attention has been called to the great aggravation of the Legislative inconvenience above mentioned, due to the technical constructions and other processes, by the operation of which, of late years, the local Legislatures of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay have been deprived of many of the powers which the Indian Councils Act purported to confer on them, and it has been rendered necessary to introduce into the Supreme Indian Legislature many Bills on subjects really local, and pertaining to those Provinces respectively?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: Some inconvenience may, perhaps, occasionally arise from the migratory character of the Indian Legislature. The recent Legislative Session at Calcutta lasted three months; but there is no ground for the suggestion that it was its shortness which led to the postponement of the Bengal Rent Bill, or the Criminal Jurisdiction Bill. The Home Government recognizes the fact that Calcutta and Simla are, at different times of the year, the head-quarters of the Government of India; and no change is contemplated. The powers of the Council of the Governor General and of the local Councils of Madras, Bombay, and Bengal respectively, depend entirely upon the provisions of the Indian Council Act of 1861; and local Councils could not, by technical construction or otherwise, be deprived of any powers which that Act confers upon them. There is, at the same time, reason to believe that the Government of India is considering the best mode of so framing its own legislative measures as not to limit inconveniently the powers of the local Councils to legislate afterwards on the same subjects.

EGYPT (CRIMINAL LAW)—PRISONERS.

Mr. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What steps have been taken by Her Majesty's Government to remedy the state of things described in Mr. Beaman's report, which summarizes thus the condition of affairs in the Egyptian prisons:—

> "In conclusion, it may be safely stated that no report can convey the feeblest impression of the hopeless misery of the mass of prisoners, who live for months like wild beasts, without change of clothing, half starved, ignorant of the fate of their families, and bewailing their own. They look forward to the day of their trial as synonymous with the day of their release, but the prospect of its advent is too uncertain to lend much hope to their wretchedness. From the moment of entering the prison, even on the most trifling charge, they consider themselves lost. The one power that can release them is money, and they do not command it. It is impossible for them to guess at the time when a new official may begin to clear off the cases in his district, or when the slow march of administration may reach them. It may be weeks, it may be months, and it may be years; many of them have long since ceased to care which?"

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The British officers appointed to watch the proceedings at Alexandria and Tantah frequently visited the prisons, and were able materially to alleviate the lot of the prisoners by securing for them daily rations of food and proper treatment by the prison warders. Representations were, at the same time, made to the Egyptian Government with respect to the uncleanly state of the prisons. Her Majesty's Representatives in Egypt have since renewed these representations, and will continue their efforts to bring about a reform of the state of things described by Mr. Beaman in his Report, to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred. According to the latest Report from Lord Dufferin, there are now no political prisoners in prison; 161 persons charged with murder, pillage, or arson at Alexandria are awaiting their trial there, and 79 persons charged with similar offences are in prison at Tantah, Damanhour, and Mahallet. These cases are being investigated by the two Commissions sitting at Alexandria and Tantah, and their conclusions are submitted to the court martial at Alexandria. All the proceedings are watched by British officers.

EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION)—DESPATCH OF THE EARL OF DUFFERIN.

Mr. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Lord Dufferin's Despatch of the 6th of February has been approved?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: On the 10th of February, as shown on page 37 of Egypt, No. 6, Her Majesty's Government approved the scheme for representative institutions, which is appended to the Despatch in question. Her Majesty's Government have also expressed their concurrence in the schemes for the re-organization of the constabulary and police. The other proposals are engaging the attention of Her Majesty's Government, and Lord Dufferin will be communicated with accordingly.

RUSSIA—CORONATION OF THE CZAR—EXPENSES OF THE SPECIAL EMBASSY.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can now state when the Estimate for the Expenses connected with the Coronation of the Czar will be presented to the House; whether it is intended to ask for an additional sum of money to that now set down in the Estimates for Her Majesty's Resident Ambassador at St. Petersburg; and, whether, if so, he will, in the Estimate which is to be presented to the House, distinguish between the amount asked for the Special Embassy on the occasion of the Coronation and that asked for Her Majesty's Resident Ambassador?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: An approximate Supplementary Estimate is being prepared, and will be laid on the Table as soon as possible. It will contain the information in detail which my hon. Friend desires.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—NEW EGYPTIAN LOAN.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, in the reforms which it is contemplated to carry out in Egypt under the auspices of Her Majesty's representative in that country, the principle that no tax can be imposed or levied without the consent of the taxpayers will be recognised; whether he has received any information respecting a contemplated new loan to be issued, in order to provide means to enable the Egyptian Government to pay for the cost of the British occupation of that Country, and to meet the compensations to be granted to those whose property was destroyed in Alexandria during the recent operations of War, and what is the amount to be borrowed for the former object; whether the taxation of the Egyptians will be permanently increased, without their consent, in order to meet the interest on this new loan; and, whether the means to meet this interest will be obtained by a reduction in the interest paid on existing loans?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Egyptian Government is prepared to adopt the Articles of the Charter annexed to Lord Dufferin's Report, by Article 59, of which no new tax can be established in Egypt without having been voted by the General Assembly. The amount of the loan to be issued for the purposes mentioned is estimated at £4,000,000—£3,000,000 to meet the indemnities, and £1,000,000 for the cost of the Army of Occupation and other charges. The Egyptian Government is not without hope that, by means of strict economy, and by including properties which now escape taxation, no permanent burden may be imposed on the Egyptian people to meet the interest on the loan. It is not intended to interfere with payments made in accordance with the provisions of the Law of Liquidation.

THE FISHERY BOARD, SCOTLAND—INQUIRY AS TO THE INJURIOUS EFFECTS OF TRAWLING.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he will suggest to the Scotch Fishery Board the propriety of instituting a public inquiry to ascertain whether the allegations by net and line fishermen, that trawling is prejudicial to spawning beds and the supply of fish, and causes great damage to nets and lines, are well founded; and, if so, to suggest a remedy?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): Sir, I am informed by the Fishery Board that they have issued a list of queries on the subject of trawling to the fishery officers and superintendents. The officers, numbering upwards of 30, are stationed over the whole fishery districts in Scotland, and are men of great experience, well qualified to form an opinion on the subject. As soon as their replies are received, the Board will be in a position to make a

Report. While an inquiry in this form is proceeding, from which I hope very useful results may be obtained, I do not think it necessary to suggest to the Board to hold a public inquiry.

DOMINION OF CANADA — REGULATIONS AS TO THE EMIGRATION OF PAUPER CHILDREN FROM ENGLAND.

MR. BROWN asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Government of Canada have made any regulations for the purpose of supervising pauper children emigrating from the country; whether the emigration of pauper children is to be allowed; and, whether he will lay upon the Table a Copy of the Regulations in question?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE, in reply, said, that the Government of Canada had informed the Colonial Office, and through that Department the Local Government Board, that they would be prepared to add to the duties of certain officials in the service the duty of looking after pauper children emigrated to the Dominion; but up to the present they had not made any regulations on the subject. He was to receive on Monday a large and important deputation, representing a considerable number of the Poor Law Boards of the country, on the subject; and until he had heard the facts they had to place before him he would not be in a position to pronounce an opinion on the subject of the hon. Member's second Question.

PUBLIC OFFICES SITE ACT, 1882—THE NEW BUILDINGS FOR THE ADMIRALTY AND THE WAR OFFICE.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the First Commissioner of Works, What steps he proposes to take in the course of the present year to give effect to the provisions of the Act of last year to provide new buildings for the Admiralty and the War Office?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I propose very shortly to invite a competition of architects for designs for the new Admiralty and War Office. It is certain, however, that the result of this competition will not be arrived at soon enough to enable us to commence the buildings during the present financial year. No Vote, therefore, will be asked for this purpose. The right hon. Gentleman will, however, have observed that we have asked for a Vote of £100,000 in the Estimates of this year toward the acquisition of the site.

ARMY—DESERTERS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

MR. A. M'ARTHUR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he has had any Correspondence with the General Commanding in South Africa as to the practicability of arresting and bringing to punishment the fifty or sixty deserters from the British Army who are now taking part in the disturbances in Southern Bechuanaland?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: There has not been any Correspondence with the General Officer Commanding in South Africa on the subject of the deserters taking part in the disturbances in Southern Bechuanaland; but with regard to the general question of deserters from the British Army in South Africa, the General Officer Commanding was authorized in 1881 to increase the reward for their apprehension.

ARMY—THE ROYAL ENGINEERS.

MR. GREER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is a fact that the approximate average service of the Senior Captains of the Cavalry and Infantry is sixteen years and six months, while that of the Senior Captains of Royal Engineers is twenty years; whether it is a fact that the Junior Majors of the Royal Engineers, who were commissioned in December 1862, have already been superseded by a total number of 388 officers of the Cavalry and Infantry, and that of the officers who joined those branches during the five years subsequent to December 1862, and who are still serving, no less than forty-six per cent. have passed over the heads of the Junior Majors Royal Engineers; whether he will state in what manner the Junior Majors Royal Engineers (superseded as shown in the above figures) will be enabled to recover such supersession, considering that they are subject to the general rules for compulsory retirement; and, whether he has yet come to any decision as to the advisability of accelerating the promotion in the junior ranks of the Royal Engineers; and, if so, whether he will communicate such decision?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: At present the average service of Majors in the Line on reaching that rank is, no doubt, less than that of Majors of the Royal Engineers; and, therefore, supersession of the latter has taken place. This is due to the fact that in 1881 the number of Lieutenant Colonels and Majors in the Line was doubled, so that officers half-way down the list of Captains became Majors. This quickened Line promotion at the moment; but it was a special act of re-organization which is not likely to be repeated; and the very fact of the Majors reaching that rank before the average age will tend to retard promotion later on. The five years' rule of retirement was only applied in the Royal Engineers in 1877, and Lieutenant Colonels did not begin to retire under that rule till last October. Thus abnormal causes have accelerated promotion in the Line; while in the Royal Engineers the retirement of Lieutenant Colonels has not yet had time to be appreciably felt in the lower ranks. On the other hand, the Royal Engineers have a far larger proportion of Lieutenant Colonels than any other arm of the Service; and the numbers have been so calculated as to reduce to a minimum the chance of any Major qualified for promotion having to retire. It is expected that the Majors of Engineers now superseded will, to a great extent, recover their supersession in the next rank; and, as the ranks in all arms are now organized with a special view to promotion, being, under normal circumstances, practically equal, I do not contemplate adopting any exceptional measures as regards the Royal Engineers unless greater necessity should arise than now appears.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—NURSING SISTERS.

Mr. GREER asked the Secretary of State for War, If he will consider the advisability of giving medals to all Her Majesty's Nursing Sisters who served in the late campaign, whether on duty at Gozo, Cyprus, or Egypt?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: As stated in my answer to the Question of the hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire (Dr. Farquharson) on the 12th of March, the grant of the medal is restricted to those who served in Egypt between the 16th of July and the 14th of September, 1882. I do not consider it advisable that the terms should be extended, or that any exception should be made.

STATE OF IRELAND—AGRARIAN CRIME IN SLIGO.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Irish Government have, during the Easter recess, as promised, considered whether, in view of the fact, exhibited by official Returns for the month of February last—namely, that no agrarian crime against the person, against property, or against the public peace, had been reported during the month from any district of the county Sligo, no further charge in respect of extra police will be made upon any district in that county; whether any decision, and, if so, what, has been come to upon the question; whether the propriety of withdrawing from the county Sligo the Special Resident Magistrate and his expensive staff will be taken into consideration; and, whether the Irish Government will consider the propriety of withdrawing from Sligo and other counties, similarly free from any grave exceptional crime, the proclamations under the Crime Prevention Act which render the ratepayers of those counties, or of any district therein, liable to extra police and special burdens upon the ground of "the existence or apprehension of crime and outrage?"

Mr. TREVELYAN: In accordance with the promise given by the Government, the position of the county of Sligo with regard to the additional Constabulary stationed was specially inquired into and considered during the Recess; and the decision arrived at was that the number of police could not, with safety to the peace of the districts concerned, be reduced at present. The position of the Special Resident Magistrate and his staff is under consideration, with a view to rearrangement. The question of revoking proclamations for additional police is one which is kept constantly in view; and no opportunity is lost of revoking such proclamations when it is believed that it can be done with safety. Eleven such revocations have occurred within the past two months.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—TRIAL OF PATRICK CONNOLLY.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he has been made aware that, at the recent Sligo Assizes, upon the trial of Patrick Connolly, charged with the murder of Thomas Gibbons, a vital deposition, made by the widow of the murdered man, and declaring her inability to identify the guilty parties, was not produced by the Crown solicitor, nor deposited in the Court; whether it only came to the knowledge of the learned Judge through the action of the prisoner's counsel; whether the learned Judge, Mr. Justice Barry, in his charge to the jury, made the following observations on the matter:—

> "He now came to another information, for the use of which he was obliged to do what he never was called upon to do before, and he had now some considerable experience. He was obliged to borrow the brief of the prisoner's counsel, in order to call their attention to a document of the most vital importance in that solemn inquiry . . . . The depositions of which he got copies were not in that court of Sligo at all, so far as he knew, and though counsel for the Crown were ignorant of the existence of that vital information until Mr. O'Malley opened it to cross-examine Bridget Gibbons. . . . It might be the result of accident, and he was sure he hoped it was, and that would be the tendency of his own belief, but it was to be regretted that when three men's lives were at stake from the official documents, every one of which ought to be in Court during the trial, and ought to be furnished to the Judge, that there should from that official depository have disappeared that remarkable information;"

whether any report has been made by Mr. Justice Barry of the circumstances which led him to use the language quoted; whether any notice has been taken, or will be taken, of the conduct of Mr. George Bolton, the Crown solicitor acting in the case; and, whether the depositions made against the accused, on the charges of murder and conspiracy to murder, which are to be tried in Dublin next week, will be deposited in court before the trials begin, and rendered available for the purposes of the defence?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER): I have been requested by my right hon. Friend to answer this Question. At the recent Sligo Assizes, on the trial of a man named Patrick Connolly, charged with murder, a very important deposition, which was to the effect stated in the Question, and which ought to have been on the file in Court, was not there, though the other depositions in the case were. It is not the fact that the matter only came to the Judge's knowledge through the action of the prisoner's counsel. On the contrary, the fact that the deposition had been made, its purport and effect, and the circumstance that it was missing, had been formally and officially communicated to the Judge before he entered the county of Sligo by the Crown Solicitor, Mr. Bolton. No Report, so far as I am aware, has been made by Mr. Justice Barry in reference to the matter. I believe there is no doubt that the language attributed to him in the Question was used by him; but I have the best reason for saying that he did not mean to convey any censure upon Mr. Bolton or the other representatives of the Crown in the case. The document never was seen by Mr. Bolton (although he had become aware of its existence), and never was in his possession. As a matter of fact, the prisoner's counsel at the trial had a compared copy of it, while the Crown Counsel had none; and the loss of the document was, in the opinion of the learned Judge, most detrimental to the case for the Crown, while it was of very material service to that of the prisoner. In justice to Mr. Bolton, I wish to add that a considerable time before the trial he informed me also of the loss of the deposition, and suggested that the magistrate who had taken it should be sent for from England to be present at the trial, that the prisoner's counsel might, if necessary, have the benefit of his testimony; and that, with my concurrence, this was done. I have made, and am still prosecuting, careful inquiry into the matter, and I have reason to believe that the loss of the document was accidental. At any rate, I cannot conceive that anyone connected with the Crown would have been party to the removal of the deposition. It was sworn in presence of the prisoners, and the fact that it was made was perfectly well known to their advisers. There is no part of Mr. Bolton's conduct in reference to the imputation conveyed by the Question which, in my judgment, calls for any notice on the part of the Government. As to the second portion of the hon. Member's Question, which refers to the coming trials in Dublin, I have only to say that those cases will be conducted on the official responsibility of the Advisers of the Crown, and in the presence of the counsel for the prisoners, who will, no doubt, do their duty.

Mr. SEXTON: I beg to give Notice that at the earliest opportunity I shall call the attention of the House to the language of the learned Judge at Sligo, and to the bearing of the facts disclosed on the official position of Mr. George Bolton.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—THE BELLECK MALE NATIONAL SCHOOL.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, On what ground the payment of arrears of salary, for services rendered in the Belleck Male National School, has been withheld from the late teacher?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that the delay in the payment of the outstanding portion of salary rests between the late teacher and the manager of the school, the Rev. Mr. M'Kenna, the parish priest. A claim for salary due to a National school teacher must be certified by the manager as "just and proper;" and in this case the Rev. Mr. M'Kenna withheld his certificate, on the ground that the teacher had abandoned his school with giving notice, in direct and wilful violation of his formal agreement.

NAVY—NAVAL ENGINEERS.

Captain PRICE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If his attention has been called to an article in the "Times" of March 30th, upon the position and prospects of naval engineers; whether the facts therein stated are in the main correct—namely, that there is a "great and growing stagnation in promotion," so much so, that whereas previous to 1863 the average time served by chief engineers in the junior rank was eleven and a-quarter years, it is now eighteen years; that owing to this stagnation the regulations as to counting junior time for increase of pay and retirement, render it almost impossible for these officers to reach the higher scales, so that the number of chief engineers in receipt of more than seventeen shillings a day has fallen from fifty-five in 1877 to seventeen at the present day; and, that the recent increase of one shilling a day in the pay of engineers of over eight years' standing, is counterbalanced by a deduction of the same amount formerly allowed them towards mess expenses?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I cannot undertake to say whether all the facts stated in the article referred to by the hon. and gallant Member are correct; but I will confine my reply to the three distinct points to which his Question alludes. It is true that the average time served by chief engineers in the junior rank was considerably less in 1863 than it is now. Previously to that date large additions had been made to the list owing to the expansion of the steam navy, and thus promotion was rapid. Since the numbers of the several ranks have been fixed to meet the present requirements of the Service, the rate of promotion, being dependent upon vacancies, is necessarily slower than it was when the number of chief engineers was not limited and was on the increase. With regard to the second point, the figures quoted are, I believe, correct; but it cannot be said to be impossible for chief engineers to reach the higher rates of pay and retirement. Engineer officers have comparatively little time on half-pay, and an officer promoted after 18 years' service in the junior rank will have about 15 years in which to make up 11 years' service counting for full pay and retirement. As regards the mess allowance, it was only granted to officers who were, from circumstances, compulsorily placed in ward-room messes. It was not granted when officers joined those messes at their own option. These officers have no claim to this allowance, now that they are on the same footing as regards messing as other classes of naval officers of ward-room rank, none of whom receive it. The new messing arrangements have nothing to do with the increase of pay to engineers after nine years' service, which is given for length of service.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—DOCKYARD EMPLOYES.

Captain PRICE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is the case that dockyard employés who belonged to Volunteer Corps, and are by the War Office Regulations compelled to attend the general inspections on pain of being fined and losing the capitation grant, are obliged to forfeit half-a-day's pay to enable them to attend; if so, can some arrangement be made to obviate this loss?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The men employed in the Dockyards receive no pay when absent with leave or on account of sickness. But I am not aware that this Regulation interferes with their duty as Volunteers; because my impression is that drills take place in the evening, and inspections on Saturday afternoon, when the men are not at work.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, From whence the Egyptian Government has found money to pay for the expenses of British Troops, for the splendid ball and fêtes to be given this week, in honour of the Army of Occupation and the War in the Soudan; whether any decision has yet been come to as to the means of paying the indemnities so rapidly and liberally awarded by the Commission, 210 claims having it is stated been passed in one day; whether the Khedive has, either to the Ottoman Bank or to any other body, incurred a floating and pre-preferred debt; and, whether it is true that the English financial adviser has come to Europe to try to raise new permanent loans?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: With regard to the expenses of the British troops and the payment of the Indemnity Awards, I must refer my hon. Friend to the reply which I have just given to the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). Her Majesty's Government have no information with regard to the *fêtes* to be given by the Khedive. It is believed that His Highness will avail himself of the powers conferred by Article 37 of the Law of Liquidation, in order to procure from the Ottoman Bank an advance in current coin. It is not intended to interfere in any way with the provisions of that Law. The Financial Adviser of the Egyptian Government is now in Europe on business connected with the above and other financial questions.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked whether it was proposed to assign any part of the Revenue now devoted to the administration of Egypt as security for the new loan?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, that he had given a partial answer to that Question just now, and could not answer it without further Notice.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the noble Lord stated, on a previous occasion, that the additional loan of £4,000,000 would not result in any grievous increase of the burdens of the Egyptian taxpayers; and he wished to know whether the new property to be taxed included that of Europeans and foreigners, which had hitherto escaped taxation?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE requested that Notice should be given of the Question.

MADAGASCAR — TREATIES WITH FRANCE—THE YELLOW BOOK.

Sir HARRY VERNEY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will lay upon the Table the Treaties between the French Government and that of Madagascar, referred to in the French Yellow Book, Treaty of August 8th, 1868, that by which Tsinuharo in 1840 céda a la France tous ses droits sur l'Ankava; whether that so-called cession, made by Chiefs in rebellion against their Government, and kept secret for forty-two years, is recognized by Her Majesty's Government; and, whether the answers of the Madagascar Government to the statements and allegations in the French Yellow Book have been communicated to Her Majesty's Government; and, if they have, whether they will be laid upon the Table of the House.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Treaty of August 8, 1868, is published in volume 58 of the State Papers, which are in the Library of the House. There will be no objection to lay it on the Table, if desired by the House. The Treaty of 1840 or 1841 has not been communicated by the French Government, nor, so far as we are aware, has it been officially published in France. In view of their ignorance of what is passing on the subject between the Governments of France and Madagascar, Her Majesty's Government must maintain their reserve. No Note from the Madagascar Envoys, commenting on the French Yellow Book, has been communicated to Her Majesty's Government.

PUBLIC HEALTH—TYPHOID FEVER AT PLYMOUTH.

SIR HENRY PEEK asked the President of the Board of Trade, If his attention has been called to a further outbreak of typhoid fever amongst the emigrants waiting at the depôt at Plymouth for the refitting of the ship "Oxford;" whether the disease has arisen, as alleged, from overcrowding; and, whether any compensation has been made to the emigrants for the expenses they have incurred through the delay in the past, and for the further delay necessitated by the fresh outbreak of typhoid fever?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, he understood that, since the last report, typhoid fever had developed itself in the cases of two more emigrants, and he understood that the whole of the emigrants had left the depôt. An exhaustive inquiry had been held into the circumstances, at the instance of the Agent General for New Zealand; and he had been told that the result of the inquiry had been to show that the outbreak of typhoid fever was not in any way due to overcrowding. With regard to the last portion of the Question, he was told that 1*s.* 6*d.* per day was the statutory compensation to which these persons became entitled; but that an additional sum had, by the intervention of the Agent General for New Zealand, been accorded to them in this case.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—CUSTOMS DUES IN CORK.

MR. O'DONNELL asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If his attention has been drawn to the annual report of the Cork Commercial Building Society, published in the Cork papers of the 21st ult., and whether he is aware that the sum of "£112 11*s.* 4*d.* entry tax," therein mentioned as part of the income of the Company, is derived from moneys levied by the Custom House officers from the traders of Cork upon goods taken out of bond; whether he can inform the House how long this impost has been levied by Her Majesty's Customs for the benefit of the said Company; and, if it is his intention to take any steps in reference to the matter?

MR. COURTNEY: I have seen the copy of *The Cork Examiner* which the hon. Member sent to my right hon. Friend. As nothing was known of the matter in London, the collector at Cork has been communicated with by telegraph. It appears from his telegram that the amount in question is one-half of the proceeds of a special tax of 1*s.* on each entry in the Port of Cork, with certain exceptions, imposed by an Act of 1814. The object of that Act was to provide funds for commercial improvements within the City and Port of Cork; and one-half of the tax is accordingly paid to this Company, and the other to the Harbour Commissioners of Cork for the maintenance and improvement of the harbour works.

INDIA (NATIVE STATES)—JUNAGHUR—THE MAIYAS.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If it is true that the tax which the Maiyas of Junaghur were slaughtered for refusing to pay had been previously referred to the consideration of the Secretary of State for India; whether it is true that the Secretary of State approved of the imposition of the tax; whether the said tax was an imposition instead of the Military service which the Maiyas were bound and willing to pay to the Rajahs of Junaghur; whether it is true that the Maiyas had always refused to pay a money tax instead of Military service, and denied the right of the Government to change the ancient condition of their tenures without their consent; whether the Secretary of State for India authorised the exaction of the tax by force; and, whether he can state under what authority the conditions of tenure of the lands of the Maiyas were changed without their consent?

MR. J. K. CROSS: It is scarcely possible, within the compass of an answer to a Question, to give an intelligible account of the proceedings, dating from 1866, which have ended in the recent affray. It is, however, a fact that, in 1876, the question of the terms on which the Maiyas were entitled to hold their lands having come before the Secretary of State in Council, it was suggested to the Bombay Government as worthy of consideration whether, in accordance with a judicial decision given by a political officer of local experience in 1867, a moderate annual money payment should not be substituted for the

Police Service, which was, undoubtedly, a condition of tenure, but which, owing to the altered circumstances of Kattywar, could not be enforced. The Political Agent in Kattywar and the Bombay Government agreed in thinking that there were sound reasons for the adoption of the course suggested, which was accordingly sanctioned by the Secretary of State in Council, in December, 1876, since when no Correspondence has passed. In answer to a Question from the hon. and learned Member for Hereford (Mr. R. T. Reid) about this attack on the Maiyas, I stated that the Report ordered by Government had not yet been received. When it comes I shall be able to give further information.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—SECTION 14—SEARCHES.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What official information he can give with regard to the proceedings detailed in the following statement, made by Mr. Matthew Harris, a Member of the Town Commission of Ballinasloe :—

> "At ten this morning (Tuesday, 3rd inst.) Sub-Inspector Joyce, with twelve men, searched my papers. Finding them too numerous to read they packed them into a basket and a bag, and brought them with them. The papers consisted of public and private letters, invoices, memorandum books, diaries, and some manuscripts on public matters. Does the law allow all letters to be removed for examination;"

whether this proceeding took place under the 14th section of the Crime Prevention Act, which enables the police, under warrant from the Lord Lieutenant, in a proclaimed district, "to search for and seize" any papers, documents, &c.

> "suspected to be used or to be intended to be used for the purpose of or in connexion with any secret society or secret association existing for criminal purposes."

Which papers, documents, &c. are declared when seized to be forfeited to Her Majesty; whether Sub-Inspector Joyce was authorised to pack up and take away Mr. Harris's private and public papers, without having taken steps to ascertain their character; and, whether these papers, the property of Mr. Harris, removed before their nature had been ascertained, are now forfeited to Her Majesty?

MR. TREVELYAN: The proceedings referred to took place under the 14th section of the Prevention of Crime Act. The only object the Sub-Inspector had in removing the papers instead of examining them on the spot was to meet Mr. Harris's convenience, who would otherwise have had to put up with the presence of the police in his house for some days while examining so large a mass of papers. Documents have been found among them which it is believed have an important bearing in connection with the murder case now pending; and it was because those documents were believed to be there that these papers were seized. All papers which were not forfeited under the provisions of the Act would, as a matter of course, be returned to Mr. Harris as soon as possible.

MR. O'KELLY: Would the right hon. Gentleman inform us what guarantee there is that the police did not put these documents there?

POOR LAW ELECTIONS (IRELAND).

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the fact has been reported to him that immediately before the recent election of a guardian of the poor for the electoral division of Temple, union of Tubbercurry, county Sligo, the estate-bailiff on the property of the local landlord, Mr. Alexander Perceval, Justice of the Peace, Deputy Lieutenant, and High Sheriff of the county, sent round to the tenants of that gentleman and delivered to each of them the following message, "The Master ordered you to vote for Mr. Alexander;" whether, on the day after the election in question, processes for rent, including the hanging-gale, were served on those tenants of Mr. Alexander Perceval who had voted for the popular candidate in opposition to Mr. Perceval's nominee; whether the course of conduct detailed amounts to an offence against section 7 of the Crime Prevention Act, which declares intimidation or incitement with a view to cause any person to do what he has a legal right to abstain from doing—namely, to vote for any particular candidate at an election—to be an offence against the Act; whether the Government intend to take notice of such conduct on the part of a gentleman, who is not only a justice of the peace, but the principal officer of the law in the county; and, whether a new election will be ordered for the electoral division of Temple?

Mr. TOTTENHAM said, that perhaps it might be convenient for the Chief Secretary to answer at the same time the Question of which he had given him Notice. It was, If his attention has been called to the practice adopted by the Roman Catholic Clergy in many districts of Ireland, of going round to the houses of voters, after the voting papers for the election of Poor Law Guardians have been distributed by the constabulary, and insisted on seeing the papers filled up and signed in their presence; and if he is aware that this course was followed in the electoral division of Killargue Union of Manor Hamilton, county Leitrim, at the recent elections; if he is also aware that bands of armed men have gone round the houses of many voters both in that, and other counties at night, with the view of intimidating voters from supporting any but the popular or Land League candidates; and, what steps it is intended to take where these practices are known to have prevailed?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have had but very short Notice of one of these Questions, and very much shorter Notice of the other, and so I have not had much time to make inquiry into the matters. With regard to the Question of the hon. Member for Sligo, I telegraphed to the police; and from the reply received it appears that the facts are not, perhaps, altogether as they are described in the Question. I am informed by the police that the estate bailiff told the tenants that it was Mr. Perceval's desire that they should vote for Mr. Alexander; and I am bound to say, at the same time, that we got from Mr. Perceval a telegram, which he sent, no doubt, on seeing the Question in the papers, in which he says he did not desire his bailiff to go and give the injunction to the tenants stated; and I leave it to the hon. Member to reconcile, if he can, the statements of the police and Mr. Perceval. Mr. Perceval is not now High Sheriff. [Mr. Sexton: He was last year.] The processes for rent had been served on nearly all the tenants on the estate, including some of those who voted according to Mr. Perceval's wish, before the election took place; and it is not believed by the police that the election had anything to do with the service of these processes. From the information at present before them, the Government do not consider the case one in which a prosecution ought to be directed under the Prevention of Crime Act. The Government has no power to annul an election. With regard to the Question of the hon. Member (Mr. Tottenham), I have not obtained any information about these alleged practices; but I may say that if such things as armed bands going about at night to intimidate voters occur, those who are engaged in them will bring themselves within the Prevention of Crime Act. With regard to the practices alleged in the first part of the Question, I have no information on the matter; and it was to prevent such practices as those referred to in both Questions being indulged in by any party whatever that the Government intend bringing in a Bill to make the election of Guardians of the Poor take place by ballot.

Mr. SEXTON: Would the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to consider the propriety of prosecuting the estate bailiff?

[No reply was given.]

ARMY ACT, 1881—MAINTENANCE OF SOLDIERS' WIVES.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Secretary of State for War, In how many cases last year the Secretary of State for War made orders, in virtue of sub-section 2, section 145, of the Army Act, 1881, to devote a portion of the pay of a non-commissioned officer or soldier of the Regular Forces towards the maintenance of his wife or child; what was the total amount paid out under those orders during the year; and, what was the total amount paid out under similar orders in each year since 1873?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Under the sub-section referred to 840 orders were made last year by the Secretary of State for stoppages of pay towards the maintenance of wives and children of soldiers. These were exclusive of stoppages voluntarily submitted to and made by order of officers commanding regiments. The total amount paid under these orders cannot be stated without reference to all regiments and corps at home and abroad, as the transaction takes place between the regiment and the woman concerned.

SPAIN—THE STEAMSHIPS "LEON XIII." AND "TANGIER."—THE PAPERS.

DR. CAMERON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, When the Papers promised respecting the cases of the steamships "Leon XIII." and "Tangier" will be presented to Parliament?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Papers have been referred to Her Majesty's Minister at Madrid, and I hope that they will be returned in time to be in the hands of Members in the course of next week.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE PHŒNIX PARK MURDERS.

MR. LALOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it be true, as stated in the "Observer" of Sunday last—

> "That a number of witnesses who will be produced for the defence of the prisoners about to be tried for the Phœnix Park murders have been examined by Mr. Curran, with the view of rebutting their evidence, if necessary;"

if true, is such a course usual against prisoners about to be tried for their lives; and, what explanation can be given for the examination of witnesses for the defence by an agent of the Government before the trial?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, Mr. Curran does not know that any of the persons examined by him will be produced as witnesses for the defence. He has examined every person he could hear of, whether in Ireland or England, who, in his opinion, could throw any light on the case, or could give an account of, or information as to, the movements of the prisoners. At the time Mr. Curran summoned the witnesses he had no reason to suppose that they would be produced for the defence; and, therefore, certainly he did not examine them with the view of rebutting their evidence.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I would wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether a record has been taken of the evidence given before Mr. Curran in connection with this case; and if the prisoners who gave that evidence are examined as witnesses, will the Crown consent to have their original depositions taken before Mr. Curran produced at the trial, with the view of being able to compare the evidence given by those witnesses at different periods?

MR. TREVELYAN: That is a Question that I cannot answer off-hand. It is a Question of great importance, and it is necessary to consider it; but it is certain that each case will have to be decided on its own merits, for the circumstances differ in almost all the cases.

MR. LALOR asked whether Mr. Curran now had any reason to suppose that some of the persons examined by him will be examined as witnesses for the defence?

MR. TREVELYAN: Mr. Curran is not aware. As I said before, Mr. Curran has kept himself extremely clear from all the circumstances connected with the subsequent trial. He has devoted his inquiry to his own special business, which was to collect the preliminary information.

MR. O'KELLY: Are we to understand that the evidence given before Mr. Curran will only be produced when it is satisfactory to the Crown, and that it will not be produced when it is in favour of the prisoner? That is the effect of the Chief Secretary's answer.

[No reply was given.]

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Mr. J. A. Scott, solicitor, Gorey, and Mr. Dodd, solicitor, Wicklow, acting as the legal advisers of candidates at the election of Poor Law Guardians for the Carnew division of the Shillelagh Union, were refused admittance to the counting of votes by the returning officer, on the ground that—

> "He had no power under the direction of the Board of Guardians to admit any person except the candidates and their proposers;"

whether the brother of the returning officer in question was a successful candidate in the Carnew division; whether Mr. Swan, a Conservative Guardian, was permitted to be present at the counting of votes in other divisions besides the division for which he was elected; and, whether the Board of Guardians or the returning officer have any power to order the exclusion of the legal advisers of candidates?

MR. TREVELYAN: I only received Notice of this Question yesterday, and at once directed the Local Government Board to make the local inquiries necessary to enable me to answer it. They have done so; but sufficient time has not elapsed for the replies to come to hand.

IRELAND—THE CONSTABULARY AND THE IRISH NATIONAL LEAGUE.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Royal Irish Constabulary have been required to fill up returns specifying the names of the principal movers and organizers of each branch of the Irish National League; how many members are enrolled; how the subscriptions come in and the amount of them; the character of the persons mentioned and whether they were arrested under the Peace Preservation Act; whether persons are enrolled and subscription paid voluntarily or by intimidation; and if the provisions of the Crimes Act are put in force where intimidation is used; and, whether the Irish National League has been declared an illegal organization; and, if not, whether the inquisitorial proceedings necessary for the filling-up of such return have the approval of Her Majesty's Government?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Irish National League has not been declared an illegal organization. No steps have been taken by the Constabulary with regard to it which have not the approval of Her Majesty's Government. I must, however, respectfully decline, in this or any other matter, to announce the nature of the confidential instructions to the police.

SPEECH OF MR. CHAMBERLAIN AT BIRMINGHAM.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, who had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask the President of the Board of Trade, If he is correctly reported to have used, in a speech at Birmingham on March 29th, the following expressions with regard to the Bankruptcy and other Bills now before this House, and the action of the Conservative party:—

> "I will not whisper it" (i.e. a charge of obstruction against the Conservatives), "I will say it upon the house tops. Why it is the common talk of the lobbies of the House of Commons that the Conservatives have determined that the Government shall not get through their legislative programme. The Government have had only one day out of 25" (this Session) "and that day it passed the second reading of the Bankruptcy Bill. The other 24 days were either wholly taken up with attacks upon the Government, or with the necessary and formal business of getting Supply, or with discussion on the Bills or Motions of private Members;"

and, if so, whether, in view of the fact that the debate on the Queen's Speech, embracing the whole programme of Government policy business for the Session, and such important questions as the administration of Ireland, the Kilmainham transaction, Irish distress, the relations of Great Britain with Egypt and other Powers, and the affairs of South Africa, lasted eleven days, and was practically Government business, and, in view of the fact that Supply is Government business, he can produce any other proof of his charge of "obstruction" against the Conservative party than that the Bankruptcy Bill passed its Second Reading in a single night; and, whether he is now prepared to withdraw the words above quoted? said, that as the Speaker had ruled that the Question could not be put, he wished to give Notice that, on going into Committee of Supply, he would call attention to the reckless and unjustifiable language used by the President of the Board of Trade on the 29th of March, and on other occasions.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: I rise to Order. I wish to know if it is in accordance with the Rules of the House for an hon. Member to put a Notice upon the Paper of his intention to charge another Member with reckless and unjustifiable conduct?

Mr. SPEAKER: I can see no reason for interposing. I understood the hon. Member for Eye to say that he intended to make a Motion upon the subject. [Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett: Yes.] If it were the intention of the hon. Member simply to call the attention of the House to the conduct of another Member, without asking for the judgment of the House upon it, he would, undoubtedly, be out of Order.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I propose to call attention to the use by the President of the Board of Trade of language of the character I have mentioned, and to move a Resolution upon it.

FISHERIES (EAST COAST)—LOSS OF FISHING SMACKS.

MR. NORWOOD asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he will consider the advisability of ordering an inquiry into the circumstances attending the very serious and unprecedented loss of life and property sustained by the smacks engaged in the deep sea fishery on the East Coast, and especially by those belonging to the Humber Ports, during the gales of last month?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, he had given instructions for the holding of an inquiry into the circumstances before the Stipendiary Magistrate of Hull, and it would be shortly set on foot.

EGYPT—ARABI PASHA.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the engagement entered into by Arabi Pasha and his companions (which is given in Lord Dufferin's Despatch of December 25th 1883), was made to the Egyptian Government or to the English Government?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: In reply to this Question, I may state that the document signed by Arabi and his companions, and printed in the Blue Book (Egypt, No. 5), was given to Lord Dufferin, who transmitted the original to the Foreign Office, and sent a certified copy to the Egyptian Government. It appears from Cherif Pasha's Note to Lord Dufferin, which appears at page 44 of the same Blue Book, that the Government referred to in the Declaration was the Egyptian Government.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON subsequently asked whether Arabi was under any obligation to the English Government?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he had given an answer to that Question the other day, and he adhered to that answer.

STAMP DUTIES—MARINE INSURANCE.

MR. ANDERSON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it be the fact that numerous memorials have been received from the Committee of Lloyds' and others from time to time, during the last ten years, praying for reduction or repeal of the Stamp Duty on policies of marine insurance; if these have been frequently referred to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue for their opinion; and, if they have reported in favour of reduction or repeal?

MR. COURTNEY: It is the fact that this question has been steadily pressed on the attention of the Government by the Committee of Lloyds' and other Bodies, and Memorials to that effect have been referred in the usual manner to the Board of Inland Revenue. But as the responsibility for changes of taxation rests with the Government, and not with the Board, it would be impossible that the recommendations of the latter should be published.

PARLIAMENT — COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE (TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN).

MR. RAIKES asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is now prepared to state to the House what steps Her Majesty's Government will recommend for the appointment of Assistant Chairmen of the Committee of the Whole House?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, that the Government had been considering this matter, and he hoped soon to be able to lay on the Table of the House a Resolution embodying the views of the Government.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL— POLICY OF HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.

MR. ONSLOW asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he would state to the House, before the resumption of the Debate on the affairs of the Transvaal State, what is the nature of the remonstrance recently addressed to the Transvaal State, in pursuance of the statement made by the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, that remonstrances have been made by Her Majesty's Government regarding the treatment of the Natives bordering on the Transvaal, and his assurance that, as long as the Convention remained in force, these remonstrances would continue to be made; and, what is the policy of the Government in the case of these remonstrances being ineffectual?

MR. GLADSTONE: My hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies informs me—and it is in accordance with my own recollection — that when he referred to the remonstrance addressed to the Transvaal Government he did not speak of any separate or recent transaction; but that he referred to a series of Papers to which reference could be made by the hon. Gentleman himself or by any other person. No communication has been made to the Transvaal Government since the receipt of Mr. Rutherford's Report, printed at page 38 of the Blue Book. It is understood that Dr. Jorissen, who is the Law Officer of the Transvaal Government, is now in London, and it is anticipated that he will desire to give some explanation in reference to recent transactions; and the Government, therefore, do not propose to enter upon the subject in writing until an opportunity for such an explanation shall have arisen.

MR. ONSLOW observed, that it would be in the recollection of many hon. Members that the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies said that remonstrances had been made, and would be made, as long as the Convention should continue in force. It had also been stated in "another place" that remonstrances would be made on this subject. He wished to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman had seen these two statements; and whether the Government were about to make any further remonstrances than they had made up to the present time?

MR. GLADSTONE: What has been stated by the hon. Member varies substantially from what I heard on the part of my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State. My hon. Friend referred to a series of proceedings which could be renewed from time to time. As I have already stated, in consequence of the presence of the Law Officer of the Transvaal Government in London at this time, an opportunity will be given him of representing the views of his Government before Her Majesty's Government proceed to embody their views in any written communication.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The right hon. Gentleman states that the Government do not propose to address a remonstrance until this Representative of the Boer Government has made some communication. I wish to know whether the Government intend to leave the initiative to him?

MR. GLADSTONE: I did not say that we should make no communication until this gentleman had communicated with us. My words were, "until he had had an opportunity of making a communication."

LORD JOHN MANNERS asked if the arrival of the Law Officer had been intimated to Her Majesty's Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: I understand he has arrived. Any notification will be made to the Colonial Department, and, as a matter of course, will not come under my notice.

MR. ONSLOW: The right hon. Gentleman proposes that the debate on the Transvaal shall be resumed to-morrow week. Will he give us any fresh information before that debates comes on?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes.

AFFAIRS OF SCOTLAND—PARLIAMENTARY MANAGEMENT.

MR. DALRYMPLE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, in view of the consideration of the question of the management of Scotch affairs, as to which he has lately received and acknowledged memorials and recommendations, Whether any opportunity will be given to the House of Commons of expressing an opinion upon the subject before a decision is taken upon it?

MR. GLADSTONE: The best answer I can give to this Question is to say that I hope shortly to be in a condition to make some communication to the House on this matter.

MR. DALRYMPLE: Will any opportunity be given for calling attention to the matter?

MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. Gentleman, when he hears any communication I have to make, will be able to exercise his own discretion as to whether there is any need for discussion.

EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION) — DESPATCH OF THE EARL OF DUFFERIN—THE REFORMS.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he can state what steps, if any, have been taken by the Government of the Khedive in conjunction with Her Majesty's Representatives in Egypt to carry out the reforms in that Country submitted to the Foreign Office by Lord Dufferin; if not, what measures Her Majesty's Government propose to take with the view of causing such reforms to be established;

and, whether Her Majesty's Government intend to withdraw the Army of Occupation in Egypt before the institutions projected by Lord Dufferin are carried out and in operation?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that, generally, he must say, he did not think that this Government had any reason to complain of the steps taken on the part of the Egyptian Government in the prosecution of the measures recommended by Lord Dufferin; and he would also say that he had heard from Lord Dufferin that the Egyptian Government was at present actively concerning itself with two questions, which Her Majesty's Government considered of great importance—the one, the alleviation of the pressure of debt upon the Fellaheen; and the other, the sale of the Domain Lands. With respect to the latter part of the Question, he did not think he could do otherwise than refer the hon. Member to the previous statement made in the House, in which it appeared to him that the House apprehended with great clearness the general position of Her Majesty's Government.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, that Lord Dufferin had suggested the institution of certain Councils for Egypt. As these Councils could not be brought into operation immediately, except under the protection of the English Army, he wished to ask whether the English Army would be withdrawn before they were established?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, it would not be convenient, nor according to usage, that he should enter upon any explanation, especially as to this or that particular measure, and the time that the English Government could undertake to withdraw its Army. He had stated in general, and he thought intelligible, terms, that we had a work to perform, and that we would not be justified in withdrawing until that work was so far performed as to be, in the judgment of the Government, reasonably secured. But he thought the hon. Member would not care to press the matter.

LAW AND POLICE—SEIZURE OF EXPLOSIVES—LEGISLATION.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can give the House any information with regard to the report in circulation that there has been a seizure of a large quantity of explosive material, and the arrest of persons in London to-day?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Yes, Sir. At 1 o'clock this morning a man was arrested in a house in London, and found to be in possession of a box which, I am informed, contained $1\frac{3}{4}$ cwt. of liquid, which was contained in india-rubber bags. These were immediately sent to Woolwich, and the Report is that the liquid is a highly explosive compound, believed to be nitro-glycerine. This man, who has been arrested, came from Birmingham. [*Opposition laughter.*] This is not a laughing matter. There has also been discovered a manufactory on a large scale, apparently of explosive material. A second arrest has been made this afternoon of another person, seen to be in the company of the former. He also had a very large quantity of material—the exact amount of which I cannot specify—apparently of the same character as that first seized. There has been arrested with the second man another man found in his company. He had a large sum of money upon him, a considerable portion of which is reported to be in American bank notes. These are the circumstances of the arrests. There have been three men taken into custody in London, and one man connected with the manufacture of these explosives is in custody in Birmingham.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH: Is the right hon. and learned Gentleman satisfied with the state of the law with regard to the possession of explosives, and does he contemplate any legislation on the subject?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: No, Sir; I am not at all satisfied with the state of the law on the subject. In my opinion, it requires very early amendment.

IRELAND—DRAINAGE OF THE RIVER BARROW.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the report of Dr. Burke, to the Local Government Board in Ireland, with reference to the sanitary condition of Mountmellick, to the following effect, viz.:—

> "That he entertains no doubt that the inundations caused by the frequent flooding of the River Barrow must exercise an injurious influ-

ence upon the health and general sanitary condition of the inhabitants residing permanently in the towns of Mountmellick and Portarlington, and particularly the latter. The Board learn that the main sewers, as well as those from private dwellings, which empty their contents into the river, become blocked up at their mouths during the flooded periods, and that sewage is driven back into the houses, and, in some instances, into the wells, the waters of which, otherwise pure, become thus polluted, and quite unfit for use. Dr. Burke observes that upon the subsidence of the waters of the river after these inundations, large quantities of vegetable matter are deposited and strewed along the banks, as well as in the gardens and dykes contiguous thereto, and that the malaria and evaporation arising, as such matter becomes decomposed and decayed, must tend to generate intermittent and enteric fevers, besides acute catarrhal and rheumatic affections among the inhabitants, more especially should they or any of them be predisposed to such affections, or should any epidemic prevail;"

and, whether the Government propose to take any, and, if so, what, steps promptly to deal with the matter?

MR. TREVELYAN: The question of the Barrow drainage has been for some time under consideration. It is not one in which the Irish Government, as a Department, has any direct control; but they have done all in their power to aid those interested in advancing it. The next step must be taken by the local proprietors interested in the scheme.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

WAYS AND MEANS — FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Sir Arthur Otway, the Statement which I am about to make to the Committee will not be so interesting as those which have been made on several occasions recently, and for two reasons. In the first place, in the Budget of last year, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister made no changes in taxation—at least, he proposed one in the first instance, but it was not carried out—and, therefore, I have nothing to report to the Committee as to the effect of recent fiscal alterations. In the second place, I have held my present Office for so short a time—only for a few weeks—that I do not think I should be justified in proposing to Parliament any considerable changes of taxation. I believe there is no greater mistake than proposing great alterations, unless after the most full study of the question and complete conviction on the part of the proposer that his recommendations are thoroughly and in all respects satisfactory. Therefore, I shall only endeavour, on the present occasion, to put very simply and plainly before the House matters of fact, concluding with such arrangements for the current year as it seems to me I can safely propose to Parliament.

I will, in the first instance, deal with the Revenue of the year 1882-3, which has just come to an end; and, as to it, there are three comparisons which I have to make. I have to compare it with the original Estimate made by my right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone) in the month of April last; with the Estimate made in the month of July, when the Vote of Credit for the Egyptian Expedition was taken; and also with the Estimate made in the month of February last before I proposed to the House the additional Supplementary Estimates for the Egyptian Expedition, when also the Supplementary Civil Service Estimates were brought forward. The original Estimate made by my right hon. Friend was that the Revenue of 1882-3 would amount to £84,935,000, exclusive of £247,000 which he proposed to raise by an increase of the Carriage Tax. My right hon. Friend added in July £2,262,000 to his original Estimate on account of the additional 1½*d.* Income Tax; but he said, on the 24th of that month—

> "Some gain has been made upon the Estimates enabling me to make the highway grant without asking the House to disturb the carriage tax."—(3 *Hansard*, [272] 1575.)

And in February last my anticipation was that there would be a further improvement in the Revenue beyond the July calculation to the extent of from £500,000 to £750,000. I am happy to say that on that occasion I underrated the improvement which has actually taken place. Those who have watched from week to week the Revenue Returns will have seen that during the last six or seven weeks there has been a very rapid increase in the amount of Revenue received into the Exchequer. The result of the whole matter is this—the total Revenue for 1882-3 has been £89,004,000, It exceeds the Budget Estimate by £4,069,000. It exceeds the July Estimate, when the additional 1½*d.* Income Tax was imposed, by about £1,800,000. And it exceeds my highest Estimate in February last by about £750,000.

And I will now give one or two of the principal heads of Revenue. I will compare, in the first instance, the receipts from Customs and Excise, and I take them together, for reasons which I will give in a few minutes. First of all, I will compare the receipts of 1881-2 with the Estimates for 1882-3. The receipts for 1881-2 were £46,527,000, divided between Customs, £19,287,000, and Excise, £27,240,000. The Estimate in February last for 1882-3 was £19,300,000 for Customs, and £27,230,000 for Excise, or, in all, £46,530,000. The actual receipts of the year have been £19,657,000 for Customs, and £26,930,000 for Excise, making together £46,587,000. So that the receipts of 1881-2, the Estimates of 1882-3, and the receipts of 1882-3, are almost the same; the extreme difference between the highest and lowest being only £60,000. I combine these two items of Customs and Excise, on account of the almost impossibility of arriving at any reasonable computation as to the division of the Spirit Duty between the two Departments. The spirit consumption may be estimated pretty accurately; but it is impossible to anticipate with confidence into which Department the Revenue itself will fall, because there is now an extreme competition between British spirits and cheap foreign spirits, coming, for the most part, from the North of Europe; the former feeding the Excise, and the latter the Customs Revenue.

I should like, while on this subject, to say a few words as to the present rate of consumption of sprits, and I may add of wine, in the United Kingdom. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister gave last year to the House a very interesting account of the rise and fall of the Spirit Duty since 1867; but I propose to add to the valuable figures which he then gave one comparison which I think may be of interest to the Committee. I will compare the Spirit and Wine Duties received in the financial year 1875-6, when the consumption was at its highest, with the amount of those duties received last year, having regard to the increase of population. The Spirit and Wine Duties produced in 1875-6 as nearly as possible £23,000,000; and if you add to that 8 per cent, for the increase of the population since 1875-6, or £1,840,000, the Committee will see that had spirits and wines been consumed last year at the same rate as in 1875-6, the total Revenue from them would have been £24,840,000. But the actual Revenue from spirits and wine in 1882-3 was only £19,840,000; so that, allowing for the increase of population, the consumption of wines and spirits has fallen off to such an extent as to be represented by a reduction of Revenue to the extent of £5,000,000 sterling. That, as the Committee knows, represents more than 2½*d.* in the pound of Income Tax. If you include beer, the calculation is not quite so easy, because the amount which would have been received under the Malt Tax is not identical with the amount received under the present duty. The decrease in consumption of beer is, however, large, and it may be generally said that the fall-off in the consumption of fermented and spirituous liquors in this country since 1875-6 represents almost 3*d.* in the pound of Income Tax. Now, Sir, as to this great fall in the consumption of fermented and spirituous liquors, and particularly in the consumption of spirits, I should like to refer for a moment to a very interesting statement made by my right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) in introducing the Budget in 1874. My right hon. Friend rarely prophesies, unless he knows; but on this occasion he did make a very interesting prophecy to the House. It was in the heyday of the Spirit Duty, and I am not surprised that the prophecy was hazarded. He said—

> "I would refer, as one main source of possible addition to the Revenue, to the vast increase in the consumption of spirits. . . . It may be said that the time may come when a check will come; . . . . but I ask, under what circumstances would it be expected that the consumption of spirits in this country would fall off to such an extent as seriously to injure the Revenue? It must be from one or two causes—either from some general failure of the consuming power of the people . . . . the will remaining as it was—or from some great change in the habits of the people. . . . If it were the former, it would tell upon all the sources of Revenue, just as well as upon that derived from spirits. . . . If the latter, the wealth such a change would bring to the nation would utterly throw into the shade the Revenue from spirits . . . . and the Exchequer would

not suffer from the losses it might sustain in that direction."—(3 *Hansard*, [218] 665-6.)

As a matter of fact, we have neither of these results. As to the first, the drink revenue stands alone in the heavy fall that has taken place. Although other items of Revenue have been for some years sluggish, there has been no general failure of the consuming power of the people. As to the second hypothesis, having looked well through the Revenue, as well as the Expenditure, I cannot find that the Exchequer has yet received any benefit elsewhere to make up for the great fall in the Revenue from spirits. Now, Sir, I am bound to say also that, personally, I do not regret this in the least. It is generally supposed that a Chancellor of the Exchequer should take no interest in sobriety, but only in Revenue—

> "Quærenda pecunia primium,
> Virtus post nummos;"

but I do not share that opinion. Personally, I rejoice greatly at the spread of temperance in this country, even if it makes Budgets more difficult, and contracts our field of beneficial expenditure.

I pass now from spirits and wine to beer. The actual Revenue in 1881-2 from beer was £8,531,000; the estimated Revenue for 1882-3 was £8,550,000; and the actual receipt in 1882-3 was only £8,400,000. This fall, I am satisfied, is due to what is known in the trade as the "hop famine," which has been universal, not only in this country, but all over the Continent. The price of hops has risen from an average of £6 10*s*. per cwt. in 1881, and £6 11*s*. in 1882, to no less than £22 13*s*. in 1883, and that is about the price at the present moment. This has greatly affected the brewing trade, and the amount of the Beer Duty. Of some other articles of consumption the account is more satisfactory. In the first place, there has been a steady rise in the Revenue from Tea since the year 1878-9, when the great fall in the amount of duty took place. In the year 1879-80 the Revenue from Tea was £3,700,000; in 1880-1 it was £3,870,000; in 1881-2 it was £3,970,000; and in the year which has just passed over it was £4,200,000. This is, I think, a thoroughly satisfactory increase, and it is one which, I hope, will be maintained. As to tobacco, the Revenue is little more than stationary, and does not call for any particular remark.

From Customs and Excise I pass to the Revenue from Stamps. In these Duties there has been a very remarkable increase, and that increase has chiefly taken place in what are known as the Death Duties — the Probate, Legacy, and Succession Duties. These receipts, in 1881-2, were £7,055,000. My right hon. Friend last year anticipated for the current year that there would be a less receipt, and the Estimate was reduced to £6,750,000. The actual receipt from the Death Duties has been £7,365,000—a most remarkable increase upon the year before, and a still more remarkable increase upon the Estimate. There are several causes for that increase, one or two of which I may give to the Committee. In the first instance, while several very large estates—one of them on which duty at the rate of 5 per cent was payable—fell in last year, the loss on the 1 per cent on lineals, now collected with the Probate Duty, was very much less than had been anticipated by the Inland Revenue Board. In the second place, there is now a much better administration of that branch of the Stamp Duties at Somerset House; and, in the third place, it happens that a payment which ought to have come in, I think, on the last day of March, 1882, as a matter of fact, only reached the Exchequer at the beginning of April, and that payment was no less than £120,000. As to the Income Tax, I find that the Estimate at 6½*d*. in the pound, made in July, was £11,662,000; whereas the actual receipt has been £11,900,000.

These are the only items of Tax Revenue as to which I need say anything at present. Passing to Non-Tax Revenue, the Post Office, the Committee will be glad to know, thoroughly retains its elasticity. The receipt for 1881-2 was £8,630,000; the Estimate for 1882-3 was £8,800,000; and the actual receipt in 1882-3 was no less than £9,010,000; and of this the Telegraph receipts show an increase of some £60,000 over the Estimate made last year. In the Miscellaneous Revenue there is also a considerable increase over the Estimate made by my right hon. Friend. That Estimate was £4,725,000; whereas the actual receipt has been £5,267,000, or an increase of £542,000 over the Estimate, and £255,000 over the receipt of 1881-2. The Miscellaneous Revenue consists of a very large number of small items, and this increase is spread over many of them. But there is one very large increase, the result of a change as to Military and Naval extra receipts, amounting to £280,000. The new system of deducting the extra receipts from Army and Navy expenditure, before ascertaining the amount of the Estimates to be proposed to Parliament, only took effect in the year 1882-3. In support of that change it was contended that, subject to the limitation proposed by the Public Accounts Committee, it would greatly strengthen the control of Parliament by limiting the power of a Department to spend more than Parliament had actually placed at its disposal. The accuracy of this contention, and the justice of the reasons which were then assigned as actuating the Public Accounts Committee to approve the change, are very well illustrated, I am happy to inform my hon. Friend the Member for Midhurst (Sir Henry Holland), in connection with this receipt. This £280,000 formed part of the entire extra receipt for these Services for 1881-2; and this remained unascertained at the end of the year 1881-2, and temporarily at the Department's disposal in addition to the grants. Nothing of the kind can recur in respect of any future year. Now, extra receipts form part of the grants to which the Departments are limited, inasmuch as they are deducted before the amount of the Vote is settled. Thus the power of the Departments to spend money beyond the Votes is entirely taken away. I have personally advocated this change for nearly 20 years; and already its benefits, as illustrated by what I have just said, cannot, I think, be doubted. And now, Sir, I will recapitulate the Revenue of 1882-3. I presume the Committee have the Paper which gives the items in their hands. The Tax Revenue for 1882-3 has amounted to £73,128,000, and the Non-Tax Revenue to £15,876,000, forming together the £89,004,000 I have already named to the Committee.

I pass to the Expenditure for the year 1882-3. The original Estimate of Expenditure, as given in the Budget Statement in April, 1882, was £84,630,000; besides £250,000, the proposed grant on account of highways. The Vote of Credit and the Supplementary Estimate on account of the operations in Egypt amounted to £3,896,000, including a small Vote for Civil Charges in connection with Egypt; and the two Supplementary Civil Estimates amounted to £217,000 in July, and £590,000 in February; giving a total estimated Expenditure of £89,583,000. In my Statement at the end of February, I said that I thought the savings would amount to about the Supplementary Civil Estimates which were then asked for from Parliament, and they have amounted to something more than those Estimates; in fact, to the sum of £677,000. As the Committee has not got the figures in detail of this Expenditure, it is my duty to place before them the actual amounts. The permanent charge for the Debt amounted to £29,004,000; the interest on Local Loans was £475,000; the interest on Exchequer Bonds (for the purchase of Suez Canal Shares) £200,000, and all the other Consolidated Fund Charges were £1,542,000. Thus the total charges on the Consolidated Fund amounted to £31,221,000. The Supply Service Expenditure was as follows:—For the Army, £15,502,000; for the Indian Home Charges, £1,100,000; for the Afghan War—part of the £5,000,000 settled in 1880 to be given to India—£500,000; the Navy Charge was £10,409,000; the charge for the War in Egypt, including the contribution to India, was £3,896,000; the charge for the Civil Services was £17,350,000; for the Customs and Inland Revenue, £2,870,000; for the Post Office, £3,828,000; for the Telegraph Service, £1,510,000; and for the Packet Services, £720,000. The total Expenditure, therefore, is £88,906,000, which, compared with the Revenue—namely, £89,004,000—gives a surplus for the year 1882-3 of £98,000.

I propose to postpone my review of this Expenditure in detail, until I deal with the estimated Expenditure of 1883-4, the present year. But there are one or two remarks on recent Expenditure which I think it may be interesting to the Committee that I should make now. The present Administration have had three years in which they have had to pay, not only for their own wars, but also much more largely for the wars of their Predecessors. The three last years of the late Government closed with deficits exceeding in each year £2,000,000, and amounting altogether to £7,770,000; whereas each of our years has closed with a surplus, the total amount of the surplus upon the three years being £1,380,000. I think the figures which I am about to give deserve consideration, and may be useful and instructive. We inherited, when we took Office, a debt for the Russian War preparations, and for operations in South Africa, which my right hon. Friend opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote) estimated on the 11th of March, 1880, at £8,100,000, but which actually amounted to £7,850,000. Of this my right hon. Friend had arranged to pay off a part by intercepting the operation of the New Sinking Fund—that is to say, by paying off so much less Debt. In our three years the amount so intercepted has been £1,650,000; but we have paid off in cash £3,100,000; so that, altogether, we have had to defray on this account £4,750,000. In February, 1880, the late Government estimated the cost of the Afghan War to India at £6,000,000, besides a large charge for Frontier Railways. The actual cost was £17,500,000, besides the charge for Frontier Railways. We determined to contribute £5,000,000 on account of this heavy charge upon India; and of this we have paid, up to the end of 1882-3, £3,500,000, having raised £2,000,000 of it by Terminable Annuities. We also, I may say, inherited the Transvaal War, and that cost us £2,600,000; and, adding together these three items, the actual debt which we inherited of £7,850,000, the contribution to India of £5,000,000, and the Transvaal War—our war inheritance has been £15,450,000. From that total large deduction has to be made. In the first instance, £2,000,000 of the grant to India are represented by, as I have said, a long Annuity; of the remaining £3,000,000, £1,500,000 remain to be paid; and the amount of the original debt of £7,850,000 not yet paid off is £3,100,000. These sums together amount to £6,600,000. There remains, therefore, of the inherited War Expenditure which we have paid out of taxation, £7,200,000, besides the £1,650,000 which has been charged on the New Sinking Fund, under the arrangement made by our Predecessors, and which has prevented us paying off Debt to that amount. To this we add the cost of our own war in Egypt, in round figures £3,900,000; so that we have paid out of taxes, altogether, £11,100,000; or, to be strictly accurate, £10,700,000, after deducting £400,000 repaid to us by South Africa. And we have no arrears whatever of the cost of our own wars. Let me put this in other words. Our Predecessors incurred an expenditure for war of £12,285,000; of this they charged on taxes £4,435,000, leaving us a legacy of £7,850,000. We have paid of this, out of Revenue, £3,100,000; there has been intercepted from money properly coming in to pay off Debt, £1,650,000; and we have had this further legacy of the Transvaal War—["No!"]—and the grant of £5,000,000 to India. In my humble opinion, the Transvaal War was a legacy from our Predecessors. ["No!"] In addition to that, we have paid the whole cost of the Egyptian War in the year of the war. We have, Sir, I think I may say, dared to pay our way, and much more than pay our way. We have gone to the taxpayer and asked him to pay the arrears of a War Expenditure of £11,100,000, or, after reducing the repayment from the Cape, of £10,700,000, of which £7,200,000, or £4,600,000, if the Transvaal expenses are excluded, was inherited from our Predecessors. They only paid off in three years £4,435,000, and they prospectively damaged their own Sinking Fund by charging upon it £550,000 a-year till 1885, which we should otherwise have applied to reduce the Debt.

And now, Sir, let me apply what I have just said to the finance of the year 1882-3. The ordinary Revenue of the year was £86,729,000; the special Income Tax of 1½*d.* for the war produced £2,275,000; making a total Revenue of £89,004,000. The ordinary Expenditure of the year was £83,990,000, as against £86,729,000 of ordinary Revenue. But we paid, in addition, for the South African and Afghan Wars before 1880, after allowing for the repayment of £400,000, no less than £1,020,000; and we have also paid the whole of our War Expenditure in Egypt—namely, £3,896,000. I hope the Committee will pardon me for dwelling on this subject; but it is important that the true figures should be clearly understood.

I believe that this is the right opportunity for giving the state of the Debt, and of the balances of the 31st day of March, 1883. On that day the Funded Debt stood at £712,697,000; the Terminable Annuities at £29,462,000; and the Unfunded Debt at £14,185,000; making together, on the 31st of March last, a total Debt of £756,344,000. The balances on that day were £6,973,000. Comparing these figures with those of 1882, I find that on the 31st March, 1882, the Funded Debt stood at £709,498,000; the capital of the Terminable Annuities at £35,540,000; and the Unfunded Debt at £18,008,000; making a total of £763,046,000, the balances at that date being £5,977,000. Looking at these figures alone, the apparent reduction of the Debt would be £7,700,000. It would, however, not be perfectly fair to take these figures alone, because our advances for local purposes have fallen short of the repayments to an extent of £600,000; and, therefore, the real reduction of the Debt since March, 1882, although apparently £7,700,000, has been only £7,100,000. That exhausts the figures that are usually given to the House with regard to the finance of the past year—that is to say, 1882-3.

I will now pass to the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for 1883-4, the year in which we now are. It is estimated that the permanent charge of Debt for the current year will be £28,954,000; the interest on Local Loans will be £525,000; that on the Suez Canal Bonds will be £200,000; and the other Consolidated Fund Charges in this year will be £1,640,000; making in all for such charges £31,319,000. The charge for the Army is taken at £15,607,000; the Home Charges, to be repaid by India, £1,230,000; the amount of the Afghan War Grant in Aid will be £500,000; and the charge for the Navy will be £10,757,000. The charge for the Egyptian Expedition will be practically nothing, some very small amount in respect of it being included in the Navy Estimates. The charge for the Civil Services will be £17,253,000. That for the collection of the Customs and the Inland Revenue is estimated at £2,775,000; that for the Post Office at £4,124,000; that for the Telegraph Service at £1,518,000; and that for the Packet Service at £706,000; making a total Estimate of Expenditure for the year of £85,789,000, or less than the Expenditure of last year by £3,117,000. In round numbers, the reductions and the increases may be thus stated. The reductions will be found under the following heads:—In respect of the War in Egypt, £3,900,000; in respect of the charge for Debt, £50,000; in respect of the Civil Services, £100,000; and in respect of the collection of Revenue, £100,000; making a total of £4,150,000. On the other hand, the increased charges are—for the Army, £100,000; for the Navy, £350,000; for the Consolidated Fund and Local Loan Charges, £150,000; and for the Post Office, £300,000; making altogether a total estimated increase of £900,000, which, deducted from the sum of £4,150,000, reduces the net total estimated decrease to £3,250,000. This latter figure has, however, to be corrected by the nominal increase in the charge to be repaid by India of £130,000, giving a real decrease of a little under £3,120,000.

I will now refer to some of the details of the estimated Expenditure for the year. In the first place, it will be observed that the permanent charge for Debt is less by £50,000 than it was last year. The reason is that the state of the balances, which are £1,000,000 more than they were at this time last year, enables me to pay off £1,000,000 out of the £2,000,000 borrowed on the Annuity of £120,000, to form part of the £5,000,000 given to India, and therefore to reduce the amount of the Annuity by £50,000. And here, Sir, I think that the Committee would wish me to give them some information as to the result of the recent operations which have been initiated, not only by the present Government, but by their Predecessors in Office, with the object of reducing the National Debt. Any statement, however, on this subject requires to be made with the greatest care; and, with the assistance of the able officers of the Department, I have taken pains to arrive at clear and accurate figures in this respect. On the present occasion, I will only deal with the steps that have been taken for the reduction of the Debt within the last nine years, and I will give the Committee the figures for that period. These nine years naturally divide themselves into two portions—namely, the six years from March, 1874, to March, 1880, inclusive, and the three years from March, 1880, to March, 1883, inclusive. It appears that on the 31st of March, 1874, the capital of the Debt, including both the Funded and the Unfunded Debt, and the value of the Terminable Annuities, was £776,018,000; while on March 31, 1880, it stood at £774,044,000, showing an apparent reduction of £1,974,000. These figures, however, would be entirely delusive if they stood alone, because we must take into account the amount of capital raised for remunerative purposes, such as Local Loans, the purchase of the Suez Canal Shares, and the Telegraphs; and the amount so raised, £20,241,000, makes the apparent reduction of the Debt £22,215,000. From this latter sum, however, has to be deducted £4,170,000, the difference between the balances in the Exchequer in March, 1874, and in March, 1880—less £115,000, a small adjustment in connection with Bankruptcy balances—and this leaves a net reduction of £18,160,000. This gives an average reduction of Debt of £3,027,000 per annum for the six years from 1874-5 to 1879-80 inclusive.

I will now pass to the three years from March, 1880, to March, 1883, during which the Committee will see that the average annual reduction of the Debt has been much greater. The nominal capital of the Debt at March, 1880, was, as I have already stated, £774,044,000, while on March 31, 1883, it stood at £756,344,000 only, showing an apparent reduction of £17,700,000. During that period, however, no capital was raised for remunerative works; but, on the contrary, the repayments exceeded the advances, and it is right, in making a fair comparison, to deduct these. They amounted to £883,000, which leaves the apparent reduction at £16,817,000. To this sum, however, has to be added £3,700,000, the difference between the balances in the Exchequer in March, 1880, and March, 1883. This makes the net reduction of the Debt for the three years I have referred to £20,517,000, or an average reduction of £6,839,000 per annum, £3,812,000 more than the average of the preceding six years. And I may say that in the present year, if our proposals are adopted, the reduction of the Debt will be probably about £8,000,000. I will add one other statement about the Debt which will be of interest to the Committee. On the 31st of March, 1857, after allowing for recoverable assets, it stood at £832,600,000; while at the end of 1882-3, calculated on the same principle, it stood at £725,500,000. The reduction, therefore, in the 26 years since 1857 was £107,100,000, in spite of several loans for unremunerative purposes, and of the Telegraph loans, which I have not treated as strictly remunerative.

Before I proceed to state the nature of my proposals for dealing with the Debt, the Committee will, perhaps, wish to know how the law at present stands with regard to the sums applicable to its interest and redemption. By the Act of 1876, which is a permanent Act, the sum of £28,000,000 per annum is appropriated to the payment of the interest on the Funded and Unfunded Debt, and to Terminable Annuities, and any balance goes to the New Sinking Fund established by my right hon. Friend opposite. By the Act of 1880 a further sum of £800,000 is added until 1885; and by the Act of 1881 a further sum of £120,000 is added until 1906. At the present moment the Terminable Annuities and the interest on the Funded and Unfunded Debt have swallowed up the whole of the £28,000,000 appropriated by the Act of 1876 to the payment of interest, except about £240,000, which goes to the Sinking Fund of my right hon. Friend.

But in 1885 two things will happen. In the first place, Terminable Annuities, amounting to £5,130,000, charged on the £28,000,000, will fall in, and the £800,000, which was added to the £28,000,000, falls in also. In these circumstances, I think the time has arrived when we ought to take proper measures for replacing by fresh Terminable Annuities those which are so soon to come to an end. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister proposed to do this in 1881; but the time at the disposal of the Government in the Session of that year was so small that my right hon. Friend was unable to carry out the proposals made to the House, and they were, consequently, allowed to drop. I now propose to take up the matter again, and to ask the House to legislate upon it. In the first place, I propose to leave undisturbed the arrangement made by my right hon. Friend opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote)—whether I liked it at the time or not — as to the £28,000,000 and the New Sinking Fund; and I also propose not to disturb the Act of 1880, under which the sum of £800,000 a-year comes to the relief of the taxpayer in 1885; but I propose to substitute for the Annuities soon about to expire fresh Annuities, which I will now describe to the Committee. I propose, in the first place, to renew, with some variation, the proposal made by my right hon. Friend in 1881 as to the conversion of a certain amount of what is known as Chancery Stock. The reasons for that proposal were given at the time by my right hon. Friend, and I need not, therefore, repeat them on this occasion; but I may say that the amount of the Three per Cents now in Court is above £61,000,000, so that I shall be able without difficulty to take £40,000,000 of that sum under ample safeguards, which have been considered and agreed upon with the Lord Chancellor, and convert it into a 20 years' Annuity of £2,674,000. I propose, also, to take about £30,000,000 out of the £50,000,000 which now stands to the credit of the Savings Banks Accounts with the Commissioners of the National Debt, and to convert that £30,000,000 into three Annuities of £1,200,000 each; one for five years, one for 10 years, and one for 15 years; in all, £3,600,000, with the proviso—and here I pause to thank my right hon. Friend the Member for the City of London (Mr. Hubbard) for the great amount of attention he has bestowed on this particular question — that as each of these Annuities falls in a new Annuity for 15 years shall be created, equal in amount to the former, *plus* the interest on the Stock cancelled to create the new Annuity; so that the annual amount of charge on the £28,000,000 in respect of interest on Debt and Terminable Annuites will permanently remain the same. I propose to substitute also for the £5,130,000 Annuity falling in in 1885, a 20 years' Annuity of £700,000. The total Annuities charged at first on the £28,000,000, under the permanent Act, will thus be £6,974,000, as against the present Annuities, and the interest on £70,000,000 Stock cancelled, which together amount to £7,237,000. The result will be, first, that for 20 years there will exist the same National Debt Charge as now—namely, £28,000,000, besides the £800,000 falling in for the taxpayers' benefit in 1885. Secondly, the New Sinking Fund will be increased by the difference between £7,230,000 and £6,974,000, and will amount this year to something under £500,000. The immediate cancellation and ultimate reduction of Funded Debt will be about £70,000,000; but the further reduction, owing to the operations which will take place in five, 10, 15, and 20 years, will be £102,000,000; so that after 20 years the Funded Debt will have been reduced by the sum of £172,000,000, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer will have at his disposal £3,374,000 a-year derived from the Annuities falling in, which will go either in relief of the taxpayer, or be otherwise disposed of as Parliament may think fit. In this calculation I have taken the Stocks at par; if they are over par, there will be a slight reduction on the £172,000,000 of Funded Debt cancelled by these operations, for which the Stocks at our disposal will leave ample margin. Within 20 years all the Chancery Stock will have been entirely replaced; and, at a very moderate estimate, the £50,000,000 now in the Savings Bank Account with the National Debt Commissioners will at least have been returned. I will not trouble the Committee with a minute calculation of the exact amounts of Stock purchased and cancelled by the operation of the two Sinking Funds and our Life Annuity system; but I have described what we propose to do in 20 years through Terminable Annuities, under an Act to be passed this year, and it is an operation which will not increase by one farthing the charge upon the country.

I now pass from the charges on the Consolidated Fund to what is known as Supply Expenditure. The total of the Estimates, as compared with the actual Expenditure for 1882-3, is £3,350,000 less than the amount spent in that year; but, omitting the expenditure on the Egyptian War, it shows an increase of £550,000. I think, Sir, that this may be the proper time for me to endeavour to place before the House a few facts as to the growth of Expenditure during the last few years. It is the special function of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to criticize, and, if possible, to reduce Expenditure; and it is my intention, during the present year, to devote as much time as I possibly can to that which I regard as my most important duty; and I may add that it is my interest, as well as my hope, that I may obtain help in this matter from the House. Formerly, it was one of the primary functions of this House to assist in reducing Expenditure. I hope I shall not offend any Member of the House when I say that of late years there has been a tendency in the direction rather of increasing, than diminishing, the Public Expenditure. Even within the last few days there have been three Motions in the House; one to increase the charge for a very gallant body—the Marines—another to increase the charge in connection with the officers of the Inland Revenue; and a third to increase the Post Office establishments, so that the cost of telegrams may be reduced from 1*s.* to 6*d.* I have had the curiosity to examine *Hansard* for the last three years—1880-1-2—to see what direct proposals on the subject of Naval and Military Expenditure have during that time been addressed to myself and to the Secretary to the Admiralty for increases or diminutions of those charges; and I find that in the three years there have been no less than 576 proposals made to us, of which 20 were to diminish Expenditure, and 556 to increase it. What are the main facts as to the recent growth of Expenditure? I should like to refer the Committee to a very interesting Paper, annually presented, which has drawn a great deal of attention from both sides of the House, and is, I believe, much studied by Chancellors of the Exchequer. I allude to the Return—the number of last Session's is 346—which shows the comparative Expenditure in different years so far as it becomes a charge on the taxpayer. Now, the aggregate growth of Expenditure from year to year is really no criterion whatever of the burden on the taxpayer, because there are paid into the Exchequer annually many millions from other sources than taxation—such as the Post Office, or Crown Lands Revenue, or Court Fees—which represent either national property, or the consideration gladly given for services performed by Government. This Return gives the actual amount of the charge on the taxpayer; and the results which it shows may, I think, be regarded as affording the best evidence of the economy exercised in different years in the real interest of the taxpayer.

Now, I will take, for the purpose of comparison, the year 1882-3, and the year 1873-4. The latter year is not very favourable for my comparison, because the amount of expenditure on the Services was criticized by the succeeding Government as being too small, and Mr. Ward Hunt added in the next year no less a sum than £400,000 to the Naval Expenditure. Nevertheless, as being the last year of my right hon. Friend's former Government, I think it offers a very fair ground of comparison; and, in fact, the years 1874-5, 1875-6, and 1876-7 would be much more favourable to 1882-3, if compared by the same rule. According, then, to the Return I have referred to, the total charge on the taxpayer for the year 1873-4 was £64,480,000, and during the year 1882-3 the total charge on the Taxpayer was £73,030,000. But we must eliminate from both these totals several charges which do not really concern the ordinary Expenditure of the Government, amounting to £3,997,000 in the case of the former year for the Alabama Claims and the Ashantee War, and in the case of the latter to £4,000,000 for the Egyptian Expedition and the grant for the Afghan War, after deducting, in order to be scrupulously fair, the Colonial repayment of £400,000. Subtracting these items from the figures I have just given, the charge upon the taxpayer for the ordinary Expenditure of the Government during the year 1873-4 was £60,480,000; whereas the charge upon the taxpayer for the year 1882-3 was £69,030,000, there being thus a difference of £8,550,000. Now, I shall be asked of what items that consists. I will, therefore, state them to the Committee. In the first place, the increase upon the Education Vote, as between the two years, is just £2,000,000; in the second place, the grants in aid of Local Taxation have increased by £3,010,000; thirdly, the proportion of the Debt Charge representing the payment of principal is greater in the latter than in the former year by £3,670,000; and, in the fourth place, the cost of collecting £7,000,000 additional Revenue is £220,000. If you add these amounts together, you will find that they represent an increased charge of £8,900,000; but whereas the charge on the taxpayer last year, compared with 1873-4, had only increased £8,550,000, it follows that, for the interest on Debt, for the Military and Naval Charges, and the ordinary charges for Civil Government, in spite of greatly increased expense in Ireland, the charge last year was not greater, but £350,000 less, than the charge on the taxpayer in 1873-4. I do not know whether these figures will have been expected by the Committee; but they are the result of most careful examination and analysis, and I shall be prepared, if necessary, to show a similar comparison for the other years I have named.

But there is another subject on which the Committee will, doubtless, like to have further information, and that is the Army and Navy Expenditure, of which I propose now to give a short retrospect. I will compare the net Military and Naval Charges at different periods since the Crimean War, whether they came out of the Votes of Parliament or from Loans; but I eliminate altogether Votes of Credit for particular wars. I take, therefore, only the ordinary charges, and I go back to the years after the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny, giving the amounts in round numbers — not less than quarters of millions—but being ready, if desired, to lay exact Returns upon the Table. In 1858-9 the net Military and Naval Charges were £19,500,000. They rapidly increased, first under Lord Derby's, and then under Lord Palmerston's Government, for iron-clads, fortifications, and augmented forces, till, in 1860-1, they reached £27,500,000. From that year they fell steadily, till, under Lord Russell's Administration in 1865-6, they were £22,500,000. They then rose under the succeeding Government, till, in 1868-9, they stood at £25,000,000. They again fell under the Administration of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, till, in the year 1870-1, they were £21,250,000. After the Franco-German War, and on account of the cost of abolishing Purchase in the Army, and that of the Localization of Forces, they rose to £23,750,000. In the three years following the change of Government they stood respectively at £25,750,000, £26,250,000, and £25,500,000. The present Government then came in, and in 1880-1 the charge fell to £24,750,000; it rose again in 1881-2, owing to the cost of additional iron-clads and re-armament of the Navy, to £25,000,000; again, in 1882-3, it reached £25,500,000; and in the Estimates of the present year the net charge for the Army and the Navy amounts to £26,250,000. This amount is the same as that for 1878-9, and £1,250,000 less than in 1860-1, with a growth of 8,000,000 in the population of the United Kingdom.

But there is an impression that this Expenditure has not been sufficiently controlled during the last few years; and, in connection with that subject, the Committee would probably like to have some detailed information. Now, I take the Estimates of the last year of the late Government, and I compare them with the Estimates which have just been laid upon the Table for the year 1883-4. I take 1879-80, although that was a year very favourable to low Estimates, inasmuch as it followed a large Vote of Credit for a war which did not take place, so that there were considerable amounts of unexpended provisions and stores in hand. On the contrary, 1883-4 followed a year of military operations, tending to deplete stores. For this, however, I make no allowance, although it probably represents something like £500,000; but what did the present Government find with respect to Army and Navy Expenditure when they took Office in 1880? In the first place, we found a very great arrear in the building of armoured ships. The rule had been to build 12,000 tons a-year, and this had been occasionally fulfilled; but in 1877-8 the Estimates only provided for 9,226 tons; in 1878-9 for 9,849 tons; and in 1879-80 for 6,555 tons. There was a still greater arrear in arming the Navy with guns of new type. In 1880 we were many years behind France and Italy in this respect, and I need not mention the strong pressure put upon us about guns, by no one more than the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), and the right hon. and gallant Admiral opposite (Sir John Hay), as well as by the noble Lord the Member for Chichester (Lord Henry Lennox), and some hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House, all of whom urged us to spare no means in proceeding with the arming of the Navy. There was, at the same time, going on a steady automatic increase in the pensions of our soldiers and sailors, which will continue, I fear, for some years; while the increase in the Reserve and in the charge for deferred pay was also steady and automatic, although some day it will be balanced by the reduction in the number of pensioners. Besides this, we found recent improvements in the non-effective pay of the Medical and other non-combatant branches of the Service, which were beginning to take effect. Further, the scheme of Army Organization which had been recently adopted would, as I stated in moving the Army Estimates, gradually bring about additional charges for Reserves, pensions, and deferred pay, which would ultimately reach the sum of £607,000 a-year. I found, also, on my table when I took Office the Report of what is known as Lord Airey's Committee, appointed by my right hon. Predecessor. That Committee proposed additional charges to the extent of £931,000 a-year. Such was the position of Army and Naval affairs which my noble Friend (the Earl of Northbrook) and myself had to face in dealing with the Estimates. We could not alter automatic increases; but in view of these prospective charges we sought economy in all directions. I devoted six months to the study of the Report of Lord Airey's Committee, and of the then existing system of Army Organization; and, as to the former, I proposed to Parliament to add, instead of £931,000 to the Estimates and 11,000 men to the Army, about 3,000 men, costing, with some improvement in the position of non-commissioned officers, only £80,000. I also thoroughly revised the Army Organization scheme which I found in operation; and instead of a prospective increase of £607,000, we made prospective economies to the extent of £684,000, producing a prospective net decrease of £77,000. My noble Friend (the Earl of Northbrook) has also made large economies in number, and consequently in wages, in Dockyard manufactures and in other charges, to meet the additional cost of armoured ships which he had inherited. Now, Sir, let me tell the Committee what has been the effect of our exertions. The net Army and Navy Estimates for 1879-80 were £25,480,000, while for 1883-4 they are £26,363,000, or, in other words, there is an increase of £883,000 as between the last year of the late Administration and 1883-4. But the whole of this increase represents the additional charge for building armour-clad ships, and for arming the Navy with guns of new type. Instead of 6,555 tons, as estimated for in 1879-80—I exclude the *Polyphemus*, *Severn*, and *Mersey* from the armour-clad class—the present Estimates provide for the building of 12,281 tons, or 5,726 tons more than were provided for in the Estimates of that year. The additional cost will be £550,000, while for naval guns of new type it will be £315,000. These two sums together amount to £865,000, which just represents the amount of the increase I have already stated. But the Committee will ask me, how, then, have we met the automatic and other charges which were left as a legacy to us? The automatic increase of soldiers' and sailors' pensions, less £130,000 an additional contribution by India, is £145,000; the automatic increase in the Army Reserve and deferred pay is £105,000; the automatic increase on the Non-Effective Charge for doctors and Departmental officers, as settled by our Predecessors, is £85,000; the charge on account of the partial adoption of Lord Airey's Report is £80,000, as against the £931,000 proposed; and the full charge for the training of the Yeomanry and the Militia, the period having been exceptionally shortened in 1879-80, for the sake of economy, represents £60,000. All these inevitable increases amount to £475,000. But the whole of this has been met by economies in other directions. The result is that we meet altogether £1,360,000 per annum additional charges, all in the nature of legacies, by economies already made of nearly £500,000 a-year, or, allowing for the difference in extra receipts, £350,000; and I hope we shall be able to carry these economies still further in the time to come. I trust, Sir, that I have stated to the Committee, if at some length, at any rate clearly, the nature of the additional Expenditure, whether in the aggregate Estimates, or in connection with the Army and Navy, which the country has had to meet; and I can only say again that I believe the figures I have given are scrupulously correct, as they have been most carefully revised and tested.

Now, Sir, I will proceed from the Expenditure to the Estimate of the Revenue of the current year. The figures which I shall give are calculated on the basis of the taxation in force in 1882-3. I will only say, as to the general principle that has been adopted in forecasting our income, that, considering the present state of trade and agriculture, the Estimate we have made is a safe, though it is not a sanguine one. The two first items are Customs and Excise. I will eliminate from each the Spirit Duty, and state the amount we anticipate to receive for spirits altogether, and then from each Department excluding spirits. The Spirit Estimate for 1883-4 we set down at £18,700,000, against £18,540,000 received last year. I am sorry to tell my hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) that, as there was a slight increase in this item over the Estimate of last year, so we are obliged to estimate for a further increase this year. Customs, after deducting the item of spirits, we take at £15,350,000, against £15,280,000 last year. Excise, also, after deducting spirits, we take at £12,600,000, against £12,765,000. We must, however, as a matter of form, divide the Spirit Estimate between the two Departments, and we take Customs at £19,750,000, against last year's receipt of £19,657,000; and the Excise we take at £26,900,000, against £26,930,000. The only item of Customs Duty which I need refer to on this occasion is that of wine. We take it at rather less than the receipt of 1882-3; and I may say that the great interest attaching to the question of the Wine Duties, in connection with our commercial relations with wine-producing countries, has led me to study with care the effect of the present duties, and numerous proposals which have been recently made for altering them. At this moment I should hesitate to adopt any of those proposals; but I may remark that I see my way, at the right time, if the state of the Revenue permits, to effect modifications which will be palatable to the countries from which we draw our chief supplies of wine. The Stamp Estimate is £11,510,000, against £11,841,000, the receipt of 1882-3. The Committee will remember that the stamp receipts exceeded the Estimate last year by no less than £700,000. The Land Tax we take at £1,040,000, against £1,045,000, the actual receipt of 1882-3. House Duty we estimate at £1,785,000, as compared with £1,755,000. The Income Tax at 6½*d.* in the pound we take at £12,400,000, as against £11,900,000, the receipt of 1882-3, which, as the Committee knows, was not a full year. The Post Office we take at £7,400,000, against £7,300,000 realized last year; and, in passing, I should observe that these Estimates do not include the revenue or the expenditure of the Parcels Post. They are expected to be about the same, £312,000 for the period of nine months. The Parcels Post, for which a separate Estimate will be made, is expected to come into operation about the 1st of July next, unless there be delay at present not foreseen. The Telegraph income we take at £1,750,000, as compared with £1,710,000 last year. Crown Lands we estimate at the same amount as last year, £380,000; interest on advances—which is falling now—at £1,185,000, as against 1,219,000; miscellaneous, £4,380,000, as against £5,268,000, the receipt of last year, which was very much in excess of the Estimates. The total Tax Revenue will thus be £73,385,000, and the Non-Tax Revenue £15,095,000, or in all £88,480,000, against the Tax Revenue of last year, £73,128,000, and the Non-Tax Revenue of £15,876,000, or a total of £89,004,000. The estimated Expenditure being, as I have already stated, £85,789,000, there is thus a surplus over the estimated Expenditure of £2,691,000.

Before considering what we should do with this surplus, I should like to mention one or two changes which we propose to make. The first is an administrative change. We propose what will effect, in our opinion, beyond doubt, both an acceleration and an improvement in the collection of the Income Tax. We propose to give the collection of Schedules D and E to officers of the Inland Revenue Board, with reasonable compensation to the local officers now employed, so far as it may be necessary to dispense with their services. That will be done gradually, so as to avoid friction as much as possible. We also make a slight change in the game and gun licences, which I will describe to the Committee, though it is not expected to affect the amount of the Revenue. At present game licences run from April to April, and we have been asked by a good many country gentlemen to let them run from July to July. We have consented to do this, the present licences, of course, running on until July. The provision will be the same for gun licences. But as to game licences, we shall recommend to Parliament a change which we think will be both beneficial and popular.

We do not wish to disturb the system under which £2 may be paid for a licence to the end of October, and £2 from the beginning of November to the end of the season. But we propose to issue a new licence, to be called an "occasional" licence, and this will be available for any gentleman who is not likely to have more than 14 days' shooting in the year. At present he must take out a £2 licence; but we propose that at any time a licence available for 14 days may be issued at the price of £1. We do not think this change will affect the amount of the Revenue, though there will probably be more licences taken out, but fewer £2 licences than now. I think I ought to add that, as no one will now have any excuse for shooting without a licence, the officers of the Inland Revenue will in future exact what the law now requires, but what has not always been exacted—and that is, that the licence should be produced. It is a very common custom for a man called upon to produce his licence to say—"Oh! my name is So-and-so; I have not got my licence with me, but it is all right." In future, in consideration of the facilities for obtaining a licence at a low rate, the officers will require that which the law authorizes—the actual production of the licence. I may also here mention an addition to the Revenue which I should very much like to have been able to propose this year—namely, a tax upon Corporations and Incorporated Bodies, in lieu of the Probate and Succession Duty, which would have to be paid if their property belonged to individuals. It is with great regret that I have made up my mind not to propose this tax this year, because I have not had time thoroughly to think out what is the most difficult part of the question—the exemptions which would have to be made. A Bill was drafted on this subject some years ago; and on studying the exemptions I confess I was alarmed at the intricacy and difficulty of the reform. I hope to be able to deal with the matter next year; and, in my opinion, it is a necessary preliminary to finally and completely dealing with the Death Duties.

I come now to proposals for the remission of taxation. In the first place, I have given much attention to the duty on gold and silver plate, and the licences for the sale of gold and silver plate, the whole Revenue of which is £121,000. Setting apart the Gold Duty and the licences, the Silver Duty brings in about £64,000. In 1881 it was proposed to gradually reduce this duty; and, although this was not acceptable to the trade, I should have been glad if I could have proposed the entire repeal this year; but to do so would involve far more than I could afford to lose. The real difficulty is the claim to drawback. The claim set up by the majority of the trade is to be repaid all duty on plate in their hands, not gone into use, which may be £120,000, may be £170,000, or even, I suspect, nearer £200,000. The basis of the claim for this payment—and I have had several very interesting discussions with the representatives of the trade—is the circumstance that they have no means of bonding or warehousing silver goods, as is the case with all other duty-paying articles of consumption, like spirits or tea, for instance. That being the case, it is argued that the manufacturer acts as the agent of the Government to collect the tax before it is really due; and, therefore, that if it is abolished, he should be repaid what he considers he has advanced. I am sorry to say that, having carefully read the Report of the Committee which for two Sessions inquired into this duty, I can get no assistance from them; for although the claim for drawback was discussed by several witnesses, the Report, which advised the repeal of the duty, was silent on this point. Feeling, however, the weight of their arguments, although not to the extent of their claim, I offered to the trade to introduce a system under which a bond might be given for the duty without requiring the silver goods to leave the manufacturers' charge, so that the duty would only be exacted when the silver went into consumption. But they complained that this would act unequally, and that they could not accept it. I may say, Sir, that, in my judgment, it is perfectly impossible to admit this high claim, whether for £120,000 or £200,000. To get rid of a tax on the rich by the payment of a fine by the public to this extent would be quite out of the question; and the way in which I propose to deal with the case is to allow silver, whether manufactured or imported, to be, at the option of the holder, deposited under bond in a species of warehouse or show rooms under the Crown's lock, where it would be open to inspection by the public, only paying duty when sold or leaving its place of deposit. I also propose to meet a very serious grievance, to my mind, that the Indian people have with regard to the silver manufactures of India, and to allow imported silver below the standard to be re-exported, instead of being destroyed, as it has to be under the present law, and to make some of the other alterations in the laws affecting silver recommended by the Select Committee. After a reasonable time has been allowed to the trade to clear off their stocks of duty-paid silver I should propose to repeal the tax altogether, without granting any drawback. That, of course, cannot take place this year, but after a reasonable lapse of time. I may say that these proposals—not the repeal of the duty, which must be left to the future—will be the subject of a separate Bill; and before introducing it I propose to confer with my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) as to the amendments in the system of hall-marking to which I have referred as suggested by, or in the evidence before, the Select Committee. I anticipate the loss to the Revenue from the optional postponement of the duty at about £10,000. We propose to try the experiment, in the first instance, in London, but to extend it one by one to other towns in which there is a considerable amount of silver manufactured—such as Birmingham and Sheffield.

Now, Sir Arthur Otway, I come to what I am afraid will make larger inroads on my balance. After the Resolution of the 29th of March, I do not think it would be respectful on my part to put out of question the reduction in the minimum price of telegrams. As I promised, I have already commenced a careful inquiry into the estimates made by the Post Office as to the cost under several plans of the reduction to the minimum charge of 6*d.* I cannot, at this moment, anticipate the result of that inquiry; but I propose to set aside £170,000 out of my balance to enable me, if possible, to carry out the change in the course of the present year.

The next serious remission is in connection with the Railway Duty; and this, also, would not be dealt with in the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, but in a separate Bill. I have carefully considered with my Colleagues the proposals which have been made on this subject in the House and elsewhere, and especially the Report of the Select Committee of 1876. Now, the Select Committee were unanimous as to a certain extent of reduction, and I am prepared to make a proposal consistent with that recommendation. But I am bound to say that I cannot consent to the total abolition of the tax, either now or in the future, as proposed by the Select Committee. If any hon. Member will study carefully the Minutes of the Committee, he will see that while a reduction somewhat equivalent to the one I am about to propose was carried unanimously, the Motion for the total abolition of the duty was only carried by a majority of 9 to 6, and amongst the majority of 9 I observe four Gentlemen who are Directors of leading English Railways. Without the assistance of those four Gentlemen, the Motion for total abolition would have been negatived; and I confess, after considering the Evidence, that I do not think its weight is on the side of total abolition. We propose, then, to take off the duty from all fares of 1*d.* a-mile and less, so that it will only fall on fares exceeding 1*d.* a-mile, including return and season tickets, where the single fare exceeds 1*d.* a-mile. We also propose that fares, although over 1*d.* a-mile, on an urban railway should pay only 2 per cent, as a fair arrangement to meet the special omnibus competition to which they are subjected, the Board of Trade being empowered to decide what parts of lines are to be considered urban. On the other hand, in consideration of this boon, we propose that the Board of Trade should have power to insist on sufficient accommodation for all parts of the line, at fares not exceeding 1*d.* a-mile, and also to insist on additional workmen's trains, if requisite, this power to be subject to appeal to the Railway Commission. And we propose, also, that soldiers and sailors should be carried for two-thirds the regular fares when in small numbers, but for half the regular fares when travelling in large numbers, such as a battalion or regiment. The loss to the Revenue by this change will be about £400,000 a-year. We propose that the duty shall be reduced from the 1st of October. The duty comes to us about two months in arrear, so that our whole loss during the present year may be set down as about £135,000.

We also propose to submit to a trifling loss in connection with tobacco and snuff. After careful analysis, the officers of the Inland Revenue are satisfied that, for the purposes of drawback, what is known as the standard of moisture may be raised from 13 to 14 per cent. They, therefore, suggest—and I approve of the suggestion—that the standard be so altered. By this change the Revenue will lose about £1,200 a-year, and the trade will gain by that amount.

These deductions leave me a balance of £2,375,000, and I think the Committee will now anticipate what my last proposal is. I propose to take off the 1½*d.* Income Tax imposed on account of the Egyptian operations last year, reducing the Income Tax to 5*d.* in the pound, as in 1881-2. The cost of doing this will be £2,135,000, leaving me a balance of £240,000. I do not think, Sir, any smaller balance could be safely left. There are still demands on us in the air. For instance, at the present moment we have under discussion the question of the purchase, in whole or in part, of the Ashburnham Collection; and there are other proposals in Bills before the House, some of which may, to a small extent, affect the Exchequer.

I will sum up the changes which we propose. My surplus is £2,691,000. I have to deduct from that £2,135,000 for the reduction of the Income Tax; £170,000 reserved for a reduction in the price of telegrams; £135,000 for the reduction of the Railway Duty; £10,000 for the loss on the Silver Duty; and, say, £1,000 for the loss on Tobacco and Snuff, making in all £2,451,000, and leaving me a balance of £240,000. I am very much obliged to the Committee for having listened so patiently to a statement which necessarily contains a great many figures, but which I have endeavoured to curtail as much as I reasonably could. What I have stated I hope I stated plainly; and if I have made myself understood by the Committee, that is all I have aimed at.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now charged on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-three, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four, on importation into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say): on

		£	s.	d.
Tea	the lb.	0	0	6."

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I propose to adhere to that which has been the custom that has prevailed of late years, not to raise any considerable discussion on the proposals of the Budget at the moment of their delivery. I think experience has shown that it is not convenient to plunge at once into a discussion of that character; and, certainly, there are some reasons connected with the particular speech to which the Committee has listened which induce me to think it is all the more desirable to suspend our judgment upon some portions of it until we have had time to study the figures which the right hon. Gentleman has placed before us. I must congratulate him upon the clearness of his Statement, and upon many points in the condition of affairs which he has been able to lay before the Committee. It is very satisfactory to find that the condition of the country is, at all events, not so bad as we have had some reason to apprehend of late. With regard to the concluding proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, it is only right to say that the House only receives as a matter of course the removal of the additional 1½*d.* on the Income Tax. That 1½*d.* was not on the Income Tax originally; but it was put on under the pledge that it was for a special purpose, and was to cease when that purpose had been fulfilled. That pledge has been fairly redeemed, and we have only to acknowledge the fact. Whether the right hon. Gentleman is altogether discreet in referring, as he did, to one or two proposals which he will not be able to make this year, but which, nevertheless, he looks forward to making in a future year, is a matter of question. Any proposals with regard to taxation to which effect cannot at once be given are, it seems to me, calculated to disturb and agitate the community, and very little credit is gained, at the expense of a good deal of inconvenience afterwards. We have had more than one instance of that during the year of the present Administration; but, with regard to the proposals themselves, I confess I am sorry to find that the right hon. Gentleman has felt himself forced, by the vote given the other night, to go against his own principles and his own canon with regard to giving way whenever there is any pressure put upon him for the reduction of income or other expenditure. I myself voted with him on that occasion, as did my Friends here; and, certainly, we hardly expected that the result of the vote of the House would be so quickly obtained. We do not look upon it as a sign that there is any stiffness in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's balance. I speak with some feeling, because I was thought a very chicken-hearted Chancellor of the Exchequer for not standing up against all sorts of things. My right hon. Friend has spoken a good many excellent words, but his actions have been somewhat inconsistent. As I said just now, this is not the occasion for going fully into the discussion of the speech we have listened to; and, among other reasons for not doing so, part of it was directed apparently to another issue, which is to be tried to-morrow. And in the course of the answer which he gave, by anticipation, to speeches which we will probably hear to-morrow, he took the opportunity of laying a good heavy burden upon the shoulders of his Predecessors, and made, I think, one of the most controversial and partizan speeches I have ever listened to on a Budget night. I am not at all prepared to accept the indictment made against us in anything like the measure which the right hon. Gentleman has meted out to us. I say that he has omitted a great many considerations and a great many points which ought to be taken into account when such a calculation is made. I am not ready, on the spur of the moment, to enter into these matters; it could not be expected of me. I might deal with some of the points, but it would be wasting the time of the Committee; and I do not think I can be expected to do more than put in my protest against their being received without contradiction. I will not say anything more. I have no doubt we shall very soon have an opportunity of proceeding with the discussion of the Budget; and I hope that before this Resolution is passed we shall be told what the proposals of the Government are as to the time at which they intend to proceed with the different parts of it. With reference to that, I would like to ask this question—which arises out of what I have been saying, though, perhaps, it is not strictly in order at such a time as this. It has been said that to-morrow the debate may take so long that it cannot be finished in one evening. I hope that may not be the case; but still it may be; and, supposing the debate is adjourned, I should like to know if the Government would undertake that it should be continued on the Monday following, so that it might be carried on at a convenient time? I think this is a matter on which we have a right to ask for an assurance from the Government.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman has made an appeal which, perhaps, it falls on me to answer. Before answering that appeal, however, I must frankly acknowledge that nothing could be more fair than the position taken up by the right hon. Gentleman in saying that for to-night he contents himself with a protest, and desires to enter one against inferences which may be drawn from some portions of the speech of my right hon. Friend. I think I may say my right hon. Friend had no controversial intention; but I cannot deny that arguments may be raised upon the facts stated by him, and that the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Stafford Northcote) cannot be expected to enter, in a manner satisfactory to himself or to the House, upon a discussion on the present Motion. He is quite justified, under the circumstances, in reserving his freedom of action, and in claiming that the conclusion drawn by my right hon. Friend should not be accepted as beyond controversy. The only other point I wish to say a word on is this—the right hon. Gentleman has referred to the time for prosecuting the debate that may arise on the Financial Statement just made. The case is rather peculiar. Undoubtedly, the custom is that after a Financial Statement has been made the substantial discussion upon it is adjourned to a day which is then named; but on this occasion it happens, unusually, that we have a debate upon the general question of expenditure standing for to-morrow. The right hon. Gentleman says—"Will the Government engage that, if the debate on the Motion of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) is not closed to-morrow, it will be resumed on an early day?" Well, Sir, we entirely admit, in principle, that ample and early opportunity should be given to the House for discussing the Financial Statement and the condition of the Expenditure; but I think it will not be possible to judge until to-morrow whether that can be most conveniently done in the shape of prolonged debate on the Motion of the hon. Member for Burnley, or upon the Motion of my right hon. Friend. Therefore, we should wish to appoint, nominally, the Committee of Ways and Means for Monday, with the intention of considering in the interim, when we find what takes place to-morrow night, what arrangements will be most convenient to the House. I quite recognize the justice of the demand for an early and full discussion of both these proposals.

Mr. WILLS said he would venture to ask the indulgence of the Committee for a few moments, whilst he made some observations in reference to one branch of the Revenue over which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had passed very lightly. The arrangements made in regard to the drawback on manufactured tobacco would be received by the trade with gratitude; inasmuch as the allowance would relieve them from an injustice under which they had long laboured, and on account of which they considered themselves entitled to some redress. But he must say that what was given to them was a very small fragment of the relief which they had hoped to have received from the right hon. Gentleman. They had now been suffering over four years from an incalculable injury inflicted upon them by the unfortunate legislation of the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). However, they desired to thank the present Chancellor of the Exchequer for the prompt attention he had given to the Memorial, which he (Mr. Wills) had had the honour of presenting to him immediately on his (the Chancellor of the Exchequer's) accession to his present Office, and for the care he had bestowed upon the investigation of their claims. It was to be hoped that, on a future occasion, the right hon. Gentleman would be able to treat the tobacco manufacturers allopathically instead of homeopathically. The Committee could scarcely be aware of the great difference between the present position of the tobacco trade and that which it had occupied before the alteration in the duty—that was to say, up to the year 1878. For some years there was an annual increase in the consumption of tobacco of over 1,000,000 lbs., and in 1877 the consumption in this country had reached the enormous amount of 50,750,000 lbs. The legislation of the right hon. Baronet the then Chancellor of the Exchequer produced a material change, the consumption at once falling 2,000,000 lbs. within the year. In 1879 it recovered somewhat, and in 1880 there was a further revival; but at the end of 1882 it was still below the point it had reached in 1877. No Chancellor of the Exchequer, he was sure, would think lightly of a duty which produced over £8,500,000 a-year. The Committee must bear in mind that out of this important sum, £4,750,000 was paid by the working classes of the United Kingdom. The working classes paid a uniform price of 3*d.* an ounce for the tobacco which they consumed, and of that 3*d.* the Government took no less that 2½*d.* in the shape of Revenue; and it was a fact that the artizan, in this bad condition of trade, got far less value for his money than at other times. At the same time, he (Mr. Wills) must tell the Committee that the small manufacturers were suffering most severely. With the advanced price of the raw material they could not make a living from the manufacture of tobacco. Only yesterday one of the oldest and most respectable firms, which had been carrying on business in this trade for two generations in London, had gone. Well, what was the result of the financial operation of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to tobacco? Why, the manufacturers were compelled to use more water and less tobacco. It had been suggested, and perhaps not unnaturally, that the Government should take means to limit the percentage of water in the tobacco; but such a proposition was quite as absurd as it would be to argue that it was the duty of the Excise to regulate the strength of beer. There was no more reason why the water in tobacco should be limited than that they should limit the amount put with the malt. The public were not bad judges, generally speaking; and in a matter of this kind they might fairly be left to protect themselves, both in regard to beer and tobacco. What was required was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should incur a temporary deficit by reducing the duty 3*d.* per lb.

By this means the consumption of raw tobacco would increase largely, and the public would be better served. He could assure the Committee that that was no theory of his own, but a fact which was amply proved—proved by experience in the United States. Through the courtesy of the United States Legation, he had been furnished with a Report relating to the internal Revenue of that country for the financial year 1881. From that official document it appeared that in 1877 the consumption of tobacco in America was 127,000,000 lbs. In 1878, under the then duty of 24 cents per lb., the consumption fell 8,000,000 lbs. In 1879, in consequence of that falling-off — which was mainly owing to smuggling—the duty was lowered to 16 cents per lb., and the consumption for 1880 was 27,000,000 lbs. over that of 1878; and in 1881 the increase was 42,000,000 lbs. over the consumption of 1878. Let them take the money value of the Revenue from tobacco. In 1877 the Revenue of the United States from tobacco was $41,000,000; in 1878 it fell to $33,000,000; the duty was then reduced, and in 1881 it rose again to $42,750,000; being an increase of $1,750,000 over the highest amount ever received before. There was another aspect of this question which was a most important one for the Committee to regard, and it was the question of smuggling. Previously to 1878, from knowledge that he (Mr. Wills) possessed, personally, of the consumption and importation, he was able to say that there were no very extensive or well-planned attempts to defraud the Revenue with regard to tobacco; but immediately the duty was raised from 3*s.* 2*d.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* in 1878, a large increase in smuggling took place; and in the Port of Hull alone it was four or five times greater than it had been in any previous year. Then, again, they had had more recently very large seizures of smuggled tobacco in Liverpool—in fact, he believed that one of the largest seizures ever made in this country was made in Liverpool a few months ago. He had to-day moved for a Return, which he believed would show that the Revenue was a pecuniary loser by the duty; because, as it would at once be seen, the duty was an enormous incentive to persons who preferred profit to principle. When it was difficult to make a profit honestly, there were always people who would endeavour to obtain that object by another course. The prospect before the trade generally was most depressing at the present time. The retailers of the United Kingdom, who were an important body in distributing the production of the manufacturers, were being rapidly reduced in number. In 1881 there were 1,137 fewer licences taken out than in 1880; and last year the falling-off increased again by 967, showing that in two years the number of licensed retailers in the United Kingdom had fallen over 2,000 in number. These figures spoke for themselves; and they would, perhaps, be the strongest argument which he could address to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whenever that right hon. Gentleman came to consider the reduction of duty. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that whenever he cared to risk a temporary reduction, he would very speedily find himself amply compensated by the enhanced satisfaction which the public would experience, and by the rapid growth which would take place in the Revenue Department over which he presided.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said he did not propose to enter into a discussion of the principles involved in the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but he wished to ask for an explanation on one rather important point. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had referred to a sum charged on the taxpayer; he had said that in 1873-4 the charge on the taxpayer, for all the Services, was £64,480,000, and in 1882-3 it would have been £73,330,000, showing an increase of £8,850,000, and in the account the right hon. Gentleman included a sum of £3,670,000 as an increase charge for the reduction of the Debt. What he (Mr. Smith) wished to ask was, whether by that they were to understand that the charge for the Debt, which in 1882-3 amounted to £29,000,000, was less by £3,670,000 in 1873-4? Was that the case? How did the right hon. Gentleman account for the application of the increased sum of £8,850,000, if that £3,670,000 was not an increase charge? That was surely a fair and reasonable question. The right hon. Gentleman accounted for what appeared to be an increase by a sum amounting to more than the increase. Perhaps, in the course of the evening, the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give some explanation of this matter.

Sir JOSEPH PEASE said, he wished to address a few remarks upon the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but he intended following the usual practice of the Committee by not going too deeply into the details of the proposition made to them on this the first hearing of the Bill. His object in rising was to congratulate his right hon. Friend upon his Budget, and especially upon the very clear and comprehensive speech in which it had been delivered. He (Sir Joseph Pease) had been a very narrow watcher of Budgets ever since he had had the honour of a seat in that House; and he could hardly call to mind an occasion upon which the Budget had been brought forward more clearly, and in which the figures had been more lucidly enunciated. There were several points which he felt sure would give great satisfaction to the constituency which he (Sir Joseph Pease) had the honour to represent (South Durham). First of all, the right hon. Gentleman promised before long to deal with the question of Death Duties. He proposed to give up, in the course of the current financial year, nearly a half of the whole Revenue derived from the Railway Passenger Duty, which meant that he was about to facilitate travelling at those lower class fares that were so much in vogue, and which were of such great importance to the working classes of this country. The district he (Sir Joseph Pease) represented had rather lower fares, he believed, than the fares required by Act of Parliament; and the Passenger duty had, therefore, been for a long time felt very much by the Railway Companies. Then his right hon. Friend also dealt with the question of Telegraphs. To any hon. Member who represented a large commercial constituency, the fact of the lower charge for telegrams would be of the most important advantage; and not only that, but it would cause very considerable diminution in the daily personal expenses of gentlemen carrying on very large businesses, as well as a large diminution in the ordinary expenses of private individuals. There was another portion of his right hon. Friend's Budget to which he should like also to refer. He did not wish to take this matter out of the hands of his hon. Friend the Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds); but he had two or three times on Budget occasions referred to the subject—namely, the question of the necessity of dealing with the large and increasing quantity of land held in mortmain, which, at the present moment, escaped from all these charges upon land, which were felt so severely by ordinary private individuals. He was glad the right hon. Gentleman was making up his mind to look into this very difficult and complicated question. No doubt, it would tax his ability to the utmost before he could fashion a scheme which would be altogether satisfactory, as the subject was one of the most difficult, as well as important, that a Chancellor of the Exchequer had ever had to turn his attention to. As to the right hon. Gentleman's fears about losing the spirit and the tobacco duties, he (Sir Joseph Pease) believe that if these duties went, the country would be able to pay taxes and duties on other commodities far more as the consumption of the articles in question decreased. The increase of temperance was having a very marked effect on their Poor Law Returns, and that fact the right hon. Gentleman should keep in view. Even if the country had to pay a little more in the shape of Imperial taxes, he thought the increase of temperance would have a very marked and beneficial effect upon the local taxpayer. The statistics which were put before them, showing that 75 per cent of all the pauperism in the country arose from the excessive use of intoxicating liquors, should make them hail with satisfaction any observable decrease in the Spirit Duties, which would foretell an ultimate decrease in the amount of that pauperism. It would, he was sure, be a source of satisfaction to every Member of that House to hear that the right hon. Gentleman was able to report so very large an increase in the Education Grant. He (Sir Joseph Pease) had sometimes thought that in the grant per head by the State, in the absence of a free system, they had gone far enough in this matter; but no doubt the cry of the country was for increased education—if not for elementary education, it was justly and rightly for increased facilities for technical and other high class education. A part of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman which had pleased him very much was that in which he seemed to show them that he had taken hold of the great question of bringing about economy of expenditure in the great spending Departments of the State.

Sir HENRY PEEK said, that as a man of business, representing a large commercial constituency, he begged to thank the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the remissions of £170,000, which he had judiciously made in bringing down the price of telegrams. As to the Parcels Post, there had been, as the Committee was aware, a European Conference, at which it was arranged that the new system should come into operation in October, 1881; and consequently, in most European countries, it had now been working for some time. In this country, however, here they were in April, 1883, and the people still without the benefit of the Parcels Post. He was perfectly certain of one thing—and in that matter he spoke with experience, tens of thousands of packages passing to and from all parts of the world through his hands every year—namely, that the arrangements made for the Parcels Post were in nothing like the forward condition they should be if the new system were to be anything like a success. He had, for the last two or three years, strenuously contended that there should be a great central depôt for the Parcels Post; but had always been met with the argument that one great central depôt would be found both inadequate and expensive, and that it would be necessary to have five or six depôts. But few Members appeared to realize the variety and quantity of new business which the Parcels Post would open up. The Postmaster General, apparently favouring the five or six depôts' idea, and as an apt illustration, said that through the medium of the post, during the London season, enormous quantities of flowers would be sent by people from the country to their town houses; and, therefore, they would require an extensive building for that business alone. The amount of such business to be expected would probably be fully realized; but, at the same time, they must bear in mind that if they put up buildings to accommodate such parcels, they would have to spend much money, and to employ a very large staff of servants, and that, when the season was over, in the whole of Belgravia there would hardly be a parcel a-week to deliver. Well, what was to become of that large building and that large staff when the season was over, and throughout the long months in which there were no flowers? He was told that the people on the Eastern Coast—the Yarmouth people particularly, who produced the bloaters—were looking forward to an immense trade in consequence of the introduction of the Parcels Post, when they could send quantities of their goods in 1*s.* or 2*s.* parcels, postage included, all over the Kingdom. That was, at most, only a three months' trade; and if they were to have separate depôts they would be compelled to adopt one for such trade, and which, from its nature, would require plenty of room. Such depôt, for nine months out of the twelve, would be absolutely idle. And what were they going to do with all the parcels that came from the Continent? Were they going to transact all the business connected with foreign parcels, as positively proposed, in an area on the ground floor not so large as this House of Commons, with a cellar not more than ten times as large? Let them consider what the trade in parcels from the Continent would be, and how great a traffic might be expected. The hon. Member for Coventry (Mr. Wills) had just now addressed the Committee on the subject of tobacco. Well, let him (Sir Henry Peek) tell the Committee what would happen with regard to tobacco if the parcels from the Continent were not closely supervised. Ladies, as everyone knew, were neat, and he had heard say that a large proportion—say seven out of ten of them—would, when that Parcels Post came into operation get their boots from Paris instead of buying them in London. Two or three pairs would come for 1*s.* for the carriage. In some cases their husbands might say—"You are sending for boots; get a couple of pounds of cigars and put them into the same parcel. The same 1*s.* will cover." No doubt, that would be done in many cases, if the Government did not carefully supervise the parcels, and the Revenue would be an immense loser; and not only that, but the public morality would very seriously suffer. Personally, he was not a smoker; but he was told by those who were, and knew a great deal about tobacco, that, unfortunately for his argument, what came from France was very indifferent. He was told, also, that Belgian tobacco did not suit the English taste, and that Swiss was not much better. But, at the same time, he was informed that the very best tobacco came from Holland; and from that country, when the Parcels Post was introduced, they might expect a great quantity of this commodity to be imported by private consumers. As he had been anxious not to say anything in the way of exaggeration, he had spoken on this subject to a large tobacco manufacturer, and had asked him to write down his views on the subject. The reply he received was in these words—

> "In answer to your inquiries, *re* the Parcels Post, we feel sure that unless a strict supervision of all parcels is maintained a very large amount of tobacco and cigars will be smuggled by its means, especially from Holland, a country where the duty on tobacco is nominal; and it is our opinion that the Revenue would suffer very considerably thereby, also that it would be very detrimental to the tobacco trade."

He (Sir Henry Peek) maintained that it would be still more detrimental to the character of the country. He had no wish to take up the time of the Committee. He had laid before the Chancellor of the Exchequer his idea as to what the depôt for the Parcels Post should be. He was quite sure they could not do the work which would devolve upon them in the Post Office with their present means; and that the sooner they, as men of business, set to work to prepare proper head-quarters the better. As a specimen of what was done under ample arrangements as to space and a good system, he might mention that one of the managers of the Parcels Delivery Company had told him that if a chest of tea were put into a Company's van, and a letter at the same moment dropped into the post, both of them for Richmond, in Surrey, the Parcels Delivery Company would undertake that the tea would arrive at its destination before the letter. He hailed the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in many respects with satisfaction, but not so far as the Post Office was concerned. He proposed to look for an additional £100,000 on the net Revenue of the Post Office. In 1877 the net Revenue was £2,136,000; in 1878 it was £2,226,000; in 1879, £2,692,000; in 1880, £2,838,000; in 1881, £2,926,000; and last year, £2,954,000. That was the net Revenue from every department of the Post Office —from postage, telegrams, packet service, and all the other branches. Now, considering that the General Post Office was never intended to be a money making Department at all, he considered that to look for £3,000,000 sterling per annum from it was not a judicious thing for the Chancellor of the Exchequer of a trading country to do. Every facility for dealing with the large number of parcels which would have to be carried should be provided; and he (Sir Henry Peek) was quite sure that unless a much broader view of the Parcels Post was taken than that which seemed to be entertained it would be a failure. If it were a failure it would be a great blow to the country at large; and, thankful as he was to have a 6*d.* telegraphic rate, he would rather it were postponed than any business undertaken should be ill done. They must bear in mind—as he had said a week or two ago, without being contradicted—that the Post Office Department had a higher sick list now from over-work than it ever had had since it was a Department. If such were the case, he certainly did think that a remedy, and a prompt one, should be found.

Mr. MONK said, he was quite convinced that great satisfaction would be felt throughout the country when it was known to-morrow that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had yielded to the vote of Friday last for reducing the cost of telegrams. He (Mr. Monk) was certain the right hon. Gentleman was in no way open to the charge brought against him by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), when he said he looked upon him as chicken-hearted for yielding to the pressure which had been put on him, and for this very sufficient reason—that he was convinced the right hon. Gentleman acquiesced in the views enunciated on Friday last by the Postmaster General, and that he felt as much gratification at being able to give this boon to the country generally as the country would be to receive it. There was another portion of the statement of his right hon. Friend which did not give much satisfaction to him (Mr. Monk), and would not, he feared, give much satisfaction to those in behalf of whom he intended to say a few words. He referred to what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman on the question of the reduction of the Wine Duties. If he had understood the right hon. Gentleman correctly, he had said he could do nothing with regard to the reduction of the Wine Duties; but that in course of time—how long was not stated, therefore they must ask for an explanation—he might effect a modification in respect of the duties on wine from those countries from which they drew their supplies. The statement of the right hon. Gentleman was a very vague one, and it was hardly giving them so much as they had a right to expect, when they bore in mind that the Prime Minister, in the debate on the re-committal of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill last year, said he was still of opinion that the Wine Duties required an early revision. The words the right hon. Gentleman used were that the Wine Duties had a serious claim upon the attention of the Government; and if the Expenditure could be got a little more within bounds, and the Revenue were a little less sluggish, he hoped that the wishes of the country on this important matter would be realized. Well, after the Budget Speech which they had heard to-night, he (Mr. Monk) thought he might make this observation—that the reduction of the Wine Duties rested, to a certain extent, with the Government itself. With regard to the second question—that of the sluggishness of the Revenue—that seemed to have passed away, inasmuch as the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had, within the last month or two, received more than he had any right or reason to expect. He would appeal to his right hon. Friend to give them a little more comfort with regard to the revision of the Wine Duties than he had yet done. The Prime Minister last year stated that he adhered entirely to the proposals which had been made in 1880. They all knew what those proposals were. In 1880 the Government took legislative powers, in the Customs and Inland Revenue Act, to reduce the Wine Duties, if they could come to an agreement with certain wine-growing countries. If they could come to terms with the wine-growing countries, the right hon. Gentleman would, no doubt, be ready to entertain proposals for inserting in the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill some Proviso for reducing the Wine Duties in the same manner, and to the same extent, as was proposed by the Prime Minister in 1880. The duty might be reduced to 6*d.* a-gallon upon all wines up to 20 degrees, and 6*d.* *plus* 1*d.* per gallon for each additional degree up to 35 degrees. If such an arrangement as that were made, it would, he believed, give great satisfaction to the country generally. He would remind his right hon. Friend of this—that whilst they were trying to revise and reduce their Wine Duties, they were left out in the cold by Spain, the country to which, in the matter of Wine Duties, he mainly referred. They could not obtain from Spain even the "Most Favoured Nation" treatment. They could not get on with the arrangement of their Commercial Treaties, upon which, to a great extent, the prosperity of England depended. Well, he (Mr. Monk) made this appeal to his right hon. Friend, and he was sure the right hon. Gentleman would take it into his best consideration. He trusted that either now, or when the Budget proposals were considered on some future day, the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give the House a little more comfort in that matter.

MR. SALT said, he thought the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would meet with pretty general assent. He merely wished to say a word or two, not so much by way of criticism, as by way of suggestion and inquiry. He was glad to find that the right hon. Gentleman had been able to deal with two matters which were not large in amount, but which were certainly important, and, at the same time, very difficult to deal with. He referred to the duties on silver, and the tax on railway passengers. The right hon. Gentleman said, in both of those cases, that he proposed to deal with them by separate and special Bills. Now, what he (Mr. Salt) wanted to ask the right hon. Gentleman was, if he would kindly be very careful that those Bills should have the full consideration, both of the Railway Companies and of the traders concerned? Both matters were extremely difficult and extremely technical. Take, for instance, the Railway Passenger Duty. The interest of the different railways in different parts of the country varied very much indeed, and that, no doubt, formed an element of considerable difficulty in dealing with the matter; and in regard to the Silver Duties, what had already fallen from the right hon. Gentleman himself showed how extremely technical were the circumstances of the trade. If he (Mr. Salt) might venture to go so far, he would suggest that those Bills should be considered not only as questions of Revenue, but also, and much more, as questions of convenient administration. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would be good enough to take care that, apart from the Revenue operation of those Bills, the details should have full consideration, not only in that House, but, what was more important, on the part of those persons who were interested outside it. With regard to Annuities, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to create, he did not wish to give him the trouble of answering any questions at that moment; but he wished to say that one part of the right hon. Gentleman's explanation did not present itself quite clearly to his mind. He did not require an answer now, but merely wished to suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that he had not quite caught the drift of his observations, and that probably the same thing had taken place in the minds of other hon. Members. He did not understand how the long Annuities falling in, in the year 1885, could be manipulated before that time. As to the Navy, the right hon. Gentleman had said the expenditure was large, because the Government had decided upon building very largely increased tonnage. He (Mr. Salt) need scarcely say that whatever the expenditure on the Navy was, whether it was large or small, he should most cordially concur in anything the Government thought necessary for keeping up the efficiency of that Service. No criticism would fall from him on that subject. If he made any criticism at all, it would be that the expenditure was too small, rather than that it was too large, with this reservation—that great care should be taken in all Departments, both in large and small matters, that when a pound was spent full value was got for it—that all the expenditure was thoroughly valuable, and thoroughly useful, and that not 1*d.* was wasted. He heard a little symptom of dissent from below the Gangway, and he would reply to that that the English Navy was not merely a weapon of war, but a great instrument for the preservation of peace. It was a great medium of communication between the various parts of the Empire. The Navy was a matter they might discuss apart from any question of peace or war. He could only repeat that the expenditure on ships, so far as it was good and wise, should have his approval. He would now only say a word as to what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman about suffering for the sins, not of his forefathers, but of his Predecessors, and about many millions of their indebtedness having had to be made up. He would not criticize that part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech; but he felt bound to say that it was open to criticism, and that, perhaps, a great deal would have to be said about it by way of criticism at some future time. Apart from political purposes, and merely from a business point of view, it would be well if they were told how much of the £85,000,000 or £86,000,000 they were asked to spend in 1883-4 was for the payment of old debts brought about by the administration of the last decade. He thanked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for his Budget and his speech.

Mr. DODDS congratulated his right hon. Friend upon the lucid manner in which he had explained all the details and somewhat complicated facts with which, under the circumstances, he had had to deal. He confessed he looked with great regret upon the resignation of the Office of Chancellor of the Exchequer by the Prime Minister, because he had hoped that that right hon. Gentleman would have remained in Office to introduce the present Budget, and to deal exhaustively with the Death Duties. That hope, however, had been disappointed, as had also the hope he had entertained that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer would have seen his way, in some measure, to deal with the subject of the Death Duties. The right hon. Gentleman had excused himself for not dealing with the subject by the fact that he had only held the Office of Chancellor of the Exchequer for a few weeks, and that the question was a complicated and difficult one. He would not weary the Committee with more than one or two observations on the matter; but with these few he was obliged to trouble them, as he was afraid that, in the discussions they were to have on the Budget, he should not have another opportunity of adverting to this point, as the Death Duties could not again appear in the discussion. He might remind the Committee that the Prime Minister had dealt with these duties in a most fragmentary manner; but, notwithstanding this fact, it was shown in the Returns which had been supplied on his (Mr. Dodds's) Motion some short time ago, that, of the 44,350 cases dealt with during the past year, no fewer than 33,915 were dealt with in one payment in lieu of Probate and Legacy Duty. Three-fourths of the whole, in fact, were dealt with in the manner he had taken the liberty of recommending to the House some little time ago, and only one quarter had paid the Legacy Duty in one sum, and the Legacy Duty of different rates in another. He had no hesitation in saying that it would be found as easy to deal with the remaining 11,434 in the way he advocated as it had been found to deal with the 33,915. There should be only one rate, which should cover the Legacy as well as the Probate Duty. There had been no dealing with estates held by Corporations, which paid no Legacy or Probate Duty at the present time. It was a great scandal that the Duties were not levied on that kind of property, and he was glad that the subject was to be taken in hand at last. As to the question of taxing real property in the shape of Death Duties, at present no charge, except Succession Duty, was imposed on it, which was very much less than was the charge made on personal property as Legacy Duty; whilst real property altogether escaped the payment of anything in the nature of Probate Duty. There was no reason in the world why real property should not be charged the same as personal property as to these Death Duties. There could be no final dealing with these Death Duties which did not touch this matter. He would not detain the Committee any longer now, but trusted he might have a further opportunity of dealing with the matter, and of bringing it under the notice of the Chancellor of the Exchequer during the present Session.

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the Statement he had made, and on the remission of taxation he had been able to offer. The country would hear with great pleasure the news that, in future, telegrams could be sent for 6*d.* This concession would affect a very large class of people, and would be received with thankfulness by a large number of people who did not now use telegrams very much. He was pleased to hear the right hon. Gentleman shadow forth a scheme for largely reducing the National Debt in 20 years; for he considered that this country had been far behind in the repayment of its Debt, considering the great increase of property and wealth in this Kingdom. During the early period of this large Debt about £100,000,000 were paid off £840,000,000 by 1835; but from that time the Debt had alternately increased and diminished, and was now not much less than it was in 1835. He regretted, however, that the time had not yet arrived when a distinct Vote could be proposed in the Budget for the payment of the Debt, independently of the amount paid by surpluses or by Terminable Annuities, in order that the public should know that they were paying off the Debt directly. There were direct and indirect taxes; and he should like, in this case, to have direct means of paying off the National Debt. He always felt that the present mode of payment was not secure; because, if anything arose in a time of pressure, very likely the money that was supposed to go to pay off the National Debt would be seized and used for the special necessity. There had lately been an instance in which the repayment of the Debt had been stopped in order to meet an emergency. If a certain amount of Debt was paid off by a distinct sum of money at the time, and that amount of Debt cancelled, the Government would have to create Debt again in order to obtain the money they required; but at present they simply seized the money; and, therefore, he had no faith in these payments until he knew that they were really made and the amount of Debt cancelled. The people of this country considered they were making efforts to pay off their Debt; but what were the Americans doing? In the past year they had paid off £25,000,000 of their Debt; and in 18 years they had reduced their Debt, which was £596,000,000, by £360,000,000, thus bringing it down to £236,000,000. He did not say that we could attempt to reduce our Debt so rapidly as that, and he did not think it would be desirable; but the time had now arrived when they ought to know that they were really paying off their Debt. At present it was repaid indirectly, and how the money had been paid could not be specially pointed out; and he should be very pleased to see a Budget in which there was a sum of, say, £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 specially voted to pay off Debt. He was also delighted to find that the right hon. Gentleman was about to take off a portion of the Railway Passenger Duty; but he regretted that the whole of it could not be taken off; for he objected to all taxation on locomotion—whether on bridges, turnpike roads, railways, or on any other means of circulation of the public. This country boasted of its Free Trade; but they ought to apply the same principle to locomotion and circulation from one part of the country to another; and he was convinced that if it was a question of money the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have plenty at the end of the year. He believed he could show that the right hon. Gentleman would have a much larger surplus than he had calculated upon. Within the last financial year there had been two Good Fridays and two Easter Mondays, and also two Saturdays between the Good Fridays and Easter Mondays. Those made nearly a whole week during which taxes did not roll into the Exchequer; but in the coming financial year there would be neither a Good Friday nor an Easter Monday; and, therefore, there would be a considerable difference between the two years. Moreover, there would be an extra day, the 29th of February next year being Leap Year; and so there would be a whole week more than in the last year during which money would roll into the Exchequer. And it must be remembered that it was at that period of the year that money came in most plentifully, for Income Tax, House Tax, and Licence Duties were then due; and, reckoning these extra days as 1-50th of the whole year, they were equal to 2 per cent of the whole Revenue. That would give £1,500,000 more than the Chancellor of the Exchequer had calculated upon, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take that into consideration. The right hon. Gentleman had not referred to these two series of holidays, but they were a fact; and he was, therefore, sorry that the whole of the Railway Passenger Duty had not been swept away, for anything that promoted circulation would increase the welfare and comfort of the people, and enable them to inhabit healthier dwellings, and, at the same time, bring in Revenue from other sources. With regard to the Probate, Legacy, and Succession Duties, he had brought these matters before the House many times; and, without fully discussing these questions now, he did think that after the agitation that had prevailed so long with respect to these Duties, and after several Chancellors of the Exchequer had stated that they could not remain as they were, it was much to be regretted that something had not been attempted to place these Duties on a fair, equitable, and just basis. The alterations made within the last few years had aggravated the distinctions between personal and real property. There had been some modification of these Duties in 1881; but these alterations aggravated the injustice existing in the charges on leasehold property, as compared with the Duties on freehold property. He should not now push the matter further; but, looking at the large estates existing all over the country, the extensive building operations going on, beautiful towns belonging to one proprietor rising up, he did not think the present principle of these Duties fair. The only fair principle was, that every man should contribute to the State according to his means; but, according to the present system, in regard to the Probate, Legacy, Succession, and other Duties, the more a man had the less he contributed to the requirements of the State. He thanked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what he had already done, and looked forward to great things from him; but he hoped that in his next Budget the right hon. Gentleman would carry out some of the suggestions which had been made that night.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH also congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the very masterly Statement he had made, which he hoped would be of immense service in enlightening the mind of the public upon these questions. He himself could not go into an ecstacy about the trifling surplus and the slight remission of taxation, for they reminded him of a spendthrift who found an unexpected 6*d.* in his pocket. He would rather emphasize the manner in which the right hon. Gentleman had laid the case of their expenditure before Parliament. With regard to the remissions, he did not know that the Chancellor of the Exchequer could have dealt with any but the items he had dealt with; and, doubtless, the reduction in the telegram charge would be a very great boon to most classes of the people, facilitating business, and being of great advantage in private affairs. The reduction of the Passenger Duty would tend in the same direction; but as to the reduction of the Income Tax to its old level of 5*d.*, he wished the right hon. Gentleman had shown at this moment what was, perhaps, more courage than could be expected of him when he was surrounded by a House of this kind. This House represented the wealth, rather than the labour, of the country; and no doubt it would be expected by those who were called upon to submit to the increase of the Income Tax as a war charge that it should be reduced on the first occasion possible; but he ventured to think there were other directions in which reductions might have been made with more benefit—on the Tea Duty, for instance, which was an enormous charge—6*d.* on the lb., or something like 75 per cent on the cost of the tea—on the ordinary class of tea consumed by the bulk of the people. He was glad to hear of the reduction in the Revenue from wines and spirits; for although that might cause some difficulty to the Chancellor of the Exchequer it showed an increase in temperance. No greater impetus to temperance could be given than by a still further reduction in the duties on tea and cocoa. There was great desire to promote sobriety among the people in every way; for of late years serious mischief—moral, physical, and financial—had been wrought by drinking in this country. But, after all, if they were to have Budgets that were acceptable to the great mass of the people, the great question was, what was to be their general war policy? The hon. Member (Mr. Alderman Lawrence) had calculated upon a larger surplus than the Chancellor of the Exchequer expected; but there were other contingencies to be considered. They might have a small, or even a large, war on their hands. What was the meaning of the Congo Question and the Transvaal Question? He would warn the people that if they did not listen to the first whisperings of a policy of aggression they must be prepared for increased taxation. While he was a Member of that House he should exercise the greatest possible vigilance, and raise an outcry whenever such a policy showed itself. Another point which had an important bearing on the prosperity of many of their great industries was the question of the Wine Duties. Although they might be called upon, as a matter of policy, to reduce those Duties it did not follow that the people would drink more wine; but the effect of their arbitrarily fixing these Duties had been to lead Spain and Portugal, and even Austria and Italy, to regard us in a less friendly spirit; and in consequence we were suffering grievous injury, in many ways, from those countries, at a moment when the trade of the country was not in a condition to bear it. Although the Chancellor of the Exchequer was entitled to plead that he had not long held his present Office, he had every confidence that everything that was possible would be done to increase and facilitate trade; and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would gradually see his way to a more scientific system of taxation than the clumsy system at present prevailing. He had often put to himself the question why their local taxation was based upon scientific principles; but in regard to their Imperial taxation they had to resort to all kinds of expedients. He hoped they would by degrees see their way to the removal of their system of Customs and Excise, which was a most costly method of raising Revenue; and he believed there would be a bright future for their commerce whenever there should come a Chancellor of the Exchequer who had the courage to grapple with that question, and to abolish the Customs and Excise system; so that by the removal of restrictions on trade this country might become the great emporium of the world.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I think the time has now arrived when I may answer the questions put to me in the course of this debate. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) said he had been called chicken-hearted for not standing up for himself; but he thought I was a worse sinner than he was. The fact, however, is that I did stand up for my opinions and was defeated on a division; and this, I think, is different from the course of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) asked me what was the meaning, in the comparison between 1873-4 and 1882-3, of the Debt Charge in the latter year being more by £3,670,000? What I said was that this amount was the difference between the amounts applied to the reduction of Debt out of the total Debt Charge, not the difference between the two Debt Charges. The hon. Baronet (Sir Henry Peek) referred to the Parcels Post; but this is not quite the time for discussing that question. We are quite alive to the points raised, and they will not be lightly passed over. The hon. Baronet also spoke of the probability of post parcels containing tobacco, and said that the husbands of fashionable ladies would arrange to smuggle tobacco over from France in their wives' boots. I do not know what the husbands of fashionable ladies may do; but I should be sorry to smoke tobacco smuggled in that way. My hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), in reference to the Wine Duties, implied, I think, that I was not quite familiar with the question; but I think I am. There is a time, however, to speak and a time to be silent, and this is the time to be silent rather than to speak. I am quite alive to the commercial bearing of the matter, and to what has happened since my right hon. Friend's proposals two years ago. In reply to my hon. Friend the Member for the City of London (Mr. Alderman Lawrence), I may say that we have not failed to observe the fact that next year, being Leap Year, will give us one additional working day, and that it will contain no Good Friday and no Easter Monday; but the officers of the Revenue are not as sure as my hon. Friend that this results in increased Revenue. On the contrary, there is an impression that the Easter holidays lead to greater consumption than at other times of Exciseable and Customable articles. As there will be another night for the discussion of the Budget, I propose to withdraw the Tea Resolution, and pass that for the Income Tax, which should be adopted at once.

Mr. SEXTON said, the right hon. Gentleman was thoroughly entitled to the complimentary observations which had been made in various parts of the House, as to the lucid character of his speech. The Statement of the right hon. Gentleman was not pretentious but solid, and it moved along with exceeding ease and clearness. The right hon. Gentleman had shown that the Revenue of the country, vast as it was, was, nevertheless, buoyant. He pointed out with regard to the spending Departments that, in the first place, the changes in Ireland would involve great charges upon the public purse; and, secondly, he wished to emphasize the fact that the Government had to build every year twice as many tons of armoured ships for the Navy than was the case six years ago, at which time the Estimates provided for 6,000 tons, instead of the 12,000 tons a-year now constructed. Certainly, he thought that, as against the Tory Party, the Budget of the right hon. Gentleman might almost be described as a brilliant one; because, notwithstanding that the present Government inherited £7,000,000 of debts from the late Administration on account of the useless, bloody, and aggressive wars which they had carried on in all parts of the world, they had, nevertheless, cleared off that *damnosa hæreditas*, and sustained a vast expenditure year after year since they came into Office. But when he turned from the manner to the substance of the right hon. Gentleman's Statement, and came to consider the Budget from the point of view of Ireland and in the interest of her people, he (Mr. Sexton) was bound to say that he regarded it with profound dissatisfaction. The Estimates of the year about to begin appeared to have been carefully framed; the Estimates for the receipts during the same period seemed also to have been arrived at with ample prudence and care; and he had no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman's anticipation of a surplus of £2,691,000 might be relied upon. The right hon. Gentleman, out of this surplus, had made certain concessions and remissions of taxation—namely, to those who were fond of shooting, to the dealers in silver plate, to the senders of telegrams, to railway shareholders; finally, to the class of persons who paid Income Tax. And, after all this had been done, the right hon. Gentleman expected at the end of the year to have in hand a balance of £250,000. He now turned to Ireland, and asked this question—had the right hon. Gentleman, in dealing with his surplus, considered, as was the primary duty of every civilized Government, that which concerned the means of livelihood of certain portions of the population? He ventured to say that if any Chancellor of the Exchequer, in America or on the Continent of Europe, were to face the Parliament of his country with so large a surplus without making some provision for the needs of a portion of the population on the verge of starvation or expatriation, his tenure of Office would not be of long duration. The Government had had ample notice of the needs of the people in the West of Ireland; and they had, therefore, no excuse for not applying some of the estimated surplus for the alleviation of their distress. That distress was limited to certain districts and areas; and he believed that if the Government had had the generosity, or public spirit, to apply one-fourth of their surplus for the purpose of loans to the occupiers of land in the West, and for seeds wherewith to sow and plant their farms in the present season, the results would have been most valuable to the public interest. How revolting was the comparison between what the Government had done and what they had not done! They relieved sportsmen, who wanted 14 days' shooting, of £1 of the Licence Duty; they showed their solicitude for the elegant delights of sportsmen; but they had no regard for those who had not the means of living. They sacrificed £10,000 in altering the import regulations with regard to silver plate; but they had no feeling for those who had not even a delf-dish or plate to put on their table. They spent £170,000 in reducing the cost of telegrams; but they had no regard for those who, to say nothing of telegrams, could not pay for a stamped envelope to save their lives. They appropriated £135,000 to the reduction of the Passenger Duty, and providing for workmen's trains; they considered the British workman, but they did not consider those in Ireland who had no work to do; and, finally, they spent over £2,000,000 sterling in remitting a portion of the Income Tax. Hon. Members had witnessed the stampede within the House as soon as that was announced, the country Party rushing to telegraph the news of this wise decision of the Government in all directions; but not 1*d.* had been applied to the relief of those who had no income to tax. He repeated that, in view of the alterations he had enumerated, the silence with which the Government had treated the claims of the people in the West of Ireland was to him nothing short of revolting. If these people were needy and homeless it was because of the policy of the English Government, which drove them from the plains, where they were able to live with comfort, to the mountain side. This suffering population, having scraped together the money for the rent of 1880 and paid it, were afterwards served with processes by their landlords, and were now without food, without seed, without the means of living, and without hope. The Government Inspectors had warned them that supplies of seed would be needed in Ireland—that seed was urgently required now; in 14 days hence it would be too late; and he could tell the Government that, unless it was supplied, ten times its cost would have to be spent hereafter. The Bishops of Connaught, five Prelates of the widest knowledge and experience of Ireland, had also warned the Government, three months ago, that the pursuit of their present policy would lead to angry and seditious feelings; that the restoration of order would be made difficult; and that the black flag of famine would overshadow the country. Even the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer might well pause to consider these weighty words. In conclusion, he believed that in Ireland this would be received as a stern and cruel Budget—as one inconsiderate of the wants and forgetful of the welfare of the people. The policy of the Government was "penny wise and pound foolish;" and their neglect of the wants of the poor in Ireland would, hereafter, inevitably involve a heavy charge upon the country.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he objected entirely to the system on which the taxation of the country was based. He objected to all indirect taxation, and considered that Revenue should be derived from direct taxation alone. He believed that, at the present time, the artizan paid 12 per cent on his income; whereas the rich man paid only 5 per cent. All Revenue, in his opinion, ought to be raised by progressive Income Tax and progressive Succession Duty; and he did not think that a man struggling for the bare necessaries of life ought to be taxed at all. On the theory carried out in Irelan dwith reference to land, a man ought not to be taxed to the extent which prevented his living and thriving. A man who earned 30*s*. a week ought not to have the tax-gatherer come down upon him so long as there were rich people in the country from whom taxes could be obtained. After listening as carefully as possible to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, he did not understand that any tax had been taken off which affected the working man. The man who was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth would get nothing out of the alteration with regard to silver plate, nor would the working man derive any benefit from the remission of a portion of the Passenger Duty. [*Dissent.*] Some hon. Gentlemen dissented from that; but his impression was that every 1*s*. of the reduction would go into the pockets of the shareholders; and, for his own part, he thought it more desirable that the Passenger Duty should be retained and used for the purpose of getting concessions from the Railway Companies. He repeated, that he should like to see all the Revenue of the country raised from Income Tax and Succession Duty. But the right hon. Gentleman had taken off some of the Income Tax—that was to say, the 1½*d*. in the pound, which was added, as was said, for a temporary object last year. He (Mr. Labouchere) did not rush with alacrity, as some hon. Members did, to telegraph that reduction, because he represented a working-class constituency, which would not be much benefited by it. With regard to tobacco, the right hon. Gentleman took off from the manufacturer—for everyone knew that he alone would benefit by it—something like £1,300 per annum. But the hon. Member for Coventry (Mr. Wills) complained that the tax upon tobacco was not reduced in the interest of the working classes, who were the principal consumers; and he pointed to the fact that when in the United States a reduction of the Tobacco Duty was made, the quantity of tobacco sold was much larger than before the duty was taken off. The hon. Member had also shown that, at the present time, the consumption of tobacco in America was at the rate of 12 lbs. per head of the population; whereas in England it was only 1½ lb. per head. Tobacco was, for the working man, not a luxury, but in many cases an absolute necessity. Now, the right hon. Gentleman would know that the profit on tobacco was made by adding water to it, sometimes to the extent of 35 or 40 per cent; and the tobacco which, in the first instance, cost 6*d*. per lb. was charged to the working man at the rate of 5*s*. per lb. That was an immense tax upon him; and he ventured to point out that there was no advantage in levying it, because it had been proved, over and over again, that on all articles of primary necessity the increased sale always made up for the reduction of duty; and this had been shown in the case of the reductions in the Tobacco Duty in the United States, to which the hon. Member for Coventry had drawn the attention of the Committee. How long were they to go upon the monstrous system of neglecting the Revenue which could be raised from the soil? He believed that nothing would benefit Ireland more than the raising of tobacco, which was essentially a sort of garden culture, and, therefore, within the capabilities of persons who had very small holdings. If the present duty on tobacco were done away with, and if the manufactured article were taxed on the system now in operation in the United States, which, at the present time, yielded a Revenue of £10,000,000 sterling, he believed that the Revenue of this country would not suffer to the extent of a single 1*d*., while the land would produce a crop equivalent in value to £5 an acre; and not only would a large number of people be able to raise this crop upon their holdings, but manufactories would spring up, and both men and women would find employment in their neighbourhood. The right hon. Gentleman alluded to the fact that very little reduction was made in Expenditure, and it was to that Members on those Benches objected. He and his hon. Friends claimed that the Expenditure of the country should be less than it was at the present time. It was all very well for one set of Gentlemen to succeed another, each charging their Predecessors with undue expenditure, yet, somehow or other, the taxes went up. He did not know how the money was spent; but the fact remained that it was spent, and if they took any period of five years it would be found that the Expenditure on the Army, Navy, and Civil Service was greater than it was in the previous five years. In making that statement he put aside all the abominable expenditure upon wars that had been undertaken, both by Liberal and Conservative Governments. The expenditure on the Army was £100,000 more than last year. The right hon. Gentleman, he thought, said there was a reduction of £100,000; but he must remember that in stating the Expenditure of last year he included the Supplementary Estimates, which he had not done with regard to the present year. The Supplementary Estimates had of late years increased in a most extraordinary manner. It was all very well for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say, after showing an apparent reduction—"I must now ask for £400,000 more;" but in this way the gilt was taken off the gingerbread.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, the Statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was very clear and pleasant hearing; and the prospect held out by him of reducing the National Debt by 172,000,000 was so charming, so far as our children and grandchildren were concerned, that he was quite unwilling to say anything in the way of criticism on that occasion. There was, however, one passage in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman which had reference to India. They all knew that a Free Trade had been imposed upon India far in excess of what was accepted in this country. They still continued to tax tea, coffee, currants, raisins, and a few other imports, which were not now taxed in India, where the Import Duties were entirely abolished. They insisted on their cotton goods and other goods entering India without payment of duty; and they said all this Free Trade was for the benefit of the Indian people; but, unfortunately, the Indian people did not see it in the same light; on the contrary, they thought they might derive some advantages from a revival of the Customs Duties. They ought to be very careful that the people of India, who did not entirely realize the advantage of our policy, should not be able to say—"You do not yourselves practise that which you have imposed upon us. Our goods are practically excluded from your country by fiscal regulations which are practically in favour of your manufacturers." It was an undoubted fact that they had undersold the Native Indian manufacturers. But with regard to the trade in precious metals, especially in the silver trade, the Natives were more skilful than the English workman. They carried on an extensive manufacture of silver goods; and there was reason to believe that if there was Free Trade with India in this branch a large importation into this country from India would take place, and an impulse would be given beneficial to those poor people, who had been undersold by the Free Trade we had forced upon them. Our present system amounted to perfect prohibition and protection to the manufacturers of this country at the expense of the small Indian manufacturers. It had been said that the duty on plate was not protective, because it was equally imposed on goods manufactured in this country. But the system under which the goods were tested was not only strict, but absolutely prohibitive, because the hall-mark was only set upon plate when in a raw state—that was to say, before the goods were polished and completed. Everyone knew that the manufacturers of India were not free to import their goods into this country—the goods they sent here were often seized and broken up; and the Indian goods they saw in this country were, he was sorry to say, in most cases smuggled, because the fiscal regulations were so severe that people could not comply with them. Therefore, he said that the considerable trade which would spring up, if the goods were admitted free of duty, was absolutely killed and non-existent. He would leave the discussion of the fiscal question, as it affected this country, to those who were more competent to deal with it; but he wished to point out that, in effect, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had recognized the wrong done to India, although, when the right hon. Gentleman came to the remedy for it, he (Sir George Campbell) was greatly disappointed. He might almost say of the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, *Parturiunt montes, nascetur* *ridiculus mus.* What was the remedy for the injustice of which he complained? It was that, if anyone was so foolish as to bring silver goods from India into this country, and was unable to sell them, they might be re-exported; and that was absolutely all the advantage which the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to give at present to the Indian manufacturer. But were the goods, pending sale, to be exposed at the bonded warehouses in glass cases, and were the warehouses to be arranged on such a plan as would promote the sale of the goods generally throughout the country? At some future day, they were told, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would repeal the duty, and at the same time, as he presumed, get rid of the system of hall-marking. He trusted that day was not far distant. In the meantime, he thought too little regard had been paid to what the Prime Minister once said would form an important trade with this country; and he considered that there should be no time lost in settling, in the interest of India and of the workmen in this country, a question which involved such a comparatively small Revenue. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to state that the plan he proposed was not indefinitely postponed, and that next year a more favourable alteration would be made in the direction indicated. He heartily agreed with the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) that a large amount of the Revenue of this country might be realized by direct taxation; and he hoped that by next year the Chancellor of the Exchequer would see his way to making more radical financial reforms than he was now able to propose. He desired to see property bear its fair share of taxation; and he trusted that next year a substantial reform would be proposed in the system of indirect taxation. In other words, he was anxious to see the valuable consumptions of the rich—the valuable wines and tobaccos of the rich—pay taxation in proportion to their value, and not at the same rate as the cheap wines and spirits and tobacco of the poor.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD thanked the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer for his elaborate Statement, which he considered one of the best vindications of Liberal finance ever delivered. He, however, desired to put a question to the right hon. Gentleman similar to the one he asked of the Prime Minister 12 months ago. One of the most satisfactory portions of the Statement of the right hon. Gentleman to Members sitting below the Gangway on the Ministerial side of the House was the announcement of the reduction in the Revenue derived from the duty on spirits—a reduction amounting to as much as £5,000,000 sterling. Hon. Members with whom he (Mr. Arnold) usually acted had heard the announcement with more unqualified satisfaction, perhaps, than the right hon. Gentleman made it; but while they rejoiced at the evident tendency to temperance, and while they were anxious to promote measures which would stimulate the growth of temperance amongst the people, they felt an anxiety to do justice, at the same time, to those who were engaged in the liquor trade. Last year, when the then Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Gladstone) brought forward his Budget, he (Mr. Arnold) drew attention to the scale of the Licensing Duties which was introduced in 1880. He had always thought that scale was inequitable and unjust; and he now wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he could not take into consideration the inequalities in that scale? A man occupying a house rated at £50 was required to pay 50 per cent for Licence Duty; but a man occupying a house rated at £400 had only to pay 10 per cent for Licence Duty. It was obvious that that was a scale which it was impossible to defend upon any principle of equity. When the Prime Minister introduced the scale in 1880, he anticipated that he would receive £305,000 a-year through its operation; but, as a matter of fact, he had received no less than £430,000 from the duty—an excess over his Estimate of £125,000. He repeated, that he and his hon. Friends were desirous of promoting legislation for the growth and development of temperance, yet they wished to do so in conformity with the principles of justice. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that night that there must necessarily be a very considerable decline in the business of those engaged in the drink trade. He (Mr. Arnold) viewed that decline with great satisfaction; but that decline obviously gave the trade a claim to consideration in regard to the recent increase and the inequitable gradations in the general scale of Licence Duty.

MR. BIDDELL said, there were one on two points of comparatively small importance he desired to raise. In the first place, he wished to call attention to the way in which the English farmers were taxed in comparison to the manner in which the farmers of Scotland were taxed. He had brought the matter under the notice of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer before; and he, as well as the Prime Minister, had admitted that the English farmers were taxed 15 per cent more than the Scotch farmers. It was not his wish to increase the taxation of the Scotch farmers. He did not want to level their taxation up to the English farmers, but rather to lower the latter down to that prevailing in Scotland. There was another matter he would very much like to see dealt with if there had been an opportunity, and that was the cost of the brewers' licences to cottagers. The cost of a brewers' licence frequently amounted to more than the Malt Tax. It would be a very small matter, indeed, to the National Exchequer to reduce the licence from 6*s*., say, to 2*s*. 6*d*.; and he was confident such a reduction would contribute to the benefit of the working classes, and would, in reality, promote temperance. He thought the shooting licence might very well have been left alone. Those who shot—and he was one—enjoyed a luxury for which they ought to pay. He agreed with the observation made by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) that the present Budget was a rich man's Budget. The working classes would derive hardly any benefit at all from it. He could not agree with the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sexton) that any part of the community in Ireland were worse off than the small farmers of England. He believed the small farmers of the Eastern counties, who depended largely upon the growth of grain, were in quite as bad a condition as the farmers of Ireland. His chief object in rising, however, was to express his regret at the predictions of the right hon. Gentleman. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had held out the hope that he might lower the duty on wines—that he might lower the duty on what was strictly the beverage of the rich—while he would not take off a single farthing of the duty on the beverage of the poor. He trusted that when the right hon. Gentleman lowered the Wine Duties, he would be prepared also to reduce the duty on beer. The Wine Duties had been lowered three or four times within living memory; but the Beer Duty had really been increased. It was high time the question of the reduction of the Beer Duty was considered. As to the reduction in the price of telegrams, he was inclined to think that was a sound operation. He was strongly of opinion that, in a very few years, the Exchequer would be recouped for the lower rate about to be charged.

MR. O'BRIEN said, what was most painful to Irish Members about this Budget was that while the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to give, practically, £400,000 to the rich Railway Companies, to make provision for cheapening gun licences, and to supply silver merchants with bonded warehouses, it never seemed to have occurred to him to devote a few paltry thousands to provide food and seed for the unfortunate people in the West of Ireland. Of the rich surplus of £2,600,000, not one penny was to go to the relief of the wretched people in the West of Ireland, a third of whom, according to the Report of the Government's own Inspector —Dr. Woodhouse—"had no possessions, except some fowls, and, perhaps, a pig, and neither seed potatoes nor oats." If the anticipations of the Prime Minister in reference to the Arrears Act had been realized, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have been obliged to provide £500,000, probably in this Budget, for the purposes of that Act. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was willing to guarantee that sum out of the Imperial Treasury, in the hope that it would help the very class of small tenants, who were now starving, out of their embarrassments. If he (Mr. O'Brien) and his Friends could show— and they could very easily show—that, instead of getting them out of their difficulties, the Arrears Act, by an unforeseen fatality, had only landed them in greater difficulties, they would have fair and reasonable ground to ask the right hon. Gentleman, who had some experience of Donegal, to amend his Budget, so as to make some little provision for those unfortunate people, for whose benefit the Treasury were last year willing to contribute £500,000. He did not know whether the present was the proper occasion on which to introduce the subject of Irish distress. Supposing it was argued that it was not, his reply would be that there was no fitter, and. in fact, no other, opportunity for doing so. Time was pressing; the official Inspectors were making light of the distress; their Reports were stopping the flow of charity which was keeping the people alive; the Government was doing nothing; there were still four and a-half months to be bridged over, and this surplus was being given over to the rich, and not a penny of it devoted to the relief of his wretched and starving fellow-countrymen. It could be quite easily shown that those who were now penniless, and in whom private charity only was sustaining life, were reduced to that position by reason of their anxiety to comply with the provisions of the Arrears Act. He did not wish to use that as an argument against the Arrears Act; he simply wanted to establish it as a matter of fact that those poor people who, in their eagerness to get rid of their arrears, were ready to raise the necessary year's rent even by mortgaging their last cow, were now the most distressed. He spoke from experience when he said that in all tho distressed parishes, and especially on the most poverty-stricken estates, the people last winter, by hook or crook, paid over that year's rent. More than that, he found that in the Dunfanaghy Union the people had also been obliged to pay up the arrears of seed rates for the seeds distributed during the famine of 1879-80. Some of the people who made these payments were without seed potatoes or oats to put in the ground; they were simply living from week to week upon whatever chance charity might be given; and actually, upon last Monday week, when the Society of Friends was sending round from Belfast a cargo of seed potatoes to these people, the country was placarded with notices from the rate collector to meet him with the arrears of seed rate. It had been said that these were all very small people; that they only paid £2 or £3 rent, and the payment of a year's rent would not hurt them much one way or another: £3, however, used as these people used money, would support a whole family on Indian meal for three months. A great number of the people borrowed the rent from the shopkeeper, and the moment the distress appeared, the shopkeeper cut short the supplies. The Arrears Act was mercifully designed for the relief, above all others, of this very class of tenants; but by an unfortunate fatality it had just had the opposite effect. It held out to them a tempting opportunity of cancelling the arrears which were always hanging over their heads, and rendering their tenancy valueless; and in getting rid of their arrears, they had actually stripped themselves and their families of the means of support. What he put to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was this—that last year Parliament practically allocated £2,000,000, according to the Prime Minister's Estimate, to give effect to the intentions of the Arrears Act. If the anticipations of the Prime Minister had been realized, £500,000 of that amount would, beyond all question, have had to be deducted from the surplus now at the disposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Only £807,000 had actually been called in to meet the operations of the Act, and that all Irish money. He put it to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to the Government, whether it was not almost an obligation, certainly whether it would not be a matter of humanity, to see that the Arrears Act was not defeated in its purpose; to see that the unfortunate people, in whose interest the Act was passed, should not be left destitute by their efforts to comply with its requirements?

The CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Member that his remarks have no bearing upon the Question before the Committee. The Resolution before the Committee is that the duty on tea be 6*d.* in the lb.

Mr. O'BRIEN said, he was arguing that an expenditure of vital necessity had been omitted from the purview of the right hon. Gentleman in framing his Budget. In order to prove its vital necessity, it was incumbent upon him to travel into detail, and even into greater detail than he had yet given. But, of course, after the intimation from the Chair, he should content himself by appealing to the right hon. Gentleman, who knew something of Donegal, whether, instead of disposing of his surplus in presents to Railway Companies and silver merchants, it would not be better expended in giving some relief to those miserable people in the West of Ireland who were now trembling for their lives on the chance of private charity?

Mr. BUXTON said, he hoped that for many years to come they might hear the annual Financial Statement from the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, for it would rarely happen that they would have any Budget more clearly or more fully presented to the House than that of the right hon. Gentleman on the present occasion. He (Mr. Buxton) would not have troubled the House but for something that had been said by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). The hon. Member said that in this Budget nothing had been done for the working man. He could not agree with his hon. Friend in that statement; because it seemed to him that in one matter especially the Chancellor of the Exchequer had provided a great boon for the working men, more especially in the great towns—he referred to the abolition of the Railway Passenger Duty on fares of less than 1*d.* a-mile. He had the honour of sitting on the Select Committee on Artizans Dwellings; and he was quite sure that all hon. Members who sat on that Committee would agree with him in thinking that very strong evidence was given as to the difficulty working men in London and in large towns experienced in getting to and from their homes in the suburbs to their work. Building, in London especially, was increasing so much, that the working classes were forced into the suburbs; they had to travel to their work early in the morning, and return late at night; and any concession that the Board of Inland Revenue could get from the Railway Companies in the direction of increased facilities for working men getting to and from work would be of the greatest possible advantage to the working classes. He felt it his duty to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the great reduction in the National Debt which had been effected. The right hon. Gentleman pointed out to the Committee that between 1874 and 1880 there was a reduction of the National Debt of £18,160,000; but that in the three years during which the Liberal Government had been in Office the reduction had already amounted to £20,500,000. He could not but think that if the reduction of the National Debt went on at the rate at which it had been proceeding during the last three years, at the end of their term of Office there would be one matter at least on which to congratulate the Liberal Government very heartily. Before sitting down, he would like to put one question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman had told the Committee that whereas there had been a decrease in the Revenue from the Beer Tax, there had been a simultaneous increase in the Revenue of Excise on tea. Last year they passed certain new regulations as to the sale of adulterated coffee. He would like to ask his right hon. Friend whether those regulations had resulted in any increased consumption of coffee, for he believed it was in that hope that the regulations were passed? He sincerely trusted there had been an increased consumption of that article.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND desired, as one of the Members of the Committee on the Artizans' Dwellings Acts, to express his concurrence in what had just been stated by the hon. Member for Andover (Mr. Buxton), and his belief that the working man would, in the end, be benefited by the reduction of the Passenger Duty. But he desired also to get, if possible, a promise from the Chancellor of the Exchequer to consider a very important question which arose with relation to the taxation of this country; a question which had been referred to by the Prime Minister, either last year or the year before in this House. Several Members had that evening urged the advantage of direct over indirect taxation, and especially Members below the Gangway on the other side of the House. Now, he (Sir Henry Holland) was not going to detain the Committee by arguing that question; but he desired to point out that if the Income Tax was to be relied upon, it must be considered whether the present exemptions from it would not have to be reduced. The Prime Minister, in the speech to which he had referred, admitted with regret that the exemption was first originated by a Liberal Government, although afterwards, as he (Sir Henry Holland) must admit, it was enlarged by a Conservative Government. Now, if direct taxation alone was to be relied upon—in other words, if the Income Tax was to be mainly relied on—the question arose whether this exemption must not be largely reduced, and for this reason. At the present time a large number of voters were exempt from the tax. That number would be very greatly increased if the franchise was enlarged by a County Franchise Act. Those voters had, and would have, considerable and increasing political influence in the country; they could bring great pressure to bear upon the Government of the day—whether Liberal or Conservative—to incur expenditure, whether for purposes of education or for any other social question, or by engaging in a popular war, or otherwise. Now, it was neither just nor expedient that those persons who had urged this increase of expenditure should bear no part of it. It was not just that they should not bear any part of the cost to the country incurred by their action; and not expedient, because it tended to make them less careful about pressing for increased expenditure of which they would bear no share. He (Sir Henry Holland) trusted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would undertake to consider this question, which he should hardly have ventured to bring before the Committee had it not been for the observations made by the Prime Minister when Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK congratulated the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the satisfactory statement he had been able to make. The right hon. Gentleman must be rejoiced that the balance, though small, turned out to be on the right side. It was a matter for congratulation that the National Debt had been so largely reduced; he sincerely hoped more would be done in the same direction. They had been told that this was a rich man's Budget. True it was there was to be a reduction of the Income Tax; but it was only fair to remember that when the Expenditure of the country was suddenly increased last year, that increase was almost entirely met by an addition to the Income Tax. Surely, under those circumstances, it was only reasonable, natural, and just, that the Income Tax should be diminished by the amount of the addition last year. He was not altogether satisfied that the reduction of the Passenger Duty would result in as great a boon to the working classes as seemed to be imagined, nor was he sure that the reduction would be equally distributed between the different Railway Companies. He did not, however, propose to discuss that question at the present moment. The principal object with which he rose was to ask his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer to consider the question of the duty on Marine Insurance. All the reasons which induced Parliament to remove the duty on Fire Insurance applied with equal, if not greater, force to the removal of the duty on Marine Insurance, which was, moreover, very unequal in its incidence. In conclusion, he once more thanked the right hon. Gentleman for his very clear, able, and interesting Statement.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR remarked, that before he proceeded to comment upon the Statement made by the right hon. Gentleman, he wished to say that the praise which had been given to the right hon. Gentleman, for the manner and method in which he had introduced the Budget, was fully justified, and he thought they ought all to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on his first appearance in his new Office. He would venture, however, to make one suggestion to the right hon. Gentleman in reference to the term for granting sporting licences. He understood that there was some elasticity to be introduced in the principle of granting temporary licences to sportsmen. It was plain to see what was in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman—namely, that a certain number of the inhabitants of a town were in the habit of taking a short vacation once a-year. This was the only time they could enjoy sport, and the right hon. Gentleman thought he was conferring a boon upon such persons by giving them an opportunity of enjoying sport during that short vacation. But a fortnight was not always the usual term of vacation. As an ordinary rule, the vacation would be three weeks or a month. In all Government Offices, he believed, it was four weeks. Therefore, as the object of the right hon. Gentleman seemed to be to afford an opportunity for the enjoyment of sport during the vacation, he would suggest that he should increase the term from 14 days to one month; and if he liked, and if it were practicable, he might make regulations by which the licences might be still further extended to persons *bonâ fide* engaged in sport. There was another point to which he desired to make allusion. The right hon. Gentleman had been charged by a great many speakers with having introduced, after all, what was a rich man's Budget, and the reply of his defenders was that in reducing the taxation upon railway passengers he had conferred a boon upon the working classes of the country. Now, he (Mr. O'Connor) did not profess to be an authority upon the question himself; but several hon. Members, who were authorities, had expressed an opinion that the reduction of the Passenger Duty would confer a far greater benefit upon railway shareholders than upon railway passengers, and in that opinion he certainly felt inclined to agree. He, therefore, thought that this part of the right hon. Gentleman's Budget only conferred a rather doubtful boon upon railway passengers. Passing from that to other parts of the Budget, he failed to see any single thing done for the artizans of this country or Ireland. The Resolution which the Committee were asked to vote was one upon which, if he could get any support, he would challenge a division of the Committee. They were asked to vote for the continuance of the duty upon tea. He would put it to any hon. Member who was at all interested in the question of taxation, whether it was not monstrous that an article like tea should have to pay so heavy a duty as 6*d*. per lb.? He was sure that the right hon. Gentleman must have given delight to the hearts of the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), and other teetotallers, by the statements he had made in regard to the reduction of the consumption of drink; but he (Mr. O'Connor) was inclined to believe that the reduction in the consumption of spirits might be due as much to the depression of trade as to the increased habits of sobriety among the people. But in the same breath that he related the reduction in the consumption of spirits, the right hon. Gentleman went on to tell them there was an increase in the consumption of tea, evidently showing that tea was every day becoming more and more a popular beverage in this country. There was every reason to believe that it was not only consumed much more extensively by the poorer classes, but even much more by the wealthy classes than it used to be. The consumption of tea had certainly increased very largely during the last 20 years. He remembered the time when very few of the farmers in Ireland ever thought of indulging in the luxury of tea at all. They never got beyond cocoa, and some of them did not even get that. But in the very same breath in which the right hon. Gentleman rejoiced over the larger consumption of tea, and the diminution in the consumption of spirits, as signs of the growth of temperance and sobriety in the country, he told the Committee that this large tax of 6*d*. per lb. upon tea was still to be continued. He wondered whether the question had ever presented itself in this shape to the minds of hon. Members of that House? He would say that 1*s*. 8*d*. was about the usual price given by the artizans of the country for a pound of tea; certainly 2*s*. was a limit in regard to the luxury which was seldom reached. He would, therefore, take 1*s*. 8*d*. as the ordinary price, and he asked the House to reflect upon this extraordinary fact—that of that 1*s*. 8*d*. charged for one of the first necessaries of life, 6*d*. was levied in the shape of taxation. He would ask any hon. Member to name a single article consumed by the wealthy classes of the country upon which a percentage of 6*d*. out of 1*s*. 8*d*, was reached, or even approached? He would take another article—the article of tobacco. As had been observed by his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), tobacco had ceased to be a luxury among a large class of the people of the country and had become a necessary. He (Mr. O'Connor) could speak with perfect impartiality, for he never indulged in tobacco, and, indeed, he hated the very smell of it, believing it to be an both absurd and an unhealthy indulgence. That, however, was only his own personal opinion. The fact remained, that tobacco was generally considered to be one of the necessaries of the people of this country. Then let them see how it worked with respect to the artizan. He purchased his tobacco at the rate of about 3*d*. per ounce. He (Mr. O'Connor) did not believe that good tobacco could be got for that price, but a good many artizans only paid that sum; and how much of that sum went in the shape of taxation? No less than 2½*d.* Take another article of consumption. A great many of the people of this country could not afford to drink tea, and could not afford to drink coffee, and they resorted to cocoa. Then let them see what was the duty imposed upon cocoa. Cocoa or chocolate, ground or prepared in any way, was charged a taxation of 2*d.* in 1 lb., cocoa was the lowest article of stimulant the artizan could take, and if it was prepared in any way, then he had to pay a taxation of 2*d.* in 1 lb. for it. Indeed, there was not a single article ordinarily consumed by an artizan, whether as a luxury or as a necessary, upon which there was not the same monstrous disproportion between the value of the article and the precentage he had to pay in the shape of taxation. Only the other day, in the discussion upon 6*d.* telegrams, the Chancellor of the Exchequer got up and reproved the lordly and easy manner in which people spoke of the enormous bites which Royalty and the Government got out of the taxation of the country. Now, there were tens and hundred of thousands of people in the country who were very hard set to get a sufficient meal for their children; yet, out of every 1*s.* 8*d.* for tea, 6*d.* had to go in the shape of taxation, when, very frequently, the 1*s.* 8*d.* might be the sum total of the day's wages of the head of the family. He believed there was some considerable truth in the remark that this was a rich man's Budget. He would now go to another point. Why was it necessary to have this large taxation? The point was one which had already been touched upon by various speakers in the course of the debate, and especially by his hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth). Why was it necessary to collect so much money? Everybody knew the reason. Let them look at the list of charges upon the Consolidated Fund of the country, and see the vast total they amounted to, the total being some £31,000,000 of money. How much of that went to support Royalty and the numerous progeny of Royalty in this country? How much went to keep up the Royal Palaces? Why, a sum of £5,000 or £6,000 a-year was required for the purpose of keeping the Royal Palaces in repair. How much went to support the Royal Yachts, and was paid for, although it was said to be monstrous to make the assertion, out of the sweat and blood of the toiling workers of this country? The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been very eloquent on another of the reasons for this large Expenditure. He (Mr. O'Connor) had felt called upon to express an opinion whether the right hon. Gentleman was justified or not in making what was styled by some a controversial and political Budget. All he could say was that, knowing the antecedents of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), he regarded the Motion which the hon. Member intended to bring forward on Friday as something very much in the nature of a sham. Indeed, he should feel inclined to think that, instead of being the proposal of the hon. Member for Burnley, it had originated with the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself. The hon. Member for Burnley was the apostle of economy; but a wink must have passed between the hon. Member and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as they passed each other, to show that they perfectly understood what was going on. The right hon. Gentleman had been very eloquent as to one of the reasons of this large Expenditure. He had spoken about the large sums spent in war during the last five or six years, and the right hon. Gentleman was not a bit too strong upon what he said upon the subject; but upon that point he should like to put one or two questions to the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman said that all this War Expenditure was a heritage bequeathed to the Government by their Predecessors. If it was right for the Government to give up a position into which they had been falsely placed by their Predecessors in the Transvaal, why did they not think of that when they came into Office? Why did it require the defeat at Lang's Nek, and the excellent rifle practice of the Boer fusiliers, to convince them of the injustice of that war? The Transvaal War was not a legacy from the late Government entirely. It was a legacy of that spirit which was still one of the strong passions of the English people, to which all Ministries, at some time or other, were willing to give their allegiance. Was the Egyptian War a legacy from the late Government? The right hon. Gentlemen who occupied the Front Opposition Bench had adopted a cautious policy with regard to the Egyptian War. They were "willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike." The Leader of the Opposition used heroic words in the country, and shook his helmet at the Prime Minister; but he never wanted a discussion, because he did not dare to lay down the principle that this country had no right to go to war for the purpose of making conquests of territory from uncivilized people. The Egyptian War was not a heritage from the late Government. It was a consequence of the action of the present Ministry, and he congratulated them on the small profit they had gained. That very friendly supporter of the Prime Minister, the hon. Member for Aylesbury (Mr. George Russell), had declared that one of the results of that war was that the Prime Minister had become the idol of the London mob. He remembered when the right hon. Gentleman's windows were broken, because he happened at that moment to be the target of the hate of the London mob; and, to his mind, the right hon. Gentleman was then in a better position than he now was, because he refused to join in the work of bloodguiltiness and injustice. The hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) had called attention to murmurings of further war, of more glory, to show what a good fighter the Radical could be in a particular case. What was the meaning of the Motions that came from time to time from the Front Opposition Bench? What was the meaning of the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) getting up and shedding tears over the wrongs of the Bechuana people? If he (Mr. O'Connor) were an Englishman and a Radical, and a Member for a working-class constituency, he would shed so many tears over the condition of the people who lived in the slums and alleys of this country, that he should have little left for these interesting savages. What was the meaning of these Motions about the Congo, and other matters? They meant that this country was constantly to be embroiled in war, and every year was to see an increase in the number of their soldiers and ships, with every year a decrease in the happiness and well-being of the working classes of this country, who had to pay the piper for all these heroic tunes of Liberals and Tories. He congratulated his hon. Friend on the manly position he had taken upon this question, and, if he might make a comparison, he would say that Yorkshire was equally remarkable for the production of the real and of the spurious article. It was the county in which the best woollen goods were produced, and it was also the place where the worst shoddy was obtained; and he very much preferred the real humanity of the hon. Member who had recently spoken (Mr. Illingworth) to the sham philanthropy of his Colleague (Mr. W. E. Forster). What was the object of every Chancellor of the Exchequer in dealing with the affairs of this country? There was a very simple test—it was not a scientific, or a heroic, or a Chancellor of the Exchequer's test — it was simply what was the position in which the toilers of the country were left. If their position was good, then the policy of the Government was good; if their position was bad, then that policy was bad. He should be very sorry to see the right hon. Gentleman leave his present Office for a considerable period; but what ought to be his policy? If he could enable the charwoman in St. Giles's to have two cups of tea for her breakfast instead of one, he would have done more for the real interests of the country than if he waged 10 Egyptian Wars, or Congo Wars, or exiled a dozen Arabis from their fellow-men. In regard to the case of Ireland, he wished to put himself right with the Committee. For himself, and for his hon. Friends, he disclaimed the idea that they were coming here to beg alms from the Imperial Exchequer. What they wanted was that the people of Ireland should have work, and that the land should have a chance of being cultivated. The Secretary to the Treasury had given one of his Lord Burleigh nods when his hon. Friend spoke of the £500,000. This House, which was the guardian of the purse of the country, had agreed to this draft of £500,000 from the Imperial Exchequer; but Ireland had not got it. The money had been sanctioned; why was it not invested, and even the loss of it risked in giving the country something like a chance? He did not say it would be lost; but he put the case strongly as to say that it might be risked in order to give the people of Ireland some means of tiding over the next three or four months. The Government might emigrate the people to any distance, and say they would not sanction outdoor relief; but why not give them some employment by means of this money that had been agreed to?

Mr. R. BIDDULPH MARTIN said, he thought all who sat on the Ministerial side of the House must have heard with great pleasure that it was proposed to reduce the National Debt; but he wished to point out one or two matters of importance which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not mentioned. With regard to the reduction of the interest on the Three per Cents, the difference between that Stock and the Two-and-a-half per Cents at present was only 1*s*. 6*d*. in the £100; and it should be remembered that the large reduction of capital which the right hon. Gentleman proposed put the Government in the position of a probability of being able to relieve the taxpayers of a very large sum by reducing the Three per Cents to Two-and-a-half per Cents. This was a question of very great difficulty, because this reduction, he believed, could only be effected by giving a year's notice of reductions of sums of not less than £500,000 at a time. Next year, or in the year following, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would, by having only 2½ instead of 3 per cent interest to pay, be enabled to increase the Sinking Fund, and so to relieve the taxpayers of a considerable amount of burden. This would be a turning point in the financial history of this country, and its importance could not be over-estimated; and he should be sorry if the right hon. Gentleman could not hold out some hope that this great reform would come within his purview very soon. He was glad to find that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in reducing the Railway Passenger Duty, proposed to get some hold upon the Railways. He was in favour of unimpeded locomotion as far as possible; but he had observed that at the meetings of the Railway Companies, the Chairman pointed to that great abuse, as they regarded it, the Passenger Duty; and that although they promised increased dividends to the shareholders, they never promised a reduction of fares. He himself cared more for the millions who travelled in the third-class carriages than for the holders of Railway Stock, with whom he could not confess to having the slightest sympathy upon this point. He hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he was arranging this matter, would take care to get as much benefit for the passengers as possible in exchange for the remission of a tax which the Companies incurred knowingly, wilfully, and with a clear knowledge of it before they made their lines.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he felt sure that every Member of the Committee was glad that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had decided to remit the extra 1½*d*. of Income Tax, for that was what everyone had looked for. At the same time, there was one thing which he had heard with surprise, and that was that the right hon. Gentleman had given way to the Resolution passed a few nights ago with regard to telegrams. He did not think hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side would find much inducement to support the right hon. Gentleman on Motions of that description, if he at once gave way to them. All had listened with great interest to the very able speech of the right hon. Gentleman; but it contained one or two matters which it would be the duty of the Opposition hereafter to call attention to. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had charged the late Government, not only with wars which were going on while they were in Office, but with the responsibility of a war which was undertaken by the present Government—namely, the Transvaal War, for which, he maintained, they were wholly responsible. He ventured humbly, but decidedly, to differ from the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman, that the Transvaal War was a legacy from the late Government. Everyone knew that the annexation of the Transvaal was one of those acts of the late Administration which were so strongly objected to by the present Prime Minister in Mid Lothian. When the present Government came into Office, they had two courses open to them, and he should have thought they would have followed the course indicated by the Prime Minister in Mid Lothian, and at once given up the Transvaal. They might either have at once handed over the Transvaal to the Boers, or, as they at first seemed to intend, have said the annexation was accomplished by their Predecessors, and they were bound to adhere to the engagements entered into in the name of the Crown. But they did neither. At first they said they were bound to adhere to the engagements made by their Predecessors, and they went on in that course for a few months, until they were defeated in three actions by the Boers; and they were wholly and solely responsible for the events that took place in the Transvaal. The Secretary to the Treasury had been the advocate of the Boers, and had defended everything they had done.

Mr. COURTNEY: I never advocated their cause.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER accepted the hon. Gentleman's statement; but he would not deny that he took a very friendly and favourable view of the Transvaal Government.

Mr. COURTNEY: What I did was to denounce the stupidity of the intervention.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER: Well, he would take it then that the hon. Gentleman had ceased to be the advocate of the Transvaal Republic; that he was not prepared to defend what many hon. Members in former years had deprecated in regard to the action of the Boers, and desired to wash his hands of the whole matter. He wished to dispute the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Transvaal War was a legacy from the late Government, and to maintain that the responsibility for that war must fairly be laid at the door of Her Majesty's present Advisers. They might either have retired from the Transvaal or they could have continued there, but they took neither course. They simply remained there until they were led into a war from which they ignominiously retired. That was one of the most disgraceful and ignominious transactions that had ever occurred in the history of this country; and he emphatically denied that the late Government, or their Supporters, were responsible for that war. When the right hon. Gentleman threw down the gauntlet, the Opposition were bound to pick it up; and he would find that he had led the House into a position which it would be their duty, from which they would not shrink, to discuss. When this question came before the House in debate, it would be discussed by abler men than himself; but he could not allow that evening to pass without entering his protest against the unwarrantable attack made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the late Government.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he had never heard any statement in that House which pleased him more than the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but he was bound to say that he was unable to approve altogether of the right hon. Gentleman's proposals with regard to the distribution of his surplus. Neither was he quite able to follow the right hon. Gentleman in the way in which he arrived at his calculations. From as careful an examination as he could make of the materials at his disposal, he had come to the conclusion that at the end of the year, if nothing unforeseen occurred, the right hon. Gentleman would probably be in possession of a surplus of £4,000,000. With regard to the distribution of the surplus, the right hon. Gentleman was bound, in honour and in duty, to remove the extra 1½*d.* of Income Tax, the purpose for which that was imposed having been effected. But he could not help thinking that the adoption of a method which had frequently been employed for the reduction of taxation — namely, the Sinking Fund and Terminable Annuities, was very like the good intentions of a spendthrift, which often came to nothing. Those proposals were very likely to yield far less results than the right hon. Gentleman expected; and it was an extraordinary thing that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should be getting rid of the Funded Debt with one hand in the shape of Terminable Annuities, while with the other he appeared to be converting the Funded Debt into an Unfunded Debt. Only on the previous day a Paper had been issued showing that a sum of £750,000 for Exchequer Bonds, which was in the hands of the National Debt Commissioners, had been converted into Terminable Annuities. Then with regard to the reduction of the National Debt, it was a very remarkable fact that while the Funded Debt was year after year decreasing, with some slight exceptions, the Funded Debt was steadily increasing, and there was no reduction at all. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had no option but to agree to a loss of £170,000, in order to lower the price of telegrams; but with respect to the reduction of the Railway Passengers' Duty, he agreed in the view that the £400,000 which the Exchequer was to sacrifice would go into the pockets of the shareholders, and not into the pockets of the travellers. With regard to the balance of the surplus, the right hon. Gentleman would have done well to have made a remission of some taxation which pressed heavily on some industries in connection with the food of the poor. Was it worth while, for instance, to levy the excessive duty on chicory? The Customs Duty on raw chicory produced not more than £69,000, and the whole amount obtained from raw and ground chicory was less than £90,000, while the industry itself was paralyzed. Some years ago a duty of 12*s.* was put on chicory imported from the Channel Islands, and it destroyed the trade. By the reduction of the Coffee Duty the consumption of coffee had been diminished. In 1847, with a duty three times as heavy as it was at present, the consumption of coffee was 37,472,000 lbs.; but in 1881 the consumption fell to 31,900,000 lbs.; and in 1882 to 31,129,000 lbs. There were many Duties from which only ridiculously small sums were derived. For instance, £9,600 was levied on appraisers. Surely it was not worth while to maintain such a tax for such a miserable result. Then, again, the makers of playing cards were taxed to the amount of £16, and surely it was not worth while levying such a charge as that. Small amounts were derived, also, from the tax upon medicine vendors; altogether the tax only realized £4,691. It would be no loss to the Revenue to forego such a tax, while it would be a great relief to the industry of the country. Then, as to the taxes which oppressed the poor. They heard something last year, but he had failed to catch anything to night, about dried fruits; but he believed the tax upon currants realized £325,000, the tax upon figs, plums, and prunes, £42,000, and raisins, £143,000; making £511,000 altogether. Well, these things might be looked upon as luxuries; whereas, if there was no duty upon them, they would be brought more within the reach of the poor, and would enter largely into ordinary use. That was one of the things that should have engaged the attention of the Cabinet now in Office. As to the tax on alcohol, he had heard the point argued by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Daly)—and the justice of the argument was assented to, in some degree, by the Prime Minister—but they had not heard anything from the present Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the subject. It had been pointed out by his hon. Friend that the tax on alcohol was of very unequal incidence, inasmuch as whiskey was the form of beverage consumed by the poorer people in Ireland; whereas in England the favourite beverage was beer, and alcohol, in the shape of beer, was taxed at nothing like the extent to which it was taxed in whiskey. The result was that the consumers of alcohol in Ireland had to pay a much heavier duty than the consumers in England. Last year the House had heard a great deal about the question of Local Taxation; and so urgent were the representations made to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and so considerable was the pressure brought to bear upon him by the House, that he was obliged—whether willingly or unwillingly he (Mr. O'Connor) knew not—to recognize the demand made upon him and give way. Well, surely, in Ireland, they had a much greater claim than anyone in England had to relief from local taxation, inasmuch as they had only within the past few weeks heard from the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant that several Unions in Ireland were practically bankrupt—that they had, from the necessity of the situation, been compelled to increase their liabilities, until absolutely their borrowing powers had come to an end. Surely there should be some relief from local taxation in those districts; but not one word had he heard from the Chancellor of the Exchequer indicating that anything was to be done in that direction. Those were the points which rose to his mind upon the Statement the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made that night; and he hoped that before the Resolution was passed, the right hon. Gentleman would give them some information, showing that the questions raised were not altogether unworthy the attention of Her Majesty's Government.

Mr. GREGORY did not think that the interests of the agricultural population had been much regarded in the present Budget. A portion of the surplus might well have been devoted to the main roads of the country. Another £250,000, in addition to that granted last year, would provide for the maintenance of the whole of them, and be a sensible relief to the rural ratepayer. The scheme for the reduction of the National Debt was a very large and comprehensive one, and he confessed he had some difficulty in following the Statement with which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been good enough to favour them. He trusted that they would have some further development of the scheme; but he presumed the matter would be discussed in the Bill which would be brought in for the purpose of giving effect to the plan. It was proposed to take £40,000,000 from the Chancery Fund to be converted into Terminable Annuities. The right hon. Gentleman would excuse him (Mr. Gregory) if, as an old practitioner in Chancery, he was somewhat jealous of the interests of the suitor with regard to the funds in the administration of the Court of Chancery. He had heard with some dismay the right hon. Gentleman's statement as to the manner in which he intended dealing with those funds. Probably, he had not clearly understood the right hon. Gentleman; but if he had properly interpreted his words, it would be well if some further explanation in the matter were given. It would be a great assistance to many hon. Members if the right hon. Gentleman would favour them with a scheme in writing, showing what the operations he proposed would be, and making it manifest that the interests of the suitor would be properly protected.

Mr. BRYCE expressed the great satisfaction with which he had heard the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to the effect that he proposed next year to impose some duty on the property of Corporations. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that when he brought forward such a proposal he would find the opinion of the House had very much changed as to the investments of corporate property within the last few years, and that he would receive their support in the matter.

Mr. GORST said, he would not detain the Committee very long; but he desired to express the satisfaction and pleasure with which he had listened to the very lucid Statement, as to the finance of the country, by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He (Mr. Gorst) would not be so presumptous as to enter into a discussion on the various points of the right. hon. Gentleman's Statement, without more consideration than he had been enabled to give to that Statement in the course of listening to it. The right hon. Gentleman was, of course, aware that there were many points in his Statement which would give rise to discussion hereafter, particularly the plan he had shadowed out for dealing with the Terminable Annuities that would fall in in 1885. The principle which he presumed had been deliberately adopted by Her Majesty's Government on that subject would give rise to considerable discussion at some future time. The subject would be well discussed, not only in that House, but throughout the country. Unfortunately, the juggle of figures that the Treasury had invented under the name of Terminable Annuities had always concealed from the public outside the House the real nature of those transactions. What had really been done during the past 20 years was to keep on an amount of taxation necessary to pay, not only the interest of the National Debt, but also to repay, year by year, part of the principal. The effect of the operation of that scheme had been that, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated, the present generation had paid off a sum already amounting to £107,000,000, and by the year 1885 that amount would be increased to £115,000,000, probably to £120,000,000. He dared say the suffering taxpayer had hoped that when he had paid off that enormous amount of the National Debt of the country, he might, at least in his old age, receive the benefit of having shaken off so much of the burden from the shoulders of the nation. The taxpayer would naturally think that the utmost the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Treasury would require of him would be to go on paying the same amount of taxation which he had paid in his youth, for the purpose of continuing the reduction of the National Debt at the same rate at which it had been going on during the past 20 or 30 years. But if the taxpayer only understood the declaration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that night, as he (Mr. Gorst) hoped that, after the discussion which had taken place, and which might hereafter occur, he would understand it, he would learn that he was to have no benefit whatever from the burden he had shaken off the shoulders of the nation—that all the benefit from the reduction of the National Debt was to be derived by future generations—and that he (the taxpayer) was not only to go on paying off the National Debt as had been done heretofore, but that instead of contributing, in round numbers, £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 a-year to that object, he was, in future, to contribute £7,000,000 or £8,000,000. It might be a question that they would discuss hereafter whether the taxpayer of to-day ought not, at least, to be encouraged so far as this—that he should have the benefit of the relief produced by the paying off of the National Debt, out of the funds to which he himself had contributed. And, perhaps, it might be as much as could be expected of the generation in which they lived, that they should go on contributing £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 a-year towards the reduction of the Debt. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer should take that view, it would give relief to taxation to the amount of £3,000,000 in 1885 ; and that money, to use the words of an old politician, would be left to fructify and produce more money in the pockets of the people. But his (Mr. Gorst's) object was not to discuss that point, or any other point, upon the Statement of the right hon. Gentleman. What he wished to point to was rather the Party, than the Financial, portion of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. He (Mr. Gorst) had heard a great many Financial Statements in that House; but he did not think he had ever heard so clever a Financial Statement, from a purely Party point of view, as that to which they had listened to that night from the right hon. Gentleman. At the present moment, the Government were on the point of being arraigned by one of their own Supporters—the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands)—for their extravagance, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer very cleverly took the opportunity of drawing a red-herring across the scent by raising a charge of extravagance against the late Government. And to judge from the language of the worthy Alderman the Member for the City of London (Mr. R. N. Fowler), who spoke just now, that manœuvre of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was very likely to be successful. As the worthy Alderman had said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer having thrown down the gauntlet, the Conservative Party was bound to take it up; though when the question raised by the hon. Member for Burnley came on for discussion, instead of debating the extravagance of the present Government, they were likely to have a debate on the extravagance of the late Government. Now, he (Mr. Gorst) would like to warn the Chancellor of the Exchequer that there were some Members in that House capable of seeing through a manœuvre of that kind; and there were many who were perfectly competent to defend the action of the late Government in matters connected with finance. No doubt, the late Government would be defended in that respect; but the object of the House to-morrow, and on any future day to which the debate might be adjourned, would not be to discuss the policy of the late Government, but to discuss that of the present Government. And he did not think the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or his Colleagues, were likely to succeed in throwing dust in the eyes of the public—they were not likely to induce them to forget the enormous Expenditure that was now going on, and which for three years past had been steadily increasing, by merely saying that their Predecessors in Office were as extravagant as they were. It was no excuse for extravagance in the present Government to say that there had been extravagance—even if there had been extravagance—on the part of the late Government. Every Government must defend its own conduct and its own actions ; and when a Government came into Office denouncing to the country the extravagance of their Predecessors, and promising the taxpayers that if they were put into the place of those who had the management of the finances, great reductions would take place in the National Expenditure, they should bring forward better arguments than those advanced by the Chancellor that night to defend themselves in the face of the country. In previous Sessions he had seen Liberal Members rise, and had heard them express their shame and sorrow, when, after having heard the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) say that no Government deserved the confidence of the country that could not govern it for £70,000,000, when they found themselves in the predicament of being the supporters of a Government that was spending £85,000,000. That shame and sorrow, that seemed to be felt by many hon. Members below the Gangway, was going now to break out in the Resolution of the hon. Member for Burnley, which the Government would have to meet by arguments showing the soundness of their own financial conduct, and which they would not be able to meet by bringing counter accusations against their Predecessors. He specially desired now to express the hope that at least a considerable section of the Conservative Party would not be led astray, as had been the hon. Alderman the Member for the City of London, and would not forget the Resolution which would come before the House to-morrow, and would determine to call the Government to account for their own extravagance.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: (Mr. Childers) I was very much blamed a short time ago by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), because I rose to reply before certain hon. Members had spoken; but I waited for some little time to see if any hon. Members wished to address the Committee, and I had no idea that the debate was going to occupy so long a time. I trust now that I may be allowed to say a few words in answer to observations which we have been listening to since I last replied. Personally, I am much obliged to those hon. Members who have been good enough to say that they approve of the manner in which I made my Statement, and that they understand my objects clearly. The hon. and learned Member who has just spoken will excuse me if I do not follow him into the details of the amount of Debt that has been paid off, because I shall at some future period have an opportunity of going fully into that question. It seems to be forgotten that I stated that the amount is now £7,000,000 a-year, and that, surely, is not an extravagant sum to redeem annually. The hon. and learned Member says I have tried to draw a red-herring across the scent in regard to my hon. Friend the Member for Burnley's (Mr. Rylands) Resolution. What I said as to the Expenditure of the last 10 years seems to the hon. and learned Member rather a charge against the late Government than a defence of what has been done by ourselves. But that was not my object. All I intended to do, in giving these figures, was to offer the fullest information in my power as to the Expenditure of the last 10 years, and I particularly compared the year 1882 to 1883—which was a year in which the present Government was in power—with the year 1873 to 1874, which was the year in which my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister was also at the head of the Administration; and that comparison had nothing whatever to do with anything which happened during the six years Administration of the late Government. If, incidentally, in stating the facts, which I wished to do as plainly as possible, I said that which, in the opinion of some hon. Members, constituted an attack upon the late Government, I cannot help it. It would be impossible to state the Expenditure of the last few years without making these comparisons; and in what I did I believe I acted with perfect fairness. With regard to the operation of the reduction of the Debt, with reference to the Suitors' Fee Fund of the Court of Chancery—a subject which has been referred to by the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory), who said he did not understand the operation of the reduction—the explanation of the matter is briefly this. There are now in the Court of Chancery £61,000,000 Consols, and other Three per Cents. There is not the faintest possibility of that total amount being largely reduced; and what we propose to do is to take £40,000,000 of the Stock, and convert it into Annuities, so that instead of £1,200,000 being paid annually as interest, about £2,700,000 will be paid, the difference being reinvested in Stock. In the end the whole of the Three per Cents will then be replaced; and meanwhile, from time to time, the state of the account is to be revised under the direction of the Lord Chancellor, and if there is the faintest possibility of the Stock replaced being less than that originally cancelled, the difference is at once credited to the Court. The operation is as safe a one as could possibly be made. The hon. Member for the City of London (Mr. R. N. Fowler) has several times alluded to the question as to whether the Transvaal War was a legacy from the late Government or not. On that point I will remark that, anyhow, the present Government has paid every farthing of its cost. The hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock) has alluded to the question of Marine Insurance Duty, asking that it should be considered with a view to reduction of the duty. On this subject I am unable to offer any opinion at the present moment; but, undoubtedly, the subject is worthy of consideration. The hon. Member for Midhurst (Sir Henry Holland) has asked whether the Government has any intention of altering the scale of exemptions from the Income Tax? I am afraid I should be too bold, after the change which has been made in the scale by the right hon. Baronet (Sir Stafford Northcote), were I to engage in the critical operation suggested by the hon. Member. The scale now in force was fixed by the late Government and carried by a large majority, notwithstanding that it was objected to by many Members on the then Opposition side of the House. Under these circumstances, I doubt whether it would be politic for the Government to attempt now any change in the direction indicated. In reply to the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson), I may say that the amount of duty paid on coffee has increased to the extent of £7,000 last year, and it is probable that a further increase will take place. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) has recalled my attention to the question of the duty on silver plate, and in doing so has expressed his regret that the Government has done so little that will benefit the Indian manufacturers, in allowing them to re-export the goods which, under the existing arrangements, will be destroyed. But my hon. Friend will remember that I have promised to consider other points in connection with silver proposed by the Joint Committee. A question has been raised by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), and other Gentlemen acting with him, with respect to the non-introduction into the Budget of a grant in aid to meet the distress existing in the West of Ireland, and he has sneered at the Budget as a rich man's Budget, especially ridiculing the reduction in the price of telegrams. But I would remind him (Mr. Sexton) that his Friends sitting round him had a few days ago voted for the introduction of 6*d.* telegrams, and I think it is hardly reasonable on the part of the hon. Member for Sligo to upbraid the Government with having done what the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and several Members of his Party had voted for as a thing not to be deferred, but to be done at once. The hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) has in his speech blamed the Government for not having voted a sum of public money for the relief of present distress in Ireland; and he contended that because the anticipations of the Premier with regard to the amount that would be expended under the Arrears Act of last Session had not been realized, the Government were now bound to spend money in Ireland on something else. But the Committee will see that the measure of relief for Irish tenants alluded to by the hon. Gentleman is a totally different matter from a Vote of public money. It is proposed as a charge on the Irish Church Fund; and this is the first time I have heard of any claim for a grant of public money out of the Exchequer for the West of Ireland; and I believe that public opinion in that country, including the opinion of the Irish Prelates, tends in a very different direction. I trust I have not omitted to reply to any of the questions addressed to me in the course of the evening, and will conclude by saying that I propose to withdraw the Resolution relating to Tea, in order that the Committee may be again set up, but that I propose to take at once the Income Tax Resolution, which is urgent.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS considered there was a great deal of force in the observations of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) as to the methed taken by the right hon. Gentleman of anticipating the debate of to-morrow upon the financial policy of the Government. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on introducing the Budget, was undoubtedly one of great ability, and he had listened to it with much pleasure and attention. He was, however, bound to say that the right hon. Gentleman had not appeared to him quite so successful in one division of the subject—that was to say, where he spoke of being obliged to refer incidentally to the acts of the late Government, as he had been in the other portions of his speech, for he seemed for the moment to have forgotten the maxim —*Summa ars est celare artem.* The feelings of the right hon. Gentleman at that particular point seemed to have run away with him; and he was bound to add that, in his references to the late Government, his speech had more of a Party character than any Budget Statement he had ever listened to. After all the unfulfilled promises of economy that were held out to the country at the last General Election, and the professions which had been made in that House, he felt there was great weight in the observations of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham; and when they came to discuss the Motion on the Paper for to-morrow in the name of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), the right hon. Gentleman would find that the question did not turn on the merits of the late Government, but upon the failure of the present Government to redeem their promises, and that the portion of the Statement of the right hon. Gentleman to which he had alluded would have practically no effect in deciding the issue placed before the House.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Resolved, That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, there shall be charged, collected, and paid for the year commencing on the sixth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-three, in respect of all Property, Profits, and Gains mentioned or described as chargeable in the Act of the sixteenth and seventeenth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-four, the following Duties of Income Tax (that is to say):

For every Twenty Shillings of the annual value or amount of Property, Profits, and Gains chargeable under Schedules (A), (C), (D), or (E) of the said Act, the Duty of Five Pence;

And For every Twenty Shillings of the annual value of the occupation of Lands, Tenements, Hereditaments, and Heritages chargeable under Schedule (B) of the said Act,—

In England, the Duty of Two Pence Halfpenny;

In Scotland and Ireland respectively, the Duty of One Penny Three Farthings;

Subject to the provisions contained in section one hundred and sixty-three of the Act of the fifth and sixth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-five, for the exemption of persons whose income is less than One Hundred and Fifty Pounds, and in section eight of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1876," for the relief of persons whose income is less than Four Hundred Pounds.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.—[Bill 123.]

(*The Marquess of Hartington, The Judge Advocate General, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Mr. SEXTON said, he did not know whether the Government desired to make any statement before Mr. Speaker left the Chair, with regard to the Motion made on Monday night that the Bill be read a second time; but he wished to state that he did not find it consistent with his public duty to allow this Bill to pass through any stage without making a protest against the disreputable system maintained by the War Office with respect to the maintenance of soldiers' children and wives. If it were open to him to convey to the public mind any adequate sense of the system in question, he believed that system could not stand for a single hour; he would go farther, and say if he could impart to the Members of the House a just idea of the mean and hateful system under which the wives of soldiers were denied their rights, neither this nor any other Government would be able to retain Office if it allowed that system to continue. Ten years ago the House committed itself to the principle that a soldier of the Regular Forces should be liable for the maintenance of children of which he was proved to be the father to the same extent as if he were a civilian; but, as the House would be aware, that principle had been systematically evaded by the War Office. What was the position in this respect of a person who was not a soldier? He was liable to be taken by a woman into a Court of Justice; if his liability were proved the magistrate would make an order, and the law would compel him regularly and effectually to obey the order of the Court. That was exactly what the 145th clause of the Army Act declared should be the position of a soldier; but, as he had already pointed out, the intention of the clause was systematically evaded by the authorities, who placed the Army before the recruit as a refuge from his natural and legal liability. They said to him, in effect—"Join the Army, and we shall make it a place of refuge for you from your liability to maintain your wife and children." Under the present system a woman must go the workhouse and get the Guardians to issue a summons against her husband, and it was required that a sufficient sum of money should be sent to the commanding officer, to convey the soldier to the place of hearing and then back to his quarters. That, he said, was a denial of justice, and prohibitive of the hearing of the complaint. But even if the woman could find the money, there was still the War Office rule that the soldier, notwithstanding any order made against him, might be sent on foreign service, in which case his wife and children might starve. This rule was, practically, another evasion of the law, and should be at once abolished, because a regiment that was ordered abroad could do very well without a soldier who had deserted his wife and child; and he contended that the regiment should proceed on foreign service without him, or, at any rate, that the man should be compelled to answer the claim upon him, as the Act said, "in the same manner as if he were not a soldier." They were told that the rule which required that a sum of money should be deposited for the transport of the soldier to and from the Court was necessary to insure the *bonâ fides* of the woman's application. They were also told that the woman might induce the soldier to desert; but in reply to that he submitted that a woman so disposed would have sufficient opportunities for her purpose under the ordinary regulations of the Army. There could, however, be no difficulty in preventing this if a corporal and a private were sent with the soldier to the place where the charge was made. Let the woman be provided with the means of proceeding out of the public funds. He thought that having to spend money in vindication of justice would be better than that the imputation should lie that the British Army was an asylum in which a man could evade his most sacred liabilities. The Secretary of State was obliged to make some allowance to the wives of soldiers; but the amount of it was at his option—he might allow, in the case of a private, as little as a 1*d*., and in the case of sergeants 6*d*. a-day. The noble Marquess had informed him that 840 orders had been made last year in cases in which paternity was proved. But if he looked into the workhouses, he would find that it was only one in ten of the orders which ought to have been made that were made; and, therefore, he said, in order to establish this system upon a basis of equity, it was necessary not only that the Secretary of State for War should make an order, but that the wife should be provided by the War Office with sufficient money to meet the demands upon her. He promised that, so long as he remained in that House, and so often as this practice came before him in any form, whether in a Bill or otherwise, he should confront the Government with the comments which belonged to so vile a system.

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House will, upon this day six months, resolve itself into the said Committee,"—(*Mr. Sexton*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) said, he should have thought that the proper time to raise this question would have been when, in Committee, they reached the 7th section of the Bill. As, however, the hon. Member for Sligo had anticipated the proceedings in Committee, and had now given his reasons for desiring an amendment in the way indicated, perhaps the better plan would be for him to at once follow the hon. Gentleman. There was a great deal in the speech of the hon. Member to which he must demur. The hon. Member spoke of the civil obligations of a soldier. It must be remembered that a soldier had undertaken certain duties to his Queen and country.

MR. SEXTON said, the 145th section of the Army Act said—

"A soldier of the regular forces shall be liable to contribute to the maintenance of his wife and of his children, and also to the maintenance of any bastard child of which he may be proved to be the father, to the same extent as if he were not a soldier. . . ."

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) said, that was certainly so in theory. The hon. Member, however, stopped short in the middle of the section. The section went on to say—

> "But execution in respect of any such liability or of any order or decree in respect of such maintenance shall not issue against his person, pay, arms, ammunition, equipments, instruments, regimental necessaries, or clothing; nor shall he be liable to be punished for the offence of deserting or neglecting to maintain his wife or family, or any member thereof, or of leaving her or them chargeable to any union, parish, or place."

Of course, there was no doubt the section began by declaring the liability of the soldier; but it went on to relieve him from the liability of execution. If execution could be issued against his arms, for instance, it was clear he would not be able to discharge his duty to his country. The liability of a soldier, therefore, was not the same as that of any other man. A soldier had a two-fold liability; he was under an obligation to support his wife and family, and he had to serve his Queen and country. Their business was to try, as far as they could, to reconcile the two obligations. Under the old Mutiny Act it was laid down that a soldier was under no kind of obligation to support his wife and family, that he might snap his finger at any such liability; but in 1873 Lord Cardwell, who was one of the most just men who ever lived, considered the subject, and introduced into the Mutiny Bill of that year the clause he (Mr. Osborne Morgan) had just read. The effect of that clause was simply that when any order had been made against a soldier for the maintenance of his wife or family or any illegitimate child, or when it appeared to the Secretary of State for War that a soldier had deserted, without reasonable cause, his wife or family, the Secretary of State might order a stoppage of a certain amount from the pay of the soldier to be appropriated—

> "In the first case, in liquidation of the sum adjudged to be paid by such order or decree; and, in the second place, towards the maintenance of such wife or children, in such manner as the Secretary of State thinks fit."

It was now proposed that that discretion of the Secretary of State be taken away. Now, it must be remembered that the Act contemplated two processes. In the first place, an order might be made by the Court before whom the case was brought; and, in the second place, the Secretary of State, where he was satisfied, without any inquiry or judicial proceedings, that a soldier had deserted his wife or children, might make an order. It was, however, only in regard to the first case that the Proviso contained in the 3rd sub-section applied. The Proviso was as follows:—

> "Where a proceeding is instituted against a soldier of the regular forces, under any Act, or at Common Law, for the purpose of enforcing against him any such liability as above in this section mentioned, and such soldier is quartered out of the jurisdiction of the Court, or if the proceeding is before a Court of Summary Jurisdiction, out of the Petty Sessional Division in which the proceeding is instituted, the process shall be served on the commanding officer of such soldier; and such service shall not be valid unless there be left therewith, in the hands of the commanding officer, a sum of money (to be adjudged as costs incurred in obtaining the order or decree, if made against the soldier) sufficient to enable him to attend the hearing of the case and return to his quarters, and such sum may be expended by the commanding officer for that purpose; and no process whatever under any Act, or at Common Law, in any proceeding, in this section mentioned, shall be valid against a soldier of the regular forces if served after such soldier is under orders for service beyond the seas."

That was a Proviso which the hon. Member for Sligo wished to repeal. The Proviso did not apply to a case in which the claim was disputed, and in which the soldier had to appear before a Court to answer the claim. The process which took place at the War Office was this. The wife applied to the War Office, then an inquiry was made of the commanding officer, and in many cases the soldier admitted his liability, and there was an end of the matter. If, on the contrary, the man denied the liability, the thing had to be fought out before the Court, and then the Proviso he had read came into operation. There were two distinct reasons for the Proviso—the danger of collusion between the soldier and the woman, and the hardship upon the soldier. It was well known that many of the bastardy cases which were brought up were by no means genuine; and it was scarcely fair that a case of this kind should be sprung upon a man who had been called away to serve in a distant locality; for if a soldier was serving in the same town in which the woman or wife was living, the Proviso, of course, had no application. Let them take the case of a man stationed in Belfast, but against whom proceedings were taken in Canterbury. Of course, he must appear before the Petty Session, in order to answer to the case. How was he to get there? It was not his fault he had been obliged to leave Kent and go to Belfast. A civilian was a free agent; but a soldier must go where he was ordered. At whose expense was he to travel from Belfast to Canterbury? It was absurd to say he was to go at his own. Probably he had not got the money. Was he to go at the expense of the country? It would be very hard indeed if the country had to bear the cost of transit in a trumped up case; and in every other case the money lodged would be returned to the party depositing it as part of the costs of the proceedings. It was said it would be hard on the woman if she had to pay the expenses; but it was not the woman who would have to do so, but the Guardians; for a wife, as the law now stood, could not take proceedings against her husband for the purpose. The woman would apply to the Guardians as a pauper, and then the Guardians would institute the proceedings. Of course, in a *bonâ fide* case the Guardians, whose interest it was to enforce the liability, would take very good care to find the money by means of which the case could be heard. He submitted that the hon. Member for Sligo had not made good his case.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman had, perhaps not unnaturally, considering the character of his Office, appeared in the *rôle* of the advocate of the unprotected soldier. He seemed to think there was little or nothing to be said for the woman. He appeared to assume that the soldier was a person whom the whole community was bound to protect, and that there was no occasion for anybody to take any interest in the case of the woman. The right hon. and learned Gentleman did not seem to understand the force of the objection taken by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), and that was all the more surprising, because his hon. Friend opened his case with remarkable and perfect clearness. His hon. Friend's contention was, in the main, this—that whatever chance the law allowed the woman to obtain justice it was negatived by the obstacles thrown in her way. It was well known that Poor Law Guardians were not particularly anxious to make advances of money. He failed to see the use of making this strange distinction between soldiers and civilians. It surely could not be said that the Army was in such a condition that unless the distinction was set up a large number of soldiers would withdraw. It had been said that it would be hard if the country were called upon to pay the cost of the proceedings. He did not see why the Army authorities should not deposit the amount required; and he was persuaded that the cost to the country would not, in the course of the year, exceed more than a few hundred pounds. The distinction between soldiers and civilians which now existed was discreditable to the Army. Morally, it was revolting; and the sooner it was abolished the better it would be for the credit and honour, and even the economy, of the country.

Mr. GORST agreed with the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General that it was exceedingly inconvenient to discuss this matter on the Motion that the Speaker should leave the Chair. As the discussion had arisen, however, perhaps he might be allowed to offer one or two observations to the House. It seemed to him that the true principle which had been accepted by the Government and the War Office was that a soldier should have no privilege over a civilian in being exempt from the maintenance of his wife and children; that, as far as his liability was concerned, he should be placed precisely on the same footing as a civilian; and that the only peculiarity in the case of a soldier should be that, in enforcing the liability, nothing should be done to prevent his discharging his duty to his Queen and country. To that principle he did not think any objection would be raised. The objection made was that in this particular part of the clause the authorities did not carry out their own principle; but that they gave to a soldier a peculiar kind of privilege which no civilian enjoyed, and which was not essential to the performance of the man's duty as a soldier. Let him take the example which was given by the right hon. and learned

Gentleman himself—the case of a soldier and a civilian who had each got a child chargeable upon them in Kent. The soldier was quartered in Belfast, and the civilian had gone to Belfast for the purpose of seeking work. In both of the cases an application was made before the Petty Sessions in Kent for an order on the father for the maintenance of the child. In the case of the civilian the order was served in Belfast. He had no one he could go to to pay his expenses. If he chose to pay the expenses out of his own pocket he could; if he had not got the money he could not appear, and then the case was heard in his absence. His presence was not essential. Justice could be done even though the man was not there, although he had a right to be present and to show cause why an order should not be made upon him. If he did not attend the evidence of the woman would be taken; and if it were confirmed by independent testimony an order would be made on the man. But a soldier had a privilege which a civilian had not; because, if the process in the Petty Sessions Court was served upon him in Belfast, the proceedings were void, unless a sufficient sum of money was deposited to pay his expenses to and from Kent. Why should that be so? He should have sufficient leave of absence to attend the Court; why should he have his expenses deposited when a civilian had not? Why should he be put in any different position to a civilian? If he had not money to attend the Court an order ought to be made in his absence. It always happened that if a defendant was not present the Justices who heard the case were more particular. They always took care the evidence was quite conclusive. They ought to be able to make an order upon an absent soldier, exactly in the same way as they would on an absent civilian. There was no doubt that the privilege afforded a soldier in this matter was not necessary for the discharge of his military duty. The Amendment suggested would put a soldier in exactly the same position as a civilian; he would have no greater or no less obligation or privilege. Ever since he had had the honour of a seat in that House he had thought this Amendment most reasonable and practicable. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General asked who was to pay the expenses; and, he added, the soldier ought not, neither ought the public. He (Mr. Gorst) agreed that the public ought not. The right hon. and learned Gentleman was quite wrong in saying that the Guardians should pay the money, because the Guardians did not institute the proceedings. It was obvious that the woman wished, by obtaining an allowance from the putative father of her child, to avoid the necessity of going to the workhouse. Whatever was the case in regard to the civilian ought to be the case in regard to the soldier; and he (Mr. Gorst) maintained that unless the privilege now allowed to the soldier was necessary for the exigencies of the Military Service—and it could not be said it was—it ought at once to be swept away.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD expressed the hope that the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) would withdraw his present proposal. He voted with the hon. Member on this point last year, and in Committee on this occasion he should vote with him.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, that during the last Parliament he held the Office of Judge Advocate General; and, therefore, he asked leave to make a few observations in reference to this matter. The objections which he frequently urged to the principle of the Amendment had been repeated by the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Osborne Morgan), so that it was not necessary he should mention them again. In answer to what had been said by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), he desired to say that the example he cited of a civilian and a soldier in Belfast was hardly a happy one. If a civilian went to Belfast he did so at his own free will; and, therefore, if he was called upon to answer a bastardy summons in Kent it was his own fault; whereas, if a soldier went to Belfast, he did so by the command of the Queen, and therefore he was not a free agent. It was not on the question of principle that he would dwell, but simply on the practice in the matter. When he held the Office of Judge Advocate General he interested himself in the matter; and he found that during the whole of his official career not one single complaint was brought by any married woman. The real fact of the matter was that in a *bonâ fide* case the question would never arise. Whenever a summons was taken out against a soldier there was always a full inquiry at the War Office; and in any *bonâ fide* case justice was never denied, and complaints as to the decision arrived at were never made. He had no doubt the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) would confirm the statement he had made—namely, that complaints were never made as to the action of the authorities in case of proceedings instituted against any man in the Service. That being the case, he did not think the House would do well, when they got into Committee, to assent to the Amendment which stood in the name of the hon. Member for Sligo.

MR. SEXTON asked the permission of the House to withdraw his Amendment, and remarked that he would move the Amendment of which he had given Notice in Committee on the Bill.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 to 4, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Amendment of s. 80 (4) of 44 and 45 Vict. c. 58, as to attestation paper).

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he had been asked by the Secretary to the Justices' Clerks' Society to mention that in 1881 the local military authorities filled up the attestation papers before sending them to the magistrate. Since then it had been decided that these papers should be duplicated, and the Justices' clerks were afraid that they would be called upon to fill up two forms. That would take up a great deal of their time, and yet the military orderlies could fill them up just as well. He should be glad if the right hon. and learned Gentleman (the Judge Advocate General) would say that these forms should be filled up by the orderlies, and that the Justices' clerks would merely be required to see that the attestations were properly filled up; and that they should receive the usual 1*s*.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) said, it had been deemed desirable to have duplicate forms; but he could not conceive that any official trouble would be cast upon the Justices' clerks.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he thought that if the Judge Advocate General would look at one of these forms he would see that they were very lengthy; and it seemed to him that the clerks ought to receive the 1*s.* for the work.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) said, that, as a matter of fact, the Justices' clerks did not receive any fee for this work.

Clause *agreed to.*

Remaining clauses *agreed to.*

MR. SEXTON moved the following new Clause:—

(Liability of soldiers to maintain wife and children.)

"Whereas it is desirable that the liability of a soldier or marine to maintain his wife and children should be real and better defined, and it is expedient to provide for the same, Be it, therefore, Enacted, as follows:—That section one hundred and forty-five of 'The Army Act, 1881,' shall be construed as though all the words after 'commanding officer of such soldier,' in sub-section three, were omitted."

The hon. Member explained that its object was to make it quite clear that a soldier was as liable for the maintenance of his wife and children as if he were not a soldier.

New Clause *brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 53; Noes 68: Majority 15.—(Div. List, No. 52.)

House *resumed.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

UNION OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE, Bill to make better provision for the Superannuation of the Officers of Poor Law Unions in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE, Mr. TREVELYAN, and Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 132.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (NORTHUMBERLAND, &C.) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. JERNINGHAM, Bill for prohibiting the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday in the county of Northumberland, the city of Newcastle on Tyne, and the county of the town of Berwick on Tweed, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. JERNINGHAM, Mr. ALBERT GREY, Mr. BURT, and Mr. JOHN MORLEY.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 133.]

LEASEHOLDERS (FACILITIES FOR PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. BROADHURST, Bill to enable Leaseholders of houses and cottages to purchase the Fee Simple of their property, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. BROADHURST, Mr. BURT, Mr. REID, and Mr. PASSMORE EDWARDS.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 134.]

House adjourned at One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 6th April, 1883.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Elementary Education Provisional Orders Confirmation (Cummersdale, &c.) * (23).
Second Reading—Contempts of Court (15).
Committee—Report—Consolidated Fund (No. 2) *.

CONTEMPTS OF COURT BILL.—(No. 15.)

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that he had already explained the provisions of the Bill to the House, and he did not, therefore, intend to make a detailed statement, but would only refer to some Amendments he contemplated making in Committee. Since the Bill had been introduced objections had been taken to the 16th clause, which provided that in case of disobedience to any order of a Court of competent jurisdiction made against the holder of any office within the meaning of the Act, it should be lawful for the Court by further order to fix such limited time as the Court might consider reasonable for compliance with such order on pain of deprivation of such office; and if within the time so limited such order should not be duly complied with, or should afterwards be wilfully disobeyed, the office so held by such person might be declared vacant; and in that case such person should not be capable of being again appointed to the said office until after the expiration of three years from the time when the office was declared to be vacant. The 19th clause defined what offices—legal, municipal, and ecclesiastical—were to be subject to this provision. Since the Bill was introduced, the objections which had been urged against the 16th clause had been carefully considered; and they had been thought, upon the whole, to preponderate over the reasons which had led to the insertion of that clause in the Bill. He might explain, in the first place, that the 16th clause was thought to be hardly consistent with the general object of the Bill, which was to place certain limits upon the punishment inflicted for contempt of Court, and to limit the maximum fine to £500; while to give a power of deprivation for the same causes of offence might be the means of taking away a man's whole livelihood. In the second place, with regard to the motive of the clause, it appeared that in most, if not in all cases in which such a power would be useful, there would be some means of accomplishing the same object by an independent proceeding, either before the same or before a different authority. For instance, if a Judge of a Superior Court ordered a County Court Judge or Coroner to do a certain act, and he refused to do it, the proper authority to deprive him was the Lord Chancellor, who was subject to Parliamentary responsibility. In ecclesiastical cases the same thing might be done, for any sufficient cause, by means of a substantive proceeding properly taken for that purpose; and the whole subject of the constitution and power of the Ecclesiastical Courts, including necessarily the means of confirming their judgments and orders, was now under the consideration of a Royal Commission, and it was thought better to wait for the Report of that Commission than to legislate at the present time on that part of the subject. Under these circumstances, he proposed to withdraw Clause 16, and so much of Clause 19 as might be found necessary.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Lord FITZGERALD said, that, although he accepted the principle of the Bill, he wished to point out that in reference to one matter it fell entirely short of public requirements. The Bill was one to amend the law as to contempts of Court, which was a very comprehensive subject. These contempts, for present purposes, might be roughly divided into two classes—one, a very large and extensive one relating entirely to civil and ecclesiastical matters, in reference to which it was a mistake to call them contempts of Court at all. For instance, if the Lord Chancellor made an order directing a trustee to bring into Court a sum of money, and he was unable to do so, the trustee would be liable to be committed for contempt. In the great majority of cases the contempt was in name only, and related to processes for enforcing civil rights. As to these, he did not intend to make any observation. But there was, in addition, another class of contempts, which, to distinguish them, he might call criminal contempts, for which, in many cases, the persons committing them would be liable to punishment, either summarily or by indictment for a misdemeanour. For instance, there was the misconduct of persons in open Court. A man might be guilty of conduct in open Court which impaired the dignity of the Court, and the Court would immediately take cognizance of that which took place before the Court itself, and inflict summary punishment. That, however, was a power which it was rarely necessary to enforce. He had had the honour of a seat on the Bench for 22 years, embracing periods of great public excitement, and he had never had occasion to exercise that summary authority. But he had always felt that it was the knowledge of the existence of that power which enabled him to maintain the order and dignity of the Court. If they conferred jurisdiction upon a Judge, they impliedly furnished him with authority to enable him to enforce that jurisdiction, and to preserve order and dignity in its administration. He was far, therefore, from objecting to the summary jurisdiction, as it at present existed for contempts in open Court, with a fine limited to £500, and the period of imprisonment to three months. But behind that class of contempts there was, again, another still more important, which was popularly known as "constructive contempts of Court." They arose, not in the presence of the Court, not in open Court, but outside the Court, and not in the presence of the Judge; and as to them, time and place had no application. They arose sometimes from speeches, but principally from the publication of newspaper articles in reference to some trial about to take place, or which was then actually going on. This constructive contempt depended entirely upon the inference that the party speaking, writing, or publishing intended in some way to interfere with and impede the administration of justice, and they had been known to our law for a very long period. It was unnecessary to consider when the practice arose—as far back as Edward III. they had it in practice—and from that time down to the present, though it was a power which was rarely exercised in modern times. There was one recorded case of a rev. gentleman, John Barker, who, having called a meeting of his parishioners in the churchyard, and made a speech on local affairs, in which he spoke disrespectfully of the King's Bench, and for that was called up and sentenced summarily to a term of imprisonment; and in another case, where, in a Petition to the Corporation of London, the party libelled the Aldermen, and also used words disrespectful of the King's Bench, he was indicted for the first and tried before a jury, but was summarily imprisoned for the last. No doubt these cases would not now be followed. In modern times this power of commitment had been confined solely to articles in the newspapers which were thought to interfere with the administration of justice. The doctrine of constructive contempt was one which he was not inclined to favour. It appeared to him that, if dealt with at all, it should be dealt with on some broad foundation. The present course of proceedings was exceedingly objectionable. If an article in a newspaper appeared, which was alleged to be such a contempt, and which, was one from which an inference could be drawn that it was intended to interfere with the administration of justice, the party was called up summarily, and the matter inquired into, the Judge being at once Judge of the law, of the fact, of the intention, of the sentence, and his decision was without any power of review. That was most unsatisfactory, and there could be no doubt that the doctrine had a tendency unduly to fetter the freedom of the Press, and in that light was important to them all. No doubt, there was a difficulty in dealing with it; but he would rather see the doctrine done away with altogether than continue to exist in its present form. There was no such law in any of the American States. The New York Code said—

> "Every Court of Record may punish summarily disorderly, contemptuous, or insolent behaviour in the immediate presence of the Court tending to interrupt its proceedings and impair the respect due to authority;"

but it could not punish for publication out of Court where the remedy was by indictment; and he believed such a practice as ours of summary punishment for constructive contempts did not exist in any other country. Its effect was to enforce silence on the part of the Press, where the public interests required the fullest publicity and the closest criticism of what was going on. He had such an objection to the doctrine and practice, that he should prefer being guided by the maxim—"*Nil falsi audeat, nil veri non audeat dicere.*" He need not say that constructive crime was in all cases contrary to the genius of the English law, and that in such cases it was usual to interpose a jury for the protection of the subject. The objections to the present system were that it was uncertain, undefined, and depending on capricious discretion. There would be a great difficulty in defining constructive contempts; but he would suggest that it might be hedged round with some protections, and that in all cases a right of appeal should be given to the Court of Appeal. The effect of that would be to render the Judges more cautious, while it would leave them free in their action; and, above all, in time a series of decisions would be built up which would regulate and control the discretion of the Judges in the exercise of their summary power.

Earl CAIRNS said, his noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack had expressed an intention to omit the 16th clause in Committee. That clause appeared to him to contain the most important part of the Bill. He thought it desirable that in a Bill of this kind the opportunity should have been taken of drawing a distinction between contempts, properly so called, and those that were not so. There was contempt of Court, such as that of insulting Judges, and interfering with juries, so as to thwart the administration of justice. These were strictly contempts, and ought to be severely punished. But then there was another species of contempt which was entirely different. Under certain circumstances, Courts of Law called that which was merely the non-fulfilment of an order contempt of Court. But that was not a contempt at all. He was afraid that this Bill would keep alive that confusion of the two kinds of contempt which ought to be kept perfectly distinct. There could be no doubt that the Bill had originated out of certain things which occurred in a recent ecclesiastical suit. He should be glad to see the punishment of imprisonment put an end to altogether in cases of that kind. He did not believe that it ever did any good. In his opinion, it would be much wiser, instead of making a martyr of a man who offended against the Ecclesiastical Law, to allow him a *locus penitentiæ*, and, in the event of his not being able to conform within a specified limit of time, to inflict on him a punishment leading up to deprivation. If the 16th clause had been properly dealt with, he believed it could have been made to produce that result; and he owned to the greatest astonishment and regret when he heard his noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack express his intention of withdrawing the clause.

Lord COLERIDGE said, he could not agree with his noble and learned Friend behind him (Lord Fitzgerald) that a material alteration should be made in the law as to constructive contempt. Judging from his present experience, he thought the practical importance of the subject had been a good deal over-estimated. He himself had never imprisoned but one man for contempt, and that was only for 24 hours; and he was a person who could not be got rid of without ordering his removal out of Court in custody. But with regard to constructive contempt, his noble and learned Friend had forgotten that offences were sometimes committed, not in the face of the Court, which, nevertheless, impeded the administration of justice. Those came within his noble Friend's description of constructive contempt. It not uncommonly happened that offences amounting to an interference with the course of justice were committed that did not take place within the walls of the Court—as in the case of threatening witnesses or interfering with persons serving on the jury. Those offences, although not committed within the walls of the Court, and, therefore, not being cognizable by the Court or capable of being dealt with summarily, might cause a serious interference with the course of justice in this country. More than once he had happened to know that the course of justice was interfered with in the manner he had suggested; and he was clearly of opinion that if there was no power vested in the Court of visiting summarily and at once such acts of contempt—though his noble and learned Friend had called them constructive only—the result would be disastrous to the administration of justice. So far as he knew, the cases in which this power of committal was exercised were extremely rare. He had hardly ever seen persons committed for contempt except in cases where the contempt was outrageous; and he did not believe that instances of constructive contempt were at all common. He thought, therefore, it would be better to leave the matter where it was, and there was no reason to believe that Judges would exceed their powers. A Court of Appeal could not be such a good judge of what particular act amounted to constructive contempt as the Judge who had tried the action in which the contempt had been committed.

Lord BRAMWELL said, he entirely concurred with the remarks of his noble and learned Friend beside him (Lord Fitzgerald). Among instances of contempt there might be the case of a witness refusing to answer a question, or behaving in an offensive way. In such cases it would be impossible to review the Judge's decision. In that case he thought there ought not to be a right of appeal, as it would be impossible for a Court of Appeal to say whether the language, demeanour, and expression of the offender had been misconceived by the Judge. He did not make these remarks from any love for the power of committal. His noble and learned Friend had been on the Bench for 22 years, and had never had to commit for contempt. He himself had been on the Bench for 26 years, and had had only one case—that of a lad from the other side of St. George's Channel, who, when hearing evidence he did not like, persisted in expressing his disapprobation so loudly, that he was obliged to take notice of it. But as to what his noble and learned Friend had called "constructive contempt," it was different. Many acts of constructive contempt were not, in reality, meant to be a contempt of Court. It often happened, for instance, that a plaintiff or defendant discussed the merits of an invention while the trial was going on. Although neither the Court nor the law was really offended by what he was doing, still the discussion was supposed to be an impediment to the Judge or jury making up their mind impartially. His noble and learned Friend on his left proposed that there should be a right of appeal in such cases. What reason could there be for allowing appeals in ordinary civil cases, and not allowing them in cases of this description? Take the case of a Judge who had held that a paragraph in a newspaper was of such a character that it might interfere with his duty, and accordingly, acting to the best of his judgment, he had fined the offender and sent him to prison — though it generally happened that the offender apologized and there was an end to the matter—why should not the offender have a right to appeal? The case could be brought before the Court of Appeal in the same way and with the same material as it had been brought before the original Court. He was satisfied that it would be a good thing to give some power of reviewing the decision of the Judge. If that decision enjoined silence where there ought not to be silence, surely it ought to be open to review. He did not himself see any difficulty in giving a right of appeal. As to what the noble and learned Earl (Earl Cairns) had said, especially with regard to the case of the clergyman who had been referred to, he thought the object desired might be obtained in the following manner. The great difficulty in such cases was that the offenders considered that, notwithstanding the sentence, and although they were told they were not to continue to exercise their functions, it was their duty to continue what they called their duty; they did not recognize the validity of the sentence. What, therefore, occurred to him as a remedy in such cases was this—that when these persons were in contempt, and persisted in performing those duties which they maintained belonged to their position, they should be treated in the same manner as a person who unlawfully intruded into the pulpit.

The Earl of MILLTOWN said, he must express his regret at the absence from the Bill of any provisions for the exercise of the Royal Prerogative of Mercy. There was one case which had occurred some years ago on the old Home Circuit where a choleric Judge had fined the High Sheriff £500 for thanking the Grand Jury for their services, a duty which the Judge ought to have performed himself. Such cases were, no doubt, rare; but Judges were only mortal, and in sentences inflicted in the heat of the moment such an extreme case as that might occur again, where a power of revision by the Home Secretary might be desirable.

The LORD CHANCELLOR, who was indistinctly heard, promised to consider the suggestions that had been made before the Committee stage of the Bill. He should not, however, feel himself at liberty to recede from the statement he had made respecting the 16th clause. He agreed with the noble and learned Earl (Earl Cairns) in his desire to get rid of imprisonment, as far as possible, in ecclesiastical cases. The real truth was that cases such as those alluded to by his noble and learned Friend (Lord Bramwell) might result in acts of forcible opposition to the law, which could not possibly be dealt with without imprisonment. He hoped, however, that what had been said on that subject during the debate would receive the consideration of the Commission now sitting with reference to the Ecclesiastical Courts.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Friday* the 20*th instant.*

THE GOVERNMENT—SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

The Earl of MINTO asked Her Majesty's Ministers, with reference to the demand which is being pressed upon them by certain parties in Scotland for the creation of a Secretary of State for Scotland, Whether they have arrived at any definite conclusions on the subject; whether a re-arrangement and consolidation of Scottish business are intended; and if so, whether the administration of the Education (Scotland) Act, 1872, will be transferred to the new Scottish Department? The noble Earl said, he knew propositions had been made to the Government on this subject; and he therefore thought it right to ask them whether they had made up their minds to do anything, and, if so, what was the nature of the changes they proposed to make? He confessed that he could not see himself what were the precise duties which ought to be made to devolve on a Scottish Minister. There were many things which he might superintend, and in regard to which his influence might, perhaps, be usefully exercised. But, taking the great Departments of the Army, of the Navy, Foreign Affairs, and the Home Office, to some extent, it was obvious that they could not have a separate arrangement as to matters concerning these great Departments available for Scotland. But there were certain matters which were peculiarly Scottish; and, perhaps, something might be done by giving a person of high political rank a kind of superintendence of those specially Scottish matters. He did not know definitely what the proposals were; but there were certain offices peculiarly Scottish which might be, perhaps, superintended to advantage by a purely Scottish Minister. There were many Boards in Scotland of which there was no counterpart in the other two Kingdoms—such, for instance, as the Board of Supervision for the relief of the poor, a very well-conducted office he believed; the Lunacy Board, the Fishery Board, and another as to which he felt very strongly, the Education Department. There used to be a Board in Edinburgh dealing with the subject of education, which had now been transported to London. He had always felt, from the beginning of that great change of policy, the giving of Imperial grants for education, very great regret that it was not resolved that Scotland should have the government and management of the whole of its educational matters as heretofore. Formerly the whole of the educational institutions in Scotland were managed in Scotland, and there was no reason why that should not be continued. He thought that was the only great and important matter connected with Scotland, as to which some benefit might be obtained by making a new arrangement which should enable the Scottish nation to manage its own educational concerns entirely without interference from Whitehall. He thought he was so far justified in entertaining that opinion by what occurred two years ago, when Lord Advocate M'Laren, at the instance of the Prime Minister, made a suggestion that certain taxes should be allotted to Scotland, and that the management should be left to local control much more than it now was. The argument was that these subventions to local rates constituted an expensive system. That, of course, was a very wide question; but what he now asked was that the Government would enlighten the House as to the nature of the changes which he imagined they had in contemplation; what were to be the duties of the new Department, if a new Department was made, and what was to be the local position of the Department—whether it was to be at Whitehall or at Edinburgh?

THE EARL OF FIFE asked to be allowed to say a few words on this subject. There was much that fell from the noble Earl with which he could hardly agree. For instance, he had very good reason for knowing that there was a considerable amount of genuineness in the demand which had been put forward by the Scottish people for a Minister, although not necessarily for a Secretary of State; and he believed that some considerable re-arrangement of Scottish Business was desirable. With regard to the administration of the Education Act, to which the noble Earl had alluded, he was bound to say that, on the other hand, there was considerable divergency of opinion. His object in raising this question two years ago was simply to endeavour to rescue Scotland from the irresponsible government of a Board located in Edinburgh, and the administration of the country from the hands of an Edinburgh lawyer, who, the more eminent he was in his Profession, the less likely he was to have much time to devote to Parliamentary Business. There was a strong desire on the part of Scotchmen for the dignity of a Cabinet Minister; but he had carefully guarded himself against urging such a proposal, if they could obtain by other means the practical advantages which they deemed necessary. He was well aware that there was a very considerable section of the Scottish people, and, perhaps, even a more considerable section of the Scottish Press, who were loudly demanding a Secretary of State for Scotland. He confessed that he had never been one of those. He had always been of opinion that the case might fairly be met by the establishment of a Scottish Department, presided over by an independent and responsible Minister, to whom Scotchmen might refer, and who might be able to acquaint himself with Scottish affairs and Scottish needs on the spot, a thing which it was impossible the Home Secretary could do. A very short time after he raised this question in their Lordships' House — he thought two months—a re-arrangement of Scottish Business did take place; and all Scotchmen heard with very great pleasure, which no one joined in more heartily than himself, that his noble Friend (the Earl of Rosebery), the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, had been made responsible for Scottish Business. But a rumour had lately gone forth that his noble Friend declined to be considered Minister for Scotland; and, therefore, it seemed to him that they were likely to drift into their old deplorable condition, without having even the forensic ability of the Lord Advocate to guide them. He would not now inflict on their Lordships the old arguments and counter-arguments on this somewhat worn subject. They had been told that the tendency of the day was to demand a Minister for everything; but he confessed he was utterly at a loss what possible connection there could be between the demand for a Minister for Agriculture and the demand for a Minister for Scotland. In Scotland the religious institutions, the educational institutions, the local government, and a variety of other things were all on an entirely different basis from what they were in England; and it seemed to him that when they abolished the Irish Office, and established similarity of customs in the Three Kingdoms, it would be quite time to oppose this Scottish demand upon the ground that it would be an unnecessary increase in the number of Government Departments. He hoped the Government would not allow themselves to be prevented from taking action in this matter by criticisms in this House, but that they would really attempt to redress a real grievance, which had been calmly and patiently put forward by a people who had consistently proved themselves to be practical, orderly, and loyal.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY said, it was an advantage to Her Majesty's Government to have had the opportunity of hearing the remarks of his two noble Friends, who were well acquainted with this subject; but at present the only answer he could give was that the matter had been for some time under the consideration of the Government, and they hoped soon to be able to state their intentions with respect to it.

PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN.—QUESTION.

The Bishop of ROCHESTER inquired of Her Majesty's Government, If it is still likely that a Bill will be laid before Parliament this Session for the better protection of women and children?

The Earl of ROSEBERY said, that a Bill dealing with that subject was in process of drafting; and he hoped to have an opportunity of announcing the intentions of the Government with regard to it during the ensuing week.

CHANNEL TUNNEL—THE JOINT COMMITTEE.—RESOLUTION.

Message of the House of Commons, of yesterday, *considered* (according to order).

Lord SUDELEY in rising to move—

> "That a Committee of five Lords be appointed to join with the Committee appointed by the House of Commons, as mentioned in the said Message, to inquire whether it is expedient that Parliamentary sanction should be given to a submarine communication between England and France; and to consider whether any or what conditions should be imposed by Parliament in the event of such communication being sanctioned,"

said, that this was a question which was of great national importance, and had of late excited very considerable interest in the public mind. The Government considered, having regard to the negotiations which had been carried on for many years with the French Government, together with the results obtained from the International Commission which sat on the subject, that the Executive Government, to a great extent, had their hands tied until Parliament should have an opportunity, with all the facts before it, of expressing a decided opinion on the whole subject-matter. In the opinion of the Government, this was no longer to be regarded as a purely national question, but was now an international one. It was fully recognized in France that Parliament was the master of the situation, and had a perfect right to speak plainly, and that nothing final could be done without its sanction. In order to put the matter clearly before the House, he would endeavour to state briefly what had taken place up to that time. As long ago as 1867 the subject of the Channel Tunnel was raised by an Anglo-French Company; and, although certain negotiations were entered into, no practical results were arrived at for three years, owing to the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War. In 1871 the matter was again opened up. Correspondence took place between the promoters of the French and English Companies on the one hand, and the French and English Governments on the other. In 1872 the Channel Tunnel Company was incorporated. On June 2, 1872, Lord Granville, then Foreign Secretary, wrote to the English Ambassador in Paris, informing him that Her Majesty's Government did not consider it advisable to give its consent to the Tunnel—if ever constructed—becoming a perpetual private monopoly; but that, subject to that observation, it saw no objection in principle to the proposed Tunnel between England and France. In 1873 the Board of Trade again raised the question, and informed the Foreign Office that, while opposing any monopoly, it would be glad to see an improvement in the communication between England and the Continent, and would, therefore, be well satisfied to hear that the British railway system was likely to be connected with the European railway system, by means of a Tunnel between France and England. These views of the Board of Trade were communicated by Lord Lyons to the French Government. Therefore, even before the late Government came into Office, the principle of a Tunnel had been agreed to, though the matter had not advanced beyond that stage. In 1874 the French Government granted a concession to the Company, contingent on making arrangements with the English Company for carrying on the English portion of the work. In October of that year the French Government forwarded a Report of their Committee on the subject, and asked to be informed of the views of the English Government. Thereupon Lord Derby, then Foreign Secretary, expressed his opinion to the Board of Trade in these words—

> "That it is very desirable to support any well-considered scheme, the result of which may be to increase the facility of communication between the two countries,"

provided that such support was not confined to any one undertaking. In the following December Lord Derby wrote to the French Ambassador in London—

> "I have to state that there appears no reason to doubt that the Government will offer no opposition to the scheme, provided they are not asked for a gift, or loan, or guarantee in connection therewith."

In 1875 a Bill was introduced into the Legislatures of both countries, and passed without opposition. In March of that year a very important step was taken. At the request of the English Government, an Anglo-French Commission, consisting of three gentlemen from each country, was appointed to consider the conditions on which the undertaking might be carried out; and to that Commission the Admiralty, War Office, and Treasury Departments were parties. The Commission met in London and Paris, and reported in 1876 on the question of the management of the traffic and jurisdiction, and suggested that the Government should be able to suspend the traffic or destroy communication in the case of war. The late Administration considered the Report of that Commission, and arrived at the decision that negotiations for a Treaty with the French Government on the basis of a Protocol should be entered into. Owing to the financial collapse of the Company nothing further was done; but when the present Government came into Office it was clear they found their Predecessors committed in favour of the project. In 1881, the South-Eastern Railway Company obtained additional power to purchase land between Folkestone and Dover. In the same year the House of Commons had before them the rival projects of that Company and the Channel Tunnel Company; and the attention of the Board of Trade was called to a report of a meeting of the Railway Company, in which the Chairman had held out the possibility of completing an experimental Tunnel in five years. A Departmental Committee was thereupon appointed to consider the conditions which ought to be imposed on the undertaking, and that Committee took a great deal of evidence. The question of the national security was then brought forward for the first time; and a most able Report was presented to the Committee by Lord Wolseley, in which reasons were stated for considering the Tunnel as a danger to the country. A Report of an opposite character was presented to them by Sir John Adye. It was immediately seen that that was a matter of vital importance, far too large to be dealt with by a small Departmental Committee; and they were, therefore, relieved of their functions; and the Secretary of State for War then decided that before the military question could be properly considered by the Government the opinion of a mixed body of military men and civilians should be obtained as to the practicability of effectually closing the Tunnel when necessary. That Committee took a great deal of evidence, and reported in May, 1882. On receipt of that Report, the Government considered what further steps they should take in the matter; and they came to the conclusion that the inquiry up to that time had related almost exclusively to the military aspect of the question, and that it would be necessary to consider the advantages of greater facilities of communication between the two countries, and the general effect of the Tunnel on commerce, before a settlement could be arrived at. The Government then determined that the best manner to complete the inquiry would be by a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament; and that was the present position of affairs. The negotiations entered into by the late Administration, and the conclusion of the Protocol laying down the basis for a Treaty, left not the slightest doubt that the late Government was pledged to a very great extent to the French Government to allow the scheme to be carried out; and, that being so, the matter had undoubtedly assumed an international character. It would be a precedent of the worst kind if the Executive Government were to take steps to upset these almost final negotiations, which had been entered into with the French Government by their Predecessors, unless they had the strong opinion of Parliament at their backs; and he apprehended the Government had no choice in the matter. The 18th clause of the Protocol entered into by the late Government in 1876 for the basis of a Treaty distinctly stated that—

> "The provisions of the Treaty to be concluded shall not come into force before they have been sanctioned by the Legislatures of the two countries;"

and it was obvious that Parliamentary inquiry into so large a matter was highly desirable, and would certainly be demanded, before Parliamentary sanction was given to such a Treaty. The Government did not shrink in the smallest degree from their responsibility; and after the Parliamentary Committee, in accordance with the Protocol, had fully inquired into the matter, it would, undoubtedly, be the duty of the Government to finally decide whether the Channel Tunnel should be made or not.

Moved, "That a Committee of five Lords be appointed to join with the Committee appointed by the House of Commons, as mentioned in the said Message, to inquire whether it is expedient that Parliamentary sanction should be given to a submarine communication between England and France; and to consider whether any or what conditions should be imposed by Parliament in the event of such communication being sanctioned."—(*The Lord Sudeley.*)

The Marquess of SALISBURY: My Lords, I have listened with interest to the speech of the noble Lord; but I must confess I have not gathered from it any reason to justify so remarkable a step as the appointment of this Committee to consider matters which are usually decided by the Executive Government itself. The noble Lord does not even tell us what are the precise questions to be submitted to this Committee. For the questions, as he observes, are of various kinds and of different natures. There are technical and commercial questions which are usually considered when a railway is to be made, and those would be referred *seriatim* to Committees of the two Houses and dealt with by them. But the noble Lord, at the beginning of his speech, appeared to indicate that very much more than this was to be submitted to the Committee, and he gave as his reason for a Joint Committee certainly the very oddest reason I ever heard; for he said it was an international matter, and was, therefore, a very proper thing for a Joint Committee of the two Houses to consider. It would be a very proper thing, indeed, if we could get a Joint Committee of the French and English Assemblies; but the Government do not appear to contemplate that. Now, what are the questions this Committee have to decide? There are military questions raised in this discussion as to whether the entrance to the Channel Tunnel on this side can, or cannot, be adequately defended. But these questions have already been submitted to a competent tribunal, and I do not suppose that any Joint Committee of the two Houses would ever dream of reviewing that decision. Behind that there are large questions of policy. It is known that this scheme is opposed very strongly, and by very influential personages in this country; and I suppose the ground on which it is opposed is the presumed intention and capacity of Foreign Powers to invade this country, and the presumed difficulty which this country might find in meeting any such hostile attack, supposing the Channel Tunnel existed. Are these questions to be submitted to the Committee? Is the Committee to be asked to consider what is the disposition of France, her past history and present condition? Is the Committee to be asked to consider the power of France; what is the amount of the Naval and Military Force she possesses; what are the chances of an invasion; what an invader would do; and in what way his position would be affected by the existence of the Channel Tunnel? One of the arguments relied upon by those who are opposed to the Tunnel is that, whatever precautions you may take for the purpose of stopping it up or rendering it useless when made, such is the clumsiness of our Executive Government, and such the disinclination of our public men to assume responsibility, that it is probable that at the critical moment it would not be closed, and would fall into the hands of the enemy. I do not for a moment give any opinion as to the justice of the estimate which is formed of the Government of this country, or of its public men; but that is one of the most commonly used arguments in reference to this question. Is the Committee to form an opinion as to that? Is the Committee to hear evidence or the arguments of counsel as to what sort of people the public men in this country are, and how they are likely to view their responsibilities in regard to the Tunnel in case of an attack on this country? I must say we are launching this Committee upon a kind of inquiry to which the Committees of both Houses are quite unused—in fact, to use the words of the Prime Minister, we are engaged "in a delegation and devolution of duties" wholly strange to the Constitution of this country, and no satisfactory result can come from their deliberations. The noble Lord says that the Executive Government is bound partly by the acts of the Government of 1869, and partly by those of the Government of 1874. But if the Government is bound to a Foreign Power, no decision of a Committee of the two Houses can unloose that bond, and the decision of the Committee would not have the slightest weight in respect to the question of International Law. The Government appear to wish to occupy the position of some firm of money-lenders, in which there is a very obliging and agreeable partner, who sees all the clients, and says—"I should be very happy to do your business for you; but my partner, who is very obstinate and disagreeable, will not permit me." This Committee is to take up the position of that obstinate and disagreeable partner; and the Government will go to the French Government and say—"We are internationally bound, and nothing would give us greater pleasure than to fulfil our engagements; but there is that Joint Committee, which is composed of very obstinate men, who have come to a resolution to prevent us from gratifying our desire." I am afraid, if this is the intention of the Government, the device, however ingenious, will be penetrated by the French Government, and that if there are any international engagements they will not be disposed of in that way. But the noble Lord has said that, after all these investigations, the Government will not hold themselves in any way bound by the decision of the Committee, so that the Committee will come to their duty with a consciousness—and I do not envy them the feeling—that if they decide the way the Government mean to go, they will be covering the action of the Government; but, if not, they will be calmly pushed aside. If the question had been proposed to your Lordships in the first instance, I think your Lordships would have done well to hesitate before embarking on a Constitutional precedent of such a grave and serious character; but as the House of Commons has decided on appointing a Committee, I do not see that the precedent will be made any the less objectionable by your Lordships refusing to acquiesce in the decision of the House of Commons. I do not, therefore, propose to ask the House to resist the proposition of the noble Lord; but with reference to the nomination of Members on the Committee, as it seems they are to take the responsibility of the Executive Government, at least in name, the Government must take the whole responsibility of nominating them; and I hope that when the task of the Committee is ended they will be satisfied with the way in which their suggestions are treated by the Government.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, the noble Marquess has certainly not spared remarks of a condemnatory kind upon the proposal before your Lordships; but he has conjured up evils, some of which, at all events, do not exist. The noble Marquess went into a number of matters which he said the Committee would have to consider, and among these he mentioned the disposition of the French Government towards us. I think, whatever else the Committee may have to consider, it appears to me that they cannot possibly have to consider that, nor whether that country has a more or less considerable Military Force, because everyone knows that the French nation in time of war would be a very formidable Power; and that, therefore, may be accepted as indisputable. Happily, at the present time, this country is on friendly terms with France, and we all hope we may long continue to be so. But it is useless to inquire into the disposition of the French nation unless you can show that under no circumstances could its disposition be unfriendly to us; and it is clearly in reference to the possibility of disagreement that we have to discuss this matter. Therefore, I think these matters of foreign policy will not be considered by the Committee. Then the noble Marquess says that the matter is of a very delicate and difficult character. That I admit, and the reason must be sought in the peculiar position of the question. Both the Government of which I had the honour to be a Member in 1868 and the late Government made some communications to the French Government as to there being no objection whatever against proceedings of this kind. The noble Marquess has said that there does exist in this country a considerable body of opinion adverse to the making of the Channel Tunnel. While, therefore, on the one hand, the Government find that two successive Governments have stated to the French Government that there would be no objection to the scheme, on the other hand they have to deal with a large section of public opinion which holds that there are considerations of the gravest kind which require to be weighed with reference to it; and although there may be inconveniences in referring this question to a Committee of Parliament, there is also the inconvenience of going to the French Government, and saying—"We have changed our minds." That condition of things would be still worse, if we were not able to say that we had been to Parliament, and that the country had changed its mind on the question. The matter having assumed a new position, it is eminently one which a Committee of both Houses of Parliament may examine fully into, and without any of that prejudice which attaches to an examination by the Government. That is a reason for referring the question to a Joint Committee; but the Committee will not enter upon a technical examination of the scientific or the military details—these will be dealt with by a Committee of each House in the ordinary way. What they will have to determine is whether there are considerations arising from the Report which has been placed before the Government by the military officers, looking to the general result which a Tunnel might have as regards the position of this country, which render it, on the whole, not desirable that sanction should be given to the projects laid before Parliament. I do not think myself that the proposal is an objectionable one; and I heard with satisfaction that, notwithstanding his criticism, the noble Marquess does not consider he would be justified in refusing to assent to it.

The Duke of SOMERSET said, that the course proposed was an unusual one; and he should like to ask whether the Government would consider themselves bound by the Report of the Committee?

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: The minds of the Government will be absolutely open, and they will certainly attach very great weight to the suggestions of the Committee.

The Earl of REDESDALE (Chairman of Committees) asked when it was proposed to name the Members of the Committee?

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: It is impossible to state with perfect certainty; but I think the names of the Committee will be selected on Tuesday.

Motion *agreed to.*

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDERS CONFIRMATION (CUMMERSDALE, &c.) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Act, 1870, to enable the School Boards for Cummersdale, Cumberland; Hayfield, Derbyshire; Little Eaton, Derbyshire; Stroud, Gloucestershire; and Treuddyn, Flintshire, to put in force the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, and the Acts amending the same—Was *presented* by The Lord President; read 1ª; and *referred* to the Examiners. (No. 23.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Six o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 6th April, 1883.

MINUTES.]—Ways and Means—*considered in Committee — Resolutions* [5th April] *reported.*

Public Bills—*Ordered—First Reading*—New Forest Highways * [135]; Glebe Loans (Ireland) Acts Amendment * [136].

Second Reading—Adjourned Debate—Ballot Act Continuance and Amendment [5].

Report—Land Drainage Provisional Order * [114].

Considered as amended—Army (Annual) [123], *debate adjourned.*

QUESTIONS.

FISHERIES (EAST COAST)—LOSS OF FISHING SMACKS.

Mr. GOURLEY asked the President of the Board of Trade, If his attention has been called to the recent loss of thirty deep sea fishing smacks, together with one hundred and eighty lives, belonging to the Humber; if it is his intention to ask the Treasury to make a grant in aid for the benefit of the widows and orphans of the fishermen who are missing; and, whether in future he will endeavour to arrange with the Admiralty that some of the seagoing cruisers of the Navy may be told off for attendance at the fishery grounds in the North Sea and around the coasts of the United Kingdom, for the purpose of rendering assistance to those engaged in the fisheries in the event of an emergency?

Mr. J. HOLMS: Sir, the President of the Board of Trade has already stated that he had ordered an inquiry into the serious losses sustained by fishermen engaged in the deep-sea fishery on the East Coast during the gales of last month; but it is not his intention to apply to the Treasury for a grant in aid for the benefit of the widows and orphans of the fishermen who are missing. The information in the possession of the Board of Trade tends to show that even if Admiralty cruisers had been present it would have been impossible for them to have approached the smacks to render assistance.

NAVY—THE ROYAL YACHTS—THE "VICTORIA AND ALBERT."

Mr. GOURLEY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, What portion of the amount (£83,226) in Vote 6 of the Navy Estimates for repairs in Portsmouth Dockyard appertains to the "Victoria and Albert," and how much of the further sum of £63,802 is for repairs to other yachts; and, how many riggers and other workmen have been employed on board the "Victoria and Albert," and for what purpose, since she was pronounced unfit for ocean service?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, the amount, £83,226, inserted in Vote 6 of the Navy Estimates for repairs in Portsmouth Dockyard, includes a sum of £27,452 for labour of all kinds on the *Victoria and Albert.* The further amount of £63,892 has been inserted in anticipation of defects on ships which are not yet known. A small part of it will be required for yachts; but it is not yet known how much. The *Victoria and Albert* has not been "pronounced unfit for ocean service;" but for some time back workmen have been employed on her to open her up for survey, in order that her fitness for repair, and the expense and cost of the necessary repairs, might be ascertained. The average number of men so employed has been, I believe, 73. The crew, including dockyard riggers, have been employed in returning stores and fittings, and fitting and preparing ships coming forward for commission; except the engine-room staff, who have been employed in overhauling, cleaning, and preserving the machinery taken out of the ship.

Mr. GOURLEY asked the hon. Gentleman to state what amount had been expended.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not think my hon. Friend asked that in his Question; but my impression is that it is about £1,800 or £1,900.

VACCINATION ACTS—LEGISLATION.

Mr. BURT asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce a measure, in the present Session, to repeal or mitigate the severity of the compulsory Clauses of the Vaccination Acts?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE, in reply, said, that in the present state of Public Business he could not hold out any hope of legislation on this question in the course of the present year.

THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS—OPIUM SMUGGLING.

Mr. Alderman COTTON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If the Government are taking steps to prevent smuggling, which is now considerable, in the Straits Settlements; and, if he is aware that opium smuggling is on the increase?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: The Colonial Office have received information that with the opening of the year there was developed in Singapore an organized conspiracy, with some of the wealthiest Chinese at its head, for the smuggling of opium, and it was maintained by a system of terrorism. However, I am glad to say that the energetic action of the Governor and Executive Council in banishing from the Colony some of the chief ringleaders has brought about the complete collapse of the attempt.

CHINA—THE CHEFOO CONVENTION.

Mr. Alderman COTTON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If, in the negotiations now being agreed to between China and England for the settlement of the Chefoo Convention, the blockade of Hong Kong and the general question of Lekim Taxes in China on all merchandise will be taken into consideration; and, in the event of the Treaty being entered into, if the Government, before its ratification, will place the particulars before the House?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, the present negotiations relate to the Lekim duty on opium; but it is probable that the points mentioned by the hon. Member will eventually come under consideration. It is not probable that a new Treaty will be necessary.

SCOTLAND—DESTITUTION IN THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS.

Mr. J. GRANT (for Dr. Cameron) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the letter of the Rev. Norman N. Mackay, dated March 30th, and published in the Scottish papers of Monday, relative to the alleged recent case of starvation at Lochinver, Sutherlandshire, and the inaccuracies therein charged against the Inspector of the Poor's statement regarding the case; and, whether, considering that there are no coroners' inquests in Scotland, he will order an independent inquiry into the facts of the case?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): Sir, in answer to this Question, I have to say that an inquiry is made by the Procurator Fiscal into every case of sudden death in Scotland, and reported to Crown Counsel, who give such further instructions as may seem to be required. Having regard to the conflicting statements made with reference to this case, I shall take care that the inquiry is of a full and exhaustive character.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—CO. ROSCOMMON.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the circumstances attending the eviction of Esther M'Donnell and her seven children, near Kilmore, county Roscommon, on the 28th of March last; whether it is true that Mr. M'Donnell's children were all suffering from scarlatina at the time they were driven from their homes; whether the eviction was carried out in the absence of the relieving officer, and the family were obliged to take shelter in a neighbouring hovel; whether one of the sick children has since died from exposure; and, whether, should the foregoing statements prove to be accurate, the Government will take steps to have the landlord, Mr. John Watkin, put upon his trial for manslaughter?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I find upon inquiry that the facts are not such as appear to have been reported to the hon. Member. The Sub-Inspector of Constabulary in the district, who was present at the eviction, reports that none of the children were sick at the time. The usual legal notice had been served on the relieving officer; he was not present, nor does the law require that he should have been. The evicted family got lodgings in a neighbouring house. None of the children have since died from exposure or any other cause. I may mention that Mrs. M'Donnell had previously been evicted and had retaken possession forcibly.

LAW AND JUSTICE—POLICE INQUIRIES INTO INDICTABLE OFFENCES.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether in England there is any general Law to regulate the procedure of the police inquiry into indictable offences; and, whether the statements recorded by them are officially filed and are available for reference in subsequent judicial proceedings?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, my answer to that Question is in the negative.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL — NATIVE HOSTILITIES — USE OF DYNAMITE.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether his attention has been called to the following statement in a letter in the "Globe" newspaper of 3rd April from a correspondent at Cape Town:—

> "The war in the Transvaal against the native chiefs Mapoch and Mampoer still drags on, in spite of the free use of dynamite against the Kaffirs. The success of it is thus triumphantly described by the war correspondent of the 'Volkstem,' the national organ, in his account of the taking by the Boer forces of the Vlugtraal caves, evacuated by the natives on the night of the 18th February:—'It took me a long and laborious climb to reach the spot at the topmost fortification, where the dynamite blasts were made on the 5th. The effects of these blasts must have been considerable. . . . . Here I saw the scattered remains of one Kaffir lying in a cleft, while the arm of another lay some ten paces distant. The stench at this spot and in several of the holes, evidently the effusion of human decomposition, was overpowering;'"

and, considering that there is no mention of the use of dynamite in the papers presented to Parliament on the affairs of the Transvaal, whether, according to promise, the Government have telegraphed to the Cape to inquire if the authorities there knew anything of the alleged use of that explosive by the Boers against the Kaffirs; and, whether any answer has been received from the Cape in confirmation or contradiction of these reports; and, if so, whether he will state to the House the substance of such communication?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Sir, in accordance with the promise given, the Secretary of State telegraphed to make inquiry as to the use of dynamite by the Transvaal troops, and received on the 16th of March from Sir Hercules Robinson the following reply:—

> "Mr. Hudson reports that no woman or child was sacrificed as alleged. The allegation is unfortunate and unfounded. Dynamite operations were found necessary to destroy caves; but they have always been conducted with exemplary caution to Natives, who are always warned to retire before the explosion."

MR. O'KELLY asked whether dynamite was used in the operations directed against the Basutos under the Imperial Government?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I suppose the hon. Member is referring to past events, because we have no operations against the Basutos at present. In that case the hon. Member will, perhaps, give Notice of the Question.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL—AGENT FOR THE GOVERNMENT.

LORD JOHN MANNERS asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any agent of the Transvaal Government has notified his arrival in London to the Colonial Office?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Yes, Sir; Mr. Jorissen, the Attorney General of the Transvaal, has arrived in London, and has asked for an interview with the Secretary of State, which will be given to him.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT 1882.

MR. BROADHURST asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the case of a trades dispute in Belfast, as reported in the "Morning News" of 3rd instant, where, during the proceedings before the magistrates, Mr. Hamilton, R.M. threatened to deal with similar future cases under the Crimes Act; and, whether he will inform Mr. Hamilton and other magistrates that under no circumstances is the Crimes Act to be applied to trade disputes, as promised by the Government during the passing of that Act last Session?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, my attention has been called to the report in the North of Ireland newspapers on this very important and interesting question. I must have full time to communicate with Mr. Hamilton, and I will answer the hon. Member's Question on Monday.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—SUPPLIES OF AMMUNITION.

MR. CROPPER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he can now inform the House that our late allies Montsioa and Mankoroane are allowed to obtain ammunition freely from the Cape, for self-defence against Boer freebooters; and, whether he has made any further plan for a proposal to them of a subsidy and a separate location?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I am afraid, Sir, I can add but little to what I have several times said in this House on the matter. But, perhaps, to put the House in possession of the view of the question taken by the Cape Government, with whom, as the Government of a self-governing Colony, rests the decision, I cannot do better than read one of the last communications received from them, telegraphed as follows:—

> "Traders can only obtain permits to remove ammunition from the Colony on giving bonds, under Act 13 of 1877, undertaking not to dispose of ammunition to Natives. The existing law and the conditions of the bond are, doubtless, often violated by traders; but Ministers state it would be impossible for them to take any steps which might appear to countenance free trade in munitions of war while they are endeavouring to obtain throughout South Africa, in accordance with the spirit of existing engagements, some uniform action for restricting and controlling the trade."

I may again remind the hon. Gentleman that the Cape Colony is a self-governing Colony.

MR. CROPPER: What is the date of the despatch?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: The 28th of March. With reference to the second part of the Question, I think the hon. Gentleman, as well as the right hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), are under a little misapprehension as to our position in the matter of a location and a subsidy. What we have done is this. We have informed these two Chiefs that if they were driven to elect to leave their country we shall be prepared to provide for them elsewhere. But until we know that they are desirous of availing themselves of our offer of assistance we do not go into details as to what measure shall be adopted.

MR. CROPPER asked if ammunition was denied to our late allies?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY said that undoubtedly it was, as far as the Government were concerned. The Chiefs must obtain their ammunition by means of ordinary trade.

MR. CROPPER asked whether it appeared to the hon. Gentleman, as it did to him, that ammunition had not been denied to those Chiefs?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY, in reply, said, that ammunition was denied to them as an open transaction with the Government, and it could only be obtained by ordinary trade.

MR. CROPPER asked whether the same rule held good with the Transvaal Boers? Could they buy ammunition?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY said, he believed that the Transvaal Government had no such regulation.

MR. CROPPER asked whether we sold ammunition freely to the Transvaal Government?

LORD JOHN MANNERS: I wish to ask whether the terms mentioned as having been proposed to the Chiefs include the tribes under them; and also whether those terms are proposed to them in a more extended form than has been mentioned to the House? Are the Chiefs informed at all of the nature of the location offered to them, and of its distance from their present land?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: No, Sir; our communications with the Chiefs have been telegraphic, through the High Commissioner, and they have gone into no details.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: The hon. Gentleman has not answered the Question as to the tribes.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: No, Sir; we have confined ourselves to the Chiefs and their immediate followers.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: Is it the intention of Her Majesty's Government to make any proposal as to the safety of the tribes?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I think that the best way to answer the Question without Notice will be to ask the noble Lord whether he is aware that the tribes number 25,000 persons?

LORD JOHN MANNERS: In answer to that Question, I beg to say that I am aware of the numerical proportions of these tribes; and I hope that my hon. Friend will not suppose that because they are numerous therefore they are to be neglected.

LAW AND JUSTICE—THE SECRETARY OF THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS.

MR. H. H. FOWLER asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the promise given by the late Secretary to the Treasury, on the 5th August 1881, that "the salary of the Secretary of the Master of the Rolls at the next vacancy would be fixed at £5,000;" whether it is intended to fix such salary accordingly; and, whether the number and cost of the other officials of the Master of the Rolls will be reduced to the level of the officials of the other Lords Justices of Appeal?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, this matter has not been overlooked. The appointment of the new Master of the Rolls has been made subject to alteration in the personal staff hitherto attached to the office. The Treasury are in communication with the Lord Chancellor on the subject, and will press for as great a reduction of the staff as they think practicable.

HELIGOLAND—ERECTION OF A BREAKWATER.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether, in view of the loss of half their fishing fleet by the inhabitants of England's nearest and smallest Colony, Heligoland, by the heavy gales that have prevailed this winter, he will recommend that the small cost of building a breakwater to protect the harbour be contributed by Her Majesty's Government, and so prevent the recurrence of such a disaster, and the destruction of the principal means of subsistence of the inhabitants?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Sir, the loss incurred by the inhabitants of Heligoland calls for a sincere expression of regret and sympathy. The Colonial Office have been in communication with the Treasury on this question of a breakwater; and although the Treasury do not recognize any claim, they are not disposed to discourage further inquiry, which, therefore, the Colonial Office are making as to the necessity and feasibility of such a work, and other circumstances connected with it. I would, at the same time, point out that the cost will certainly not be so small as the hon. Member's Question might seem to imply.

COLONIAL DEFENCES—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

MR. A. F. EGERTON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Report of the Royal Commission on Colonial Defences can be laid upon the Table; and, whether any of the recommendations contained in the Report will be carried out?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: The Report on Colonial Defences is, as my hon. Friend probably knows, strictly confidential, and can never be laid on the Table of the House; but it is receiving the consideration of the Government.

ARABI PASHA—CONDITIONS OF DETENTION AT CEYLON.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the document in which Arabi Pacha and his companions give "their word of honour to go to whatever place may be indicated" by the Egyptian Government is still in the possession of the English Foreign Office, and only a copy of it been "handed to the Egyptian Government;" and, if this be so, what is the reason for this document having been removed from the custody of the Government with whom the engagement was made, and retained by a Government which is not a party to the undertaking?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, the declaration was sent to the Foreign Office by Lord Dufferin. There will be no objection to its being handed over to the Egyptian Government if they desire it.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—MR. BOLTON, CROWN SOLICITOR FOR TIPPERARY CO.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. George Bolton, about whose conduct a Notice of Motion has been given, is the same gentleman who has successfully conducted the recent prosecutions in the South and West of Ireland for murders and other offences committed by members of secret societies; whether there is reason to believe that he is the object of special aversion to members of those societies; and, whether his conduct has not in every one of these cases commanded the approbation of the authorities?

MR. SEXTON said, that, having given Notice of a Motion with regard to the gentleman referred to in this Question, he would now ask the Chief Secretary, whether this Mr. George Bolton is not the same gentleman whose management of a prosecution in Sligo was characterized with such extraordinary severity by Mr. Justice Barry; and whether he is not the same gentleman reported by Lord Justice Fry to the Lord Chancellor of Ireland for revelations affecting his character as solicitor in the drafting of the marriage settlement of his wife?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, this Question is a good example of the manner in which hon. Gentlemen ask Questions, the answer to which they know very well. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) was answered on this matter by my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland pretty recently, and very fully; and I do not think it is necessary to repeat that answer now in any great detail. Mr. Bolton is, no doubt, the gentleman the hon. Member has in his mind. In answer to the hon. Member for Leitrim (Mr. Tottenham), I have to say that it is the fact that Mr. Bolton has successfully conducted some important prosecutions in the county of Tipperary, and also some of those from the West of Ireland which were recently tried in Dublin, and that his conduct in these cases has commanded the approbation of the Government. It is not improbable that on this account he may be the object of special aversion to members of secret societies.

SCOTLAND—DESTITUTION IN THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS.

MR. BUCHANAN asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can give any further information to the House as to the destitution in the Western Islands, and as to the adequacy of the means at present available for its relief?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I would ask my hon. Friend to postpone his Question for a few days. The officers of the Board of Supervision have been pursuing a personal inquiry in the districts affected by the destitution; and I learn by telegraph that some of their Reports have already reached Edinburgh, and will be in London to-morrow or Monday.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—DR. JORISSEN.

MR. GORST asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to negotiate directly with Dr. Jorissen as representing the Transvaal Government without the intervention of Her Majesty's High Commissioner of South Africa?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, in answering this Question I wish to say that no negotiations are going on between Her Majesty's Government and the Transvaal Government on this subject. The communications that have taken place recently, or that may have to take place, would be of quite a different character. The Government does not yet know the precise object of Dr. Jorissen's visit to this country; but there would be no disadvantage—on the contrary, there would seem to be some advantage—in entering into communications with him. As regards the High Commissioner, it is not a matter of necessity that negotiations with the Transvaal Government should be conducted through the High Commissioner. Fortunately, Sir Hercules Robinson is expected in this country early in May; and, therefore, we shall have the opportunity of hearing his views on the question at large, and likewise any suggestions he may have to make to Her Majesty's Government with regard to it.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked whether Dr. Jorissen would, during his stay in this country, enjoy the privileges of a Diplomatic Agent of a Foreign State?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir.

POSSESSION OF EXPLOSIVES—LEGISLATION.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I beg to give Notice that on Monday next I shall ask leave to introduce a Bill to amend the law with reference to the possession of explosives. In order to expedite the passing of that measure, I shall move that the Orders of the Day on Monday be postponed until that Motion has been disposed of. With reference to the progress of the Bill, I shall, in case it meets with the approval of the House, ask the House to take those extraordinary measures for promoting its rapid passage which are usual in cases of urgency.

PARLIAMENT—GRAND COMMITTEES—REPORTING.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON said, that he had given Notice of a Question with reference to the deficiency of accommodation for members of the Press in the Grand Committee Rooms; but, understanding that the Speaker had given this matter his special attention during the last two days, he should like to ask what space the Speaker was able to place at the disposal of the Press in these two rooms?

MR. SPEAKER: I am anxious to afford all reasonable facilities for reporting the proceedings of the Grand Committees; because I believe that, in doing so, I shall only be giving effect to the wishes of the House. Twelve seats have been provided for reporters in each of these Committees, and I trust that that accommodation will be found sufficient. I fear that it would not be possible to extend it further without trenching unduly upon the space allotted to the public.

Mr. J. COWEN asked whether it was not competent for the House of Commons to dispense with the attendance of reporters altogether in the Committees; and, if so, whether, by so dispensing with them, they would not considerably facilitate the Business of those Committees?

[No answer was given to this Question.]

PARLIAMENT—COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (SPECIAL REPORT).

Leave to Committee to make a Special Report:—

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY accordingly *reported* from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure:—Mr. Horace Davey, Sir Massey Lopes.

And had appointed in substitution:—Mr. Raikes, Mr. Waddy.

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY further *reported*, That they had added the following fifteen Members in respect of the Court of Criminal Appeal Bill:—Mr. Buszard, Dr. Commins, Baron de Worms, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Freshfield, Mr. Carpenter Garnier, Mr. Morgan Lloyd, Mr. Macartney, Mr. Patrick Martin, Mr. Mellor, Mr. Reid, Mr. Sellar, Mr. Warton, Mr. Willis, Sir John Eardley Wilmot.

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY further *reported*, That they had discharged Mr. Serjeant Simon from the Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures.

And had appointed in substitution:—Mr. Horace Davey.

Mr. Speaker

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—•:o:•—

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

NATIONAL EXPENDITURE.

RESOLUTION.

Mr. RYLANDS, in rising to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the present amount of the National Expenditure demands the earnest and immediate attention of Her Majesty's Government, with the view of effecting such reductions as may be consistent with the efficiency of the public service,"

said, he did not wish to go into the relative merits of Liberal and Tory finance. Even if it could be shown, as he dared say it could, that Conservative Governments of late had been more extravagant than Liberal Governments, he should derive no satisfaction from such a comparison. It was no justification to say that there were greater sinners than themselves; and it must be borne in mind that the Conservatives had not made any great professions of economy. If they were extravagant, they were not inconsistent; whereas the Liberal flag had conspicuously borne the motto, "Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform." That banner had been somewhat draggled in the mud in recent years. The question of National Expenditure was too serious to be the subject of Party conflict. They had all been to blame. ["No, no!"] He did not blame his hon. Friends close around him, but the House as a whole. There never was an occasion when such a Motion as he now proposed to make was more justifiable than at the present moment. In 1850 Mr. Cobden made his celebrated speech in favour of economy. At that time the Expenditure was £55,500,000, against the £86,500,000 which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers) announced yesterday. In 1862 his right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) brought forward a similar Motion when the Expenditure was £71,000,000. Ten years later, his right hon. and learned Friend the present Secretary of State for the Home Department denounced the right hon. Gentleman the present

Prime Minister for his extravagance, and expressed, in language of the greatest force, the argument in favour of such Resolutions as the one which he (Mr. Rylands) was about to propose. He would not go over those arguments again, because he felt satisfied that there was a right hon. Gentleman in the Cabinet who would amply justify the course he (Mr. Rylands) was about to take in proposing an abstract Resolution. The Prime Minister himself, too, had set him an example. The right hon. Gentleman, in 1857, had himself proposed an abstract Resolution in favour of national economy, in the following terms:—

> "That, in order to secure to the country that relief from taxation which it justly expects, it is necessary, in the judgment of this House, to revise and further reduce the expenditure of the Army and Navy."

On that occasion the right hon. Gentleman dwelt especially on the cost of our Military Services, and pointed out that, whereas, in 1852, the Army and Navy Expenditure was £16,000,000, it had risen, in 1857, to £20,500,000. But, according to his (Mr. Rylands's) right hon. Friend's (Mr. Childers's) Budget just brought forward, the cost of those Services was £26,600,000—an advance of £6,000,000 over the Expenditure of 1857, and £10,600,000 over that of 1852. The success of such Resolutions depended on three conditions—first, out-of-doors pressure and general dissatisfaction in the country; secondly, the sympathy, or want of sympathy, in the House itself; and, thirdly, the disposition of the Government itself. He hoped his Resolution would meet with the favourable consideration of the Government. Experience taught the usefulness of abstract Resolutions on that subject, for Mr. Hume's Motion, in 1848, induced Lord John Russell to diminish the charge for the Military Services by nearly £1,000,000; and, three years later, those charges had been diminished by £3,500,000. In 1855-6 there was an Expenditure, owing to the Crimean War, of £93,000,000. In 1857 it fell to £76,000,000, and on that occasion the present Premier brought forward his Resolution, and was himself shortly afterwards Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Expenditure fell from £76,000,000 in 1857 to £71,250,000 in 1862. Then came the Resolution of his (Mr. Rylands's) right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), and the Expenditure fell from £71,250,000 in 1862 to £66,000,000 in 1866. Thus, between 1857 and 1866, there had been a reduction of £10,000,000 in Expenditure. In those 10 years there was a reduction of Expenditure amounting to £10,000,000, or an average reduction of £1,000,000 every year. This proved that there was no justification for the idea that there must necessarily be a progressive increase in our Expenditure. After 1866, however, this progressive economy suddenly stopped, for when the Derby-Disraeli Government came into power the flood-gates of Expenditure were opened, and the Expenditure increased in two years to the extent of £3,000,000. That increase marked an epoch in the recent financial history of the country. There was a General Election in 1868, and the present Prime Minister was a candidate for South-West Lancashire. The right hon. Gentleman issued an address to the electors, in which he brought a powerful indictment against the Tory Government. One serious charge was that they had increased the Expenditure of the country by £3,000,000 in two years, which, in the right hon. Gentleman's judgment, was not necessary in the interests of the Public Service. This £3,000,000, and the claim for national economy, formed the key-note of the right hon. Gentleman's eloquent speeches during that electoral campaign. The right hon. Gentleman did not tolerate for a moment the idea of a progressive increase in the Expenditure, but gave the true reason for the Expenditure in the profligacy of the Government. [Mr. GLADSTONE said, he did not use the word "profligacy."] He would admit that the right hon. Gentleman did not use that word; but he said that the Government had been making use of the Public Funds to make things pleasant all round. If that was not profligate conduct, he (Mr. Rylands) did not know what was. The right hon. Gentleman pointed out that the influence of the spending servants of the Crown—a large Army and bureaucracy of increasing power—constantly tended to the increase of Expenditure. Individuals, and knots, and groups, and classes, he said, had a quick, constant, and unsleeping interest in feeding themselves on the product of the public industry. He added—

> "If the public go to sleep, the other power never goes to sleep. On the contrary, it watches for its opportunity."

Let them look at their swollen Estimates, and he (Mr. Rylands) would ask whether these groups and classes were not enforcing their opportunity while the Government appeared to be asleep? In 1868 the same excuses were put forward by the Tory Government that were put forward by the Departments now. The First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary of State for War naturally said they must have all this money for the purpose of keeping up the efficiency of our establishments. The right hon. Gentleman met that by saying—

> "If you intend to have any limit put upon the Expenditure of the country, it is high time that you should be upon your guard against efficiency. Efficiency in itself is a very good thing; but in the mouth of a Minister who wants to find excuses for a great increase in the public burdens it is a plea that ought not to be admitted without a great deal of carefulness."

We were told in 1868 that we required new guns and new and improved ships, and that all these things were very costly; but the right hon. Gentleman would not allow the electors of South-West Lancashire to be misled by any such language as that—

> "Why," he exclaimed, "for the last 15 years we have been doing nothing but arming and re-arming and building and re-building, thinking we had found a better method of building ships, thinking we had found a better method of constructing guns or small arms, rushing with precipitate haste at the wholesale execution of the idea of the moment, and before the idea of the moment had been fully embodied in a vast Public Expenditure, finding that some other fashion and some other pattern were superior, and that the whole thing was to be done over again."

It was unnecessary for him (Mr. Rylands) to dwell further on the powerful arguments used by the right hon. Gentleman in 1868 against the extravagant Expenditure of the Tory Government. But the right hon. Gentleman's speeches had an effect on the country at large, and on the result of that General Election. It was then shown, as it had been shown on a more recent occasion in Mid Lothian, that the eloquence of the right hon. Gentleman had the power of many legions. The country listened to the economical instructions of the right hon. Gentleman; the extravagant Tories were nowhere at the poll; a Liberal majority was returned to Parliament, and the right hon. Gentleman succeeded to power as Prime Minister. The Government then formed was an economical one, and included several Members who had been leading advocates of national economy. Mr. Lowe was Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Cardwell Secretary of State for War, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Pontefract (Mr. Childers) First Lord of the Admiralty; and other important posts were held by the right hon. Members for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), and Montrose (Mr. Baxter). For about 18 months they acted manfully in cutting down the Estimates. He well remembered the admirable speeches of the Secretary of State for War and the First Lord of the Admiralty, in moving the Army and Navy Estimates in 1869 and 1870. It was perfectly refreshing to read them now in these degenerate days. Mr. Cardwell laid down distinct principles of action. His administrative policy included the withdrawal of forces from the Colonies, the concentration of regiments at home, and consequent reduction in the Army. He established greater control and economy in the purchase of stores. He exercised caution and moderation in the manufacture of fire-arms and munitions of war. And he made reductions in the Army Establishments, retired redundant officers, and exercised careful economies in the general items of Expenditure. These efforts produced most satisfactory results. The Army was reduced by 24,000 men, and the total Expenditure for Army purposes was decreased by the sum of £2,300,000. Exactly the same principles were applied to the Navy by his (Mr. Rylands's) right hon. Friend the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. Foreign squadrons were withdrawn from distant stations and the ships concentrated near our own shores. Great reforms and savings were effected in the purchase of stores. Redundant officials were removed. The number of men employed in the Dockyards was limited to 11,000, and a check was put upon the manufacture of stores by the Government, and greater opportunities afforded for the competition of private shipbuilding yards in the supply of vessels of war. The effect of these wise proposals was to secure a reduction of Navy Expenditure upon that of 1868, of about

£2,250,000. It would, therefore, be seen that the total reduction upon the Army and Navy Services effected in 1869-70 amounted to no less a sum than £4,500,000. He wished to fix the attention of the House upon these Estimates, because they were proposed by practically the same Government as the present. The Prime Minister was responsible for both, and in 1870 considered that reduced Expenditure sufficient for the protection of the country, and for the general cost of the Administration. It was quite true that those Estimates were materially increased during the year 1870, as the result of an unreasoning panic, which occurred in consequence of the Franco-German War. At the very time when the two greatest Military Powers of the Continent were engaged in a deadly struggle, and when certainly there was no danger that British interests would be attacked, the Prime Minister yielded to the clamour from both sides of the House and proposed a Vote of Credit for £2,000,000, for which he (Mr. Rylands) thought at the time, and still believed, there was not a shadow of excuse. He was one of a small minority of 7 who voted against that useless expenditure. However, the Government yielded to the pressure, and the virtue went out of them. They were no longer entitled to the credit of being an economical Government. There was a gradual increase of Expenditure until, in 1873-4, the Budget Estimates, including Supplementary Votes but excluding the Alabama Claims, amounted to £72,500,000, being an increase of £3,000,000 over 1870-1. That was the time, in 1872 and 1873, when his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), whom he regretted not to see present, denounced the Expenditure. That was the time when the Government had so drifted into a large Expenditure, and had become a discredited Administration, to some extent, before the House and the country—it was that inglorious period of their history, in 1873-4, that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his Budget Speech last night, selected as the point of departure in making his comparison between the Expenditure of the Liberal and the Conservative Government. But what he (Mr. Rylands) went back upon was the Estimates of 1870-71, when the Government were fresh from the constituencies, after all the magnificent teachings of the Prime Minister, and were resolved to carry out the principles they had upheld before the country. It was partly owing to the increased Expenditure of 1873-4 that the country had the advantage of seeing what the Conservative Party would do when in Office, and as to the result he could only say—"Bad as our people were, your people were worse." The Expenditure rapidly mounted up under the management of Mr. Disraeli and his subordinates, so that from 1875 to 1880 it jumped up something like £10,000,000 or £12,000,000 a year. ["Oh, oh!"] Yes; it was so. In 1875 the Expenditure was £74,500,000, and in 1880 it was £86,000,000. The present Government at once proceeded to decrease the Expenditure. In 1881 it was brought down to £83,750,000; but last year it rose to £89,000,000; while this year, according to the Estimate of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it was £86,500,000. He (Mr. Rylands) had taken the gross expenditure, in giving comparisons over long periods, as being more popularly intelligible; but, of course, he was aware that such comparisons must be taken with qualifications. There was the reduction of Debt, which had been somewhat greater during the past three years than in 1870-1. There were also additional grants in aid of local rates, amounting to £3,000,000, and the increased cost of the Post Office and Telegraph Departments of £2,500,000. But, after making all necessary allowances on account of these items, the additional charge upon the public since 1870-1 was simply enormous. The ingenuity of the Chancellor of the Exchequer would almost lead them to think they were now, and for the last few years, in a financial Elysium. It was very easy to take figures here and there and show a decrease in this and the other Departments; but he wished to challenge the attention of the House to the following facts:—In 1870-1 the net Expenditure on the Army was £11,750,000; in 1883-4 the amount was £15,600,000—an increase of £3,850,000. In 1870-1 the Expenditure on the Navy was £8,927,000; and in 1883-4 it was £10,757,000—an increase of £1,830,000. These were the Estimates of the economical Party. In addition, the Civil Service Estimates, excluding Revenue Charges, had increased £6,970,000—a total increase of over £12,500,000. Those were hard facts, and they showed how they had gone on increasing the Expenditure. He intended to direct the attention of the House to the increase in the Army and Navy Votes, and would leave to his hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) the consideration of the Civil Service Expenditure. Take the case of the Army. As compared with 1870-1, there was an increase of 24,000 men, at an additional cost of nearly £4,000,000. What was the excuse? What was the policy of the Government? He presumed it was not "Jingoism;" for, although, in a weak moment, they had followed the policy of Lord Beaconsfield in the Egyptian War, he understood they altogether repudiated and renounced Lord Beaconsfield and all his works. Of course, if they wished to carry out that policy of adventure, they ought to keep up a large Army Establishment. But if there was no policy of adventure, there never was a time when there was less reason than now for disturbing ourselves in regard to the state of affairs in Europe. He appealed to the authority of leading statesmen that when they were in a state of peace they ought to retrench. That was Sir Robert Peel's policy. It had been advocated by Mr. Disraeli in 1862, and the Prime Minister had again and again urged it. He thought they might withdraw some of the troops in the Colonies. At present the Colonial garrisons amounted to 26,000 men, at a cost to this country of about £3,000,000. He thought, at least, 10,000 men might be withdrawn, and, by a consequent reduction in the Army, a saving effected of over £1,000,000. He would not dwell upon the fancied necessity of defending what had been called the "the Keys" of India. They now held Egypt, and it was to be hoped that military expenditure against Russian aggression in the East might be curtailed. The best security for our Indian Possessions was to be found in the diminution of taxation, the development of the country by the construction of railways, and other public works, and in the general prosperity, happiness, and contentment of the Native Races. The principle of keeping up our Establishments in time of peace had resulted in largely increasing almost every Vote both for the Regular Forces and for the Reserves. Not that he did not entirely approve of the system of maintaining a large Reserve Force, seeing that the 585,000 men who now composed our Militia, Yeomanry, and Regular Reserve Forces were an admirable reason against largely increasing the charge of the Regular Army. And, with all our expenditure, it could not be said that we had an efficient Army. Many of the men who were sent to Egypt could not, except by accident, hit a haystack with their rifles; and the consequences of this bad shooting might have been most disastrous, if the firing of the enemy had not been inferior even to that of our own men. It seemed to him that what the country most wanted was an efficient, but small, Army, with an adequate Reserve. Then, again, the charge for the Non-Effective Services had been enormously increased by the abolition of Purchase, till it had reached its present total of £3,347,000. Whatever might be the advantages of the abolition of Purchase, its financial excuse was that its ultimate results would be increased economy; and yet it was certain that, as a matter of fact, nothing of the kind had happened. He would not discuss the Navy Estimates in detail; but he was bound to say that, in his opinion, there was no justification for the increased expenditure contemplated by the Government. He had not the slightest wish to reduce the Navy below its proper strength; but the existing 114 sea-going ships ought to suffice, added to the 132 vessels that were employed for Coast defence and other purposes, and to the cruisers of the Merchant Service that would be armed and made available in time of war, according to the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. Another item that might very well be reduced was the Dockyard expenditure, which had risen from £2,120,000 in 1871 to £3,946,000 under the present Government. He could not pretend to be an authority on Naval construction; but it was noticeable that the Admiralty were now building monster vessels at a very great cost; and he might ask, how these very expensive ships, some of them costing as much as £800,000, would behave in the presence of two or three cheap torpedo boats? Considering the sums of money thus spent in the Royal Dockyards, and the possible futility of the outlay, it might, perhaps, be urged that the Government would find the country equally well served in reality if it employed fewer men in the Dockyards, and trusted more to the open market and to private builders. For the great cost of the Naval and Military Services of the country the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary of State for War, as Heads of the chief spending Departments, were primarily responsible. No doubt, Parliament was responsible also; but though the House had opportunities of criticism its real power was comparatively small. The Resolution which he was about to move related to the excessive Expenditure; but how was Parliament to deal with the matter practically? The right hon. Gentleman would say that that could be done in Committee of Supply. That was theoretically feasible; but how did it happen that in Committee of Supply the best of causes commanded so few votes? The reason, he feared, was that Government made expenditure a Party question; so that when an item had been discussed in a thin Committee, the great body of Members were summoned by the Division Bell to vote as the Whip told them. He ventured to urge on the right hon. Gentleman, gathering from his Budget Speech of last year that he was considering whether some additional financial control might not be given to the House, that a strong Estimate Committee should be appointed to discuss the cost of the Army, the Navy, and the Civil Service. Or, if that could not be done at present, Committees might be appointed to consider certain specified large items of expenditure. He believed that, at the present moment, in consequence of the state of agriculture and of trade, and in consequence of the still increasing competition of foreign countries, if this country desired to maintain its position in the open markets of the world, it must strive after economy and after the means of producing the articles of agriculture and commerce in the cheapest possible mode. The public took deep interest in the Motion he proposed; and he ventured to tell the Government that, unless they dealt with this question of expenditure with a firm hand, unless they could show some means, before they again went to the country, by which a substantial reduction of expenditure and relief of taxation could be effected, they would be charged with neglecting their professions and principles. Unless a definite policy with regard to the expenditure was set forth by the Government, they would again go to the country, as in 1874, without that clean record of Liberal policy which they ought to possess; and if they could not go to the people with the good old words of the Party, "Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform," they would be met with the assertion that they had been false to their professions. The effect would be disadvantageous to the country and unfortunate for themselves; and the country might find, as it had found before, that while they struck at the Government for their extravagance, they would be only bringing back into power hon. Gentlemen who might be still more extravagant. That, however, the people would not consider; they would judge the Liberal Party by their professions; and he had no hesitation in saying that unless the Government altered their course the country would justly condemn them. He would conclude by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

MR. H. H. FOWLER, in seconding the Motion, said that in its justification he would quote almost the closing words of the speech of the Prime Minister before he retired from the Office of Chancellor of the Exchequer—words which would remain as the summing-up of his judgment as to what the financial duties of the House and the Government were. On that occasion the Prime Minister said—

> "There are three principles, greater than all others, on which, in my opinion, all good finance should be based. The first of them is that there should always be a certainty that whatever the charge may be, it can be paid. That, I believe, is of vital importance. The second is that, in times of peace and prosperity, the people of the country should reduce their Debt; and the third point is, that they should reduce their Expenditure."—(3 *Hansard*, [268] 1298.)

The able, lucid, and powerful Financial Statement of his (Mr. Fowler's) right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers), on the previous night, showed conclusively, apart from all controversial matters, whatever might have been the charge for the past year, or whatever the charge for the coming year might be, that there was adequate provision to meet it. It also showed that a large amount had been paid in reduction of Debt during the last 10 or 12 years, and indicated still further operations in that direction; but where the speech failed was, that it did not indicate a reduction in the National Expenditure. The proposition which those who supported this Resolution had to make out that evening, therefore, was that the National Expenditure could be reduced. They contended that in time of peace the Expenditure was too high; that the financial resources of the country, although adequate to meet it, were unnecessarily strained; and that a burden was thus imposed on the people of this country which they ought not to be called on to bear. In discussing the National Expenditure, it seemed to him to be necessary to dispel one or two popular delusions which had arisen in many speeches and articles throughout the country, and which resulted from what he would call a misleading mode of keeping our National Accounts. The sums of £80,000,000, £84,000,000, and £89,000,000 had been referred to in connection with the Expenditure; but, so far as the income derived from taxes and its expenditure were concerned, there were no such figures in existence. If a manufacturer, in his balance-sheet at the end of the year, found that he had made large purchases of raw material and had largely increased his disbursements for wages, and if, on the other side of the balance-sheet, he had gross receipts, which not only covered that additional expenditure, but yielded him additional profit, he did not point to that expenditure with regret, or regard it as indicative of loss. So it should be with regard to the accounts of the State. The income and expenditure were swelled by business Departments which the Government carried on for the service and advantage of the community at large. In various directions this was done by the Government; and a large proportion of the increased expenditure, instead of indicating an addition to the burdens of the taxpayer, represented operations which decreased those burdens and extended the public convenience. In 1882 the real Expenditure was £74,000,000, not £85,500,000; and of this £74,000,000 only £70,500,000 were provided by taxation, and £3,500,000 were derived from the business of the Post Office and the Telegraphs. He would not follow the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) in his remarks concerning the Expenditure on the Army and Navy, further than to say that he fully agreed with him in reference to the necessity for reduction. He also approved of the course the hon. Member had adopted in taking the year 1870-1 for his calculations, which was a sounder period for the purpose than the year 1873-4. The gross Expenditure in that year for the Civil Service—or for items other than the Army and Navy—was £38,750,000, and in 1882 it was £47,750,000; and here was an apparent increase of £9,000,000. But the real increase was about £8,000,000. His right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer last night made a strong point of the fact that between the two years he mentioned there was an increase in the charge upon taxes of only £8,000,000; but to that the right hon. Gentleman ought to have added the large increase of income or additional profit from the Post Office and the Telegraphs—an increase which was very considerable in the time stated; for the Non-Tax Revenue between 1871 and 1882 had increased by nearly £5,000,000. Now, with the permission of the House, he would look at this Expenditure of £47,750,000, and he would classify it under four heads—(1), the expenditure with reference to the Debt; (2), the statutory charges on the Consolidated Fund; (3), the optional expenditure which Parliament voted annually; and, (4), the cost of collection and of the machinery for the administration of the Post Office and Telegraphs. With reference to our position in connection with the Debt the expenditure upon it had increased something like £1,000,000 during the time the present Government had been in power. He did not think hon. Gentlemen opposite would dispute that that increase had arisen mainly, in fact altogether, from two items—namely, the additional charge of £800,000 created by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) just before he left Office, and the additional Annuities created for the purpose of paying the Indian Loan. The Chancellor of the Exchequer raised a very interesting question last night with reference to our policy on account of the Debt. He (Mr. H. H.

Fowler) thought there was a kind rf tendency to take rather panic notions on that matter. At the close of the Great War in 1817 the Debt was £841,000,000, and the annual charge £32,000,000; and in any Estimate between then and now we had to take into consideration the additional wealth of the country. At the accession of the Queen in 1837 the Debt stood at £787,000,000. At the close of the Crimean War in 1857 it stood at £832,500,000, and to-day it stood at £725,000,000. During the last 25 years we had added nearly £50,000,000 to the Debt for Fortifications, Telegraphs, Suez Canal Shares, and other expenditure. Although there had, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer showed, been a net reduction of the National Debt by £107,000,000, it should be made clear that, in addition to this reduction, we had also provided out of the taxation of the country for the additional Debt which had been created during that period. We had really paid off £133,000,000 in 25 years. Our position with reference to the Debt was somewhat peculiar. In 10 years, between 1870 and 1880, there were only two European Powers which had reduced their Debts—Denmark and Great Britain. Denmark had reduced its Debt to the amount of £3,000,000; but the other nations of Europe during that time had added to their Debt £1,513,000,000, while America had paid off £94,000,000. During the same 10 years there was an increase in our national wealth of something like £650,000,000; our Debt did not represent 8 per cent of the national wealth, nor did it represent more than eight months of the national earnings of the year. Lord Beaconsfield was accurate when he said that our National Debt was a mere flea-bite compared to the national resources, and we were not justified in regarding it as an intolerable burden. We could afford to regard it with no great feeling of dissatisfaction, although, at the same time, there was a general consensus of opinion that we should continue in the course of reducing the Debt. The next item of our Civil Service Expenditure was the statutory charges placed by the country upon the Consolidated Fund. Those charges were placed upon the Consolidated Fund, unfortunately, with very great facility; and, when once there, they could not be removed. They amounted to something like £1,665,000; and, apart from the Civil List and the Royal Annuities, amounting to £546,000, the bulk of them consisted of pensions, salaries, and allowances. He thought there was room for a very great reduction in almost every one of those items. Military and hereditary pensions represented over £20,000 a-year; judicial pensions, £60,000; diplomatic and other pensions, £15,000; and distinguished services, £22,000. In addition to the judicial salaries, amounting to nearly £470,000, there were the judicial compensations—a most fruitful source of jobbery—which, in this country, amounted to £68,000 a-year; in Ireland, to £7,000; and in Scotland, to £6,000. He thought there was not only room for inquiry, but great reason why the House should look with great care on all new legislation for proposing to abolish existing offices and create new ones. When a man was a servant of the country, and the State thought fit to dispense with his services in the particular position which he had occupied, he should be bound to serve it in some other capacity. Under the judicial expenditure there was found one of those appropriations out of the Consolidated Fund for local purposes, which was most unfair and inequitable. It was a payment of £35,000 a-year for the salaries of the Metropolitan police magistrates. There was no borough or town in England, having stipendiary magistrates, but paid those magistrates out of its own rates. The main item in the Civil Service Expenditure was the Parliamentary or optional, the annual amount voted every year. During the 10 years there had been an increase of something like £6,000,000 on this Expenditure. In 1880 it amounted to £15,250,000, in 1881 to £15,750,000, in 1882 to £16,500,000, and in 1883 to £17,250,000. On that point he approved his hon. Friend's (Mr. Rylands's) suggestion that these Estimates should be submitted to a Standing Finance Committee. In that way, he (Mr. H. H. Fowler) thought that justice would be done both to the Departments and the taxpayers, while the expenditure would, at the same time, be reduced. The main increase on the Civil Service Estimates, no doubt, arose on the Education Vote and Local Taxation. The increase in aid of Local Taxation was £2,750,000 during the last 10 years, and that grant had now reached £5,750,000 sterling. He contended that there was no mode of local expenditure more extravagant than grants in aid of local taxation. There was nothing which required more careful scrutiny and reform than this very question. It was not confined to agricultural districts; it was quite as unfair in urban districts; and, however the farmer might suffer from what he considered unfair taxation, the shopkeeper suffered not less. Under the present system, a grant in aid of local taxation was a subsidy to a taxation of which the upper and middle classes bore about 80 or 85 per cent from a taxation to which they did not contribute more than 60 per cent. Five-sixths of local taxation was defrayed by the upper and middle classes, whereas they only paid about three-fifths of Imperial taxation. To illustrate the calculation, he might say that in a grant from Imperial to local funds the working classes would receive relief to the extent of 3*s*. 4*d*. in the pound, derived from a Revenue towards which they contributed 8*s*. in the pound. He objected to the grant from the Imperial Revenue of £250,000 for the repair of turnpike roads. If any charge ought to be thrown upon the locality it certainly was that appertaining to the repair of local roads. In his opinion, it was a great mistake, when the turnpike tolls were abolished, that some complete and general system had not been adopted. It was unjust; and he could not understand upon what principle it could be maintained that a local charge, as regarded roads, should be put upon the Consolidated Fund, when the same charge, so far as it affected towns and urban districts, was not proposed to be put on the Consolidated Fund. As regarded the increase in the Education Votes, he should, in the absence of the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council (Mr. Mundella) refrain from making the observations he had intended to lay before the House, in reference to the small result that had been obtained from so large an expenditure. On looking at the Estimates he found that the Public Works absorbed £1,500,000, Salaries and Expenses £2,500,000, Law and Justice £6,000,000, Education, Science, and Art £4,250,000, Foreign and Colonial £750,000, and other Charges £1,250,000. Taking the item of £1,500,000 for public works first, he desired to point out how enormous was the sum of money incurred in the erection of new public buildings. This was not a mere isolated expenditure; but it was one that was continually going on year after year, until million after million was swallowed up. Last year the enormous expense connected with the new Courts of Justice, as well as that incurred for the new Natural History Museum at South Kensington, had come to an end; and yet, nevertheless, the Estimate for the present year showed an increase which, in reality, amounted to £250,000. In the face of this fact, however, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had felt bound to oppose, the other evening, the granting of the boon to all classes of a reduction of the cost of telegraph messages to 6*d*. What would have been the feeling of the public had they found that that boon was to be withheld from them, in order that a number of fresh public buildings might be erected? He had received communications with regard to waste and extravagance; and he trusted that, now it was known that the House of Commons was looking into the subject, this source of expenditure would be greatly checked. The cost of collecting and administering the Revenue did not show such a tendency to increase, because, while it was £2,500,000 in 1871, it had only risen to £2,800,000 in 1882. The expenses of the Post Office had risen from £4,000,000 in 1871 to £4,750,000 in 1882; but that was counterbalanced by the increase of profits derived from it. The profit in 1871 was £1,500,000; in 1880, £2,750,000; and in 1882, £3,250,000. The entire charge on the taxes was, in 1857, £63,500,000; and in 1882, £73,500,000. In order to correctly appreciate the true financial position of the country, he must refer to the valuable Return which had been moved for by the right hon. Member for the City of London (Mr. Hubbard). In 1877 the real Expenditure of the country was £68,000,000; in 1878 it was £71,000,000; in 1879 it was £74,750,000; in 1880 it was £73,000,000; in 1881 it was £71,750,000; and in 1882 it was £74,100,000. It was a mistake, therefore, to imagine that we had yet got into the region of considerable reduction. He did not desire to enter into any controversy as to which political Party was the more economical; but the people of this country might well say to both the Front Benches — "A plague on both your houses." The National Expenditure did not seem to be greatly affected by either Party being in power, for it continued to rise with a regularity apparently very little regulated or controlled by either of them. But he wanted to say a word or two upon the importance of the question as it affected the masses of the people. When these large sums were voted and expended, the House did not realize the number of homes whose daily comforts are affected by their taxation. Their payments were not in respect of luxuries or surplus unspent income, but affected their daily consumption of the necessaries of life. He was reminded of a story told in one of his most pathetic and powerful speeches by his right hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) of a French lady who applied to the Minister of France for a grant of 1,000 crowns. The lady was indignant at the refusal of a sum so small in comparison with the Revenue. But Necker replied—"Madame, 1,000 crowns represent the taxation of a whole village." The true test of our national life was in the progress of the cottage homes of England. It was said that working men need not pay taxes unless they liked; but, with all respect to his hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), the working men of this country would not be content to live on bread and water. Why assume to the toiling class, who needed, if any class did, the physical reliefs which all classes claim, a tone of frigid utilitarianism? There were three articles which he (Mr. H. H. Fowler) looked upon as being principal articles of consumption in the home of the working man—tea, tobacco, and beer—and those three articles were the most heavily taxed of almost all commodities. Suppose 1*s.* to be spent on any of those articles, how much of it was paid as tax? In the case of tea, the taxation was at least 6*d.* out of the 1*s.* Of the 1*s.* spent in beer, 2*d.* was paid for tax; and out of 1*s.* spent on tobacco 10*d.* was the tax. That was a most unfair taxation as compared with the taxation of the richer classes. His hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), in a clever burlesque, which, no doubt, most hon. Members had read, had described the imaginary future of an imaginary Liberal Party; and he (Mr. H. H. Fowler) could not but feel that, whatever there might be of exaggeration or caricature in that article, there was some truth underlying; and that House would have to face, some day, the question whether taxation had been properly adjusted as between capital and labour. The late Lord Beaconsfield had said that finance was, after all, a question of policy. He (Mr. H. H. Fowler) would invert the proposition, and say that all policy was a question of finance. They could have no sound national policy, a policy which was affecting the peace, the progress, and the prosperity of the great bulk and masses of the people, unless they had a sound system of national finance. Extravagance in a nation was just the same thing as extravagance in an individual, and would produce, in the long run, precisely the same result. He would urge, with all respect to the House, that it was their duty and their interest—possessing, as they did, the vantage ground of experience and knowledge, and remembering that they did, in the main, in that House represent that section of Her Majesty's subjects who, whilst they contributed least in proportion to the national income, yet derived the most advantage from the National Expenditure — remembering these things, they ought to anticipate and they ought to disarm the impatience —not the ignorant impatience, but the intelligent impatience—which unnecessary taxation invariably arouses, and the feeling which was certain to be excited by the knowledge, sooner or later acquired, that the incidence of that taxation was unfair. Election after election they would have to face a more intelligent constituency, and, depend upon it, a more economical constituency, too. Therefore, on those grounds—not for the purpose of Party recrimination or Party triumph—he asked the House unanimously to affirm that the National Expenditure of this country demanded the earnest and immediate attention of Her Majesty's Government with a view to its early consideration.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, the present amount of the National Expenditure demands the earnest and immediate attention of Her Majesty's Government, with the view of effecting such reductions as may be consistent with the efficiency of the public service,"—(*Mr. Rylands,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. GLADSTONE: I think, Mr. Speaker, that whatever may be the view taken by any hon. Member of this House of the Motion which is before us, there will be a general admission that the important task assumed by my hon. Friends the Members for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) and Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), who have respectively made and seconded it, has been performed by them with great ability; and although I am very far from being prepared to subscribe to all that both or either of them may have said, there is much of it in which I heartily concur, and many things, and many statements and ideas have proceeded from them, which will tend to freshen and invigorate the public mind on this important subject, and to bring into lively and practical operation thoughts which for long periods are apt to lie dormant. I feel, therefore, that it is due alike them and to the House that I should lose no time in stating to the House the estimate that we form of the Motion that has been made, the course which we propose to take, and the nature and extent of the results which we anticipate from it, in case it should be carried. I will make some very brief observations indeed, at the beginning, upon two or three remarks which fell from my hon. Friend who proposed the Resolution, in some of which I was myself personally concerned. My hon. Friend appeared to anticipate that, inasmuch as his Motion, as he considered, fell under the title of an abstract Resolution, and as he had frequently heard objections taken from persons standing at this Box to abstract Resolutions, he must expect that a similar course would be taken to-day. There is, however, a good deal of ambiguity about the use of the phrase "an abstract Resolution." I, for my part, have often objected to abstract Resolutions, but I draw a distinction between them, both according to the circumstances in which they are moved, and according to the subject-matter with which they deal. I should say that in general it is objectionable to move abstract Resolutions in regard to matters which ought to be put forward by legislation, unless they are intended at once to be followed by the submission of practical proposals to the House. But I make this admission at once to my hon. Friend—that, with regard to all questions of finance, my hon. Friend has no course, if he is to proceed at all, but to proceed by an abstract Resolution; and no doubt, Sir, when objection is naturally taken to abstract Resolutions, it is taken upon this ground—that it very often happens that after the declaration of a principle—or a change, as it were, in the air—the House feels that it has done something when it has really done nothing; and allows the subject-matter to go to sleep in such a way that occasionally the ultimate and practical settlement of great questions is not forwarded, but is actually impeded by the very cheap assertion and the very cheap exhibition of public faith and virtue that is sometimes made in an abstract Resolution. But I understand my hon. Friend to make this Motion in the sense of pledging the Government—and I must also say, if I am to interpret his Motion in a favourable manner, in the sense of pledging the House—to something of a practical character, in a real and a close review of the Expenditure of the country, and that with profit. My hon. Friend spoke with great impartiality, in respect of which I have no exception to take to what he said, unless this, that he did not go quite far enough. He said that all the Governments were to blame; that both Parties were to blame; and he generously said that he himself was to blame, and he took more on himself than some of those who sat behind him appeared to be prepared to accept. But, Sir, my hon. Friend, in my opinion, will never have done full justice to the case until he recognizes this fact—that if there has been an indifference to the great question of Public Expenditure in recent times, that is neither exclusively due to Goverments, nor to Parties, nor to Parliaments, but to the public of this country also. The nation itself has been far less alive to the subject of economy in the administration of its affairs than used to be the case in former times; and we must not shut our eyes to the fact that this House is an Assembly so essentially representative of public feeling that, if it has fallen short in this most important and essential particular of its duty, it never could have so fallen short unless there had been in the public mind an inadequate appreciation of the pressing nature of the subject. My hon. Friend referred to what took place in 1870, when, he stated, he resisted a Vote of Credit which was proposed as an additional expenditure by me, and he said that he was one of 7 Gentleman who voted against it. Well, Sir, if he was one of 7 Gentlemen who voted against it, that, in my opinion, is a very clear and sufficient proof, not only that the general sense of the House lay the other way, but that the country did not take his view of the matter. And, Sir, as I have referred to the subject of what took place in 1870, I must demur to the censure bestowed by hon. Friend on the measures of that year. He says that was a time when two great Military Powers were about to exhaust each other in the efforts of a frightful war, and that that was the very time when it would have been perfectly safe for us to have held our hands and kept down our Expenditure. I think my hon. Friend's recollection has not served him quite faithfully on this occasion. It was not from any apprehension on account of that war, or from an idle idea that it was our duty to interfere in every Continental contest, that the measure was then proposed to the House in reference to our Military Establishments. It was because, in the judgment of the Government and of the country, a serious danger had appeared to threaten the prosperity of a small but free neighbour, in whose welfare the people of this country feel the deepest interest. It was to make provision, and, as I believe, an effectual, though a moderate, provision, against danger in that quarter, that the measure was proposed to which my hon. Friend has referred, and which he says he opposed in a minority of only 7 Members. I find in the speech of my hon. Friend that which I admit is almost absolutely incidental to a speech of such a nature. In discussing and bringing to question the augmentation of Public Expenditure, it was hardly possible that my hon. Friend should administer complete justice as between expenditure and the purposes to which it was applied. There was a very great change, which my hon. Friend appears to think was a change of inclination or of personal views on the part of the Government in 1870 and 1871, and he says with perfect truth that, at that time, a very considerable augmentation was made in the Military Estimates. But, Sir, my hon. Friend ought to admit—and I think he will admit—that while I am by no means prejudging the question whether we have now strict military economy, yet I will call even upon him to admit that, at least as regards a portion of the increase of charge, we have, at all events, had value for our money. My hon. Friend appears to be one of those who do not approve the operations in Egypt last year. But, whether he approves them or not, let him consider the manner in which they were carried into effect. Let him consider the promptitude—and promptitude in war means cheapness—with which the whole of that operation was carried through; and my hon. Friend must know that, if the very same circumstances had occurred 20 or 30 years ago—if we had, say, the Army or the Army Establishments of 1853 instead of those of 1882, it would have been impossible for us, in anything like the same space of time, or with the same decision and success, to put our hand to the execution of a work which we deemed to be imperative in point of principle and policy, and necessary for the security of Eastern Europe, as well as other objects. No doubt, the operation proposed by us in 1871 was an operation of immense responsibility and immense cost—I mean the abolition of Purchase. But that operation was one which gave us the control of a truly National Army. That Army had been, indeed, before full of the highest military qualities, as far as devotion is concerned; but as to the efficiency of the body of officers, and the relation established between the body of officers and the nation at large, a fundamental change was then effected, which I believe the country has recognized as more than worth all the money it cost. My hon. Friend will perhaps allow me to refer to the mention he has made of the case of 1857. He states that at that time a Resolution of this nature was made in the House of Commons, and that it was made by myself. It is quite true. I thought then, as I think now, that there was very good reason why the Motion should be made; and why it should be made by myself.

It was desirable that it should be made, because, undoubtedly, the period immediately succeeding the Crimean War was the turning point in regard to expenditure in this country, and the reason why I felt it incumbent upon me to make the Motion was that, as Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1853, I had indicated to the House how, on the scale of expenditure which then prevailed, the Income Tax might be extinguished at an early date. From the scale of expenditure, as it was proposed in 1857, that was impossible, and I felt it to be my duty to endeavour to bring to issue the question, whether the House of Commons desired still to hold out to the country the expectation of extinguishing the Income Tax, or whether it was ready to face, perhaps, in deference to real necessities, a scale of Establishments which would make it impossible, under the circumstances that then existed, to escape from the pressure of the burden. The Income Tax was not then so much rooted, perhaps, in the public habits as it is now; and when it was first proposed by Sir Robert Peel, it was proposed as a tax essentially temporary and special, the proceeds to be applied to the effecting of particular purposes of commercial reform, and the application to be one, as he held out the expectation, of very limited scope indeed. Although I would be very sorry to give to this discussion the slightest tinge of a question between two sides of the House, as my hon. Friend has treated the Government of 1871 as having at that time abandoned the ideas of economy with which it had come into Office, and which, unquestionably, in 1868 I for one had loudly professed before the country; as he said that, I may perhaps point out to him that though the very last Military Estimates which we proposed in 1873-4 were over £22,800,000, they were £1,800,000 lower than the Military Estimates that had been proposed in the year 1868. I beg pardon; my right hon. Friend (Mr, Childers) reminds me that these are the amounts spent, and not the Estimates. Now I came to the Motion of my hon. Friend, and here I at once admit that the check possessed by economically-minded Members of Parliament over the proposals of the Government, through Motions to be made in Committee of Supply, although it is a valuable and an absolutely necessary check, yet it is an insufficient one. It is the only check which can be brought into constant operation; but it is perfectly right that, from time to time, the House of Commons should rouse itself to efforts of a different character, and, therefore, that Motions of this kind should be made. It is, indeed, most desirable that when a Motion of this kind is made, we should remember that it is a subject not to be trifled with, and that the words of the Motion, if we adopt them, in the shape of a judgment and decision of this House, are words that carry a meaning. It may not be in our power to assure ourselves of very sweeping or very splendid results; but, at any rate, we ought to feel and know that, if a Motion of this kind is adopted, it is a solemn pledge to a serious effort, and that we must not shrink from any labour or anxiety that the endeavour to redeem that pledge may be found to involve. My hon. Friend, in one portion of his speech—I will not use the homely phrase—fell foul of efficiency; but he quoted some cautionary words of mine about efficiency to which I entirely adhere. It is not necessary to enter upon any controversy as to the proper place of the word "efficiency" in a discussion of this kind, because my hon. Friend has placed in his Motion a very just and judicious limitation. He desires to pledge the House to the expression of its opinion—

> "That the present amount of the National Expenditure demands the earnest and immediate attention of her Majesty's Government, with the view of effecting such reductions."

What reductions?

> "Such reductions as may be consistent with the efficiency of the public service."

It is impossible for the Government to object to a Motion of that kind. For, after what I have said as to the propriety of such Motions on occasion, the only question that can arise in our minds is whether this occasion is proper? Well, Sir, we are not prepared to assert that it is not proper. A considerable interval has passed since the House was invited to make any attempt of this kind. There was an attempt of the sort in 1873; but that so soon came to an end, in consequence of and in connection with the termination of the Government that had sanctioned it, that I consider that as hardly entering into the history of the case. I must go back as far as 1847 before we arrive at a period when the

House made a serious effort on this subject. The Government, therefore, considering that the principle of such a Motion is sound, are prepared to accept the Motion of my hon. Friend. We do that, wishing, at the same time, that the House should perfectly understand what we think it implies. Our acceptance implies that the Government will do its best to make a careful review of the several branches of the Public Expenditure; but we also look upon the Motion and find much of its value in this—that, as we conceive, it pledges the House also to take a certain course. I think it means that the House will assist the Government and will endeavour to strengthen its hands, and will show a general disposition, not to encourage, but rather to discountenance, whatever efforts may be made tending in the opposite direction. All that we expect from the House in the event of the adoption of the Motion. And, Sir, there is one mode in which the House is accustomed to act, so important, although I do not, at the present moment, venture to announce a positive decision of the Government upon it, yet I wish to mention it as a subject that it may be our duty to revise—the interference of the House of Commons, not only in the way of checking the items of expenditure, as they are proposed from year to year, but in the way of general review—as thoroughly Constitutional, and as supported amply by precedent in the traditions of other times; and those times are not exclusively confined to the period of the Reformed Parliament. On the contrary, the two occasions which alone I will quote are anterior to the Reform of 1832. In 1817, there was a step of this kind taken, and it was followed up by a similar Motion in 1819. A Committee was appointed under the Government of Lord Liverpool for the purpose of making a general review of the Public Expenditure. Again, in the year 1828, a similar Committee was appointed, and I cannot refer to that period without saying, what I think justice demands from me—that, although the greatest efforts for economy have been made since the Reform of 1832, yet, undoubtedly, the Government of the Duke of Wellington, I believe, on principle, and from the personal convictions of many of its leading Members, was, and proved itself in intention—conscientious intention—an economical Government. That was in 1828; and again, in 1847, Lord Russell assented to the appointment of a Select Committee. I have before me the terms in which those Select Committees were appointed. I need not trouble the House by reading over the formal References that were made. What I say is, that they were large and liberal in their terms, and that they opened up to the full consideration of the House the whole arrangements of the Public Expenditure, and that the only limitation they imposed was that which my hon. Friend has substantially introduced in his stipulation on behalf of efficiency—namely, that they were to consider what measures were to be conducted for the relief of the country from any part of the existing Expenditure by economies which would not be detrimental to the Public Services. I will not, at the present moment, say that we shall make a proposal to the House to appoint one Committee or more than one Committee of this kind; but I shall consider it one of our first duties to consider the matter very seriously; and if we see a prospect of advantage from the appointment of such Committees, and if we find that there is a general concurrence of opinion in that view—for that would be almost essential—then in a short time we would make a proposal of that character. There is one word which I ought to say. If we should ask the House to appoint such Committee or Committees, I need not say that we shall be appointing them at a period when the voting of the Estimates has already begun. Therefore, the Committees would not be appointed to consider the Estimates of the year in particular—though they would not be excluded from their view—but would be Committees upon the Expenditure in general. I am very desirous, however, to give my own view of the case, in order that there may not go abroad any exaggerated ideas upon the subject. My hon. Friends have—and I think very usefully, and my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his excellent speech last night, with the greatest utility to the public also—entered upon a variety of comparisons. What I wish to do, however, is to go further back. I want to go back into what I call the heart of the economical period of British administration, and I wish to choose for that purpose the year

1840. I do it for several reasons. First, because there can arise here no question between one Party and another, for the year 1840, like 1882, was a year of Liberal administration; and, secondly, because, as I have said, it is a year taken from a period of strict notions of economy professed on both sides of the House; and I think the most rigid economist, if he looks back and examines the proceedings of Parliament between 1830 and 1852, will have very little to desire. The Governments never bore hardly on individuals, and they upheld public faith and honour, yet they never missed an opportunity of providing for the present and prospective reduction of the Charges. Therefore, by taking the period of 1840, I take the period most suitable for comparison, from which we shall be able to judge of the whole deviation we have made in the action and policy at this time, and whether it be owing to a change of disposition or inefficiency on our part, or whether it is owing to an augmentation of public necessities. Further, it is the earliest year embraced in those admirable 15 years' summaries, by means of which every Member of the House has an opportunity of examining in great detail the particulars of Public Revenue and Expenditure. I begin by taking the Expenditure of that year and comparing it with that of 1882-3; but the result which appears to arise will be very considerably modified by necessary deductions. In 1840 the gross Charge to the country was £53,244,000; whereas, in 1882-3, it was £88,906,000, which presents to us the appearance of an enormous increase; but certainly the comparison so stated would be most fallacious, and I will proceed to perform those operations which are necessary, and are of a simple character, in order to make it a safe and trustworthy comparison. I wish to make it safe, so that we may know what the increase of our Expenditure has been, and how the augmentation stands in relation to the population and wealth of the country. The first thing to be done is to give the cost of the collection of the Revenue, because inasmuch as the Post Office, Telegraphs, and Packet Service form a principal part of the cost of collection, and as they are really not properly an expenditure out of taxes, but are the necessary charges for the performance of a Service which has enormously extended itself, we should take into our view these circumstances. The cost of collecting the Public Revenue in 1840 was £4,115,000, and the deduction of that sum reduces the gross Expenditure to £49,129,000. The cost of collection in 1882 had risen to £8,921,000—or considerably more than double—and the deduction of that sum reduces the gross Expenditure to £79,978,000. Then I think it is also convenient that the special War Charges of 1882 should be deducted, because although they are perfectly real for the particular year, they form no part of our general system of expenditure, and would rather tend to confuse our view. In 1840 there were on account of China and Canada special War Charges amounting to £703,000, and in 1882 the War Charges for Egypt were £3,896,000. Applying this correction, we get the Expenditure of 1840 at £48,427,000, and of 1882 at £76,082,000, so that the enormous gap which seems at first to separate the figures of the two years has gradully become a little narrower. But, then, Sir, it is most important to make one other deduction, if not two. The first is the deduction for the sum paid in the reduction of the Debt. Unfortunately, strictly as the principle of economy was applied in 1840, another principle which I hold to be still more important—namely, the equalization of the Revenue as against Charges—was not so tenaciously upheld in that period, and the consequence was that the operations for reduction of the Debt, without allowing for what was paid in the form of Terminable Annuities, were then conducted on a very small scale. It may surprise the House, perhaps, to know that in the year 1840, out of the Revenue of £48,426,000 only £531,000, went to the reduction of the Debt, and out of the Revenue of £76,082,000 in 1882 the sum that went to the reduction of Debt was £7,100,000. I am one of those who hold with the utmost tenacity to the principle that in all tolerable circumstances of the country, reduction of the Debt ought to be prosecuted as a paramount duty; and whatever authority may be quoted—and I know there are authorities that can be quoted for representing the National Debt as a flea-bite —I will not open my ears to the charms of the charmer, though he charm ever so wisely upon the subject; and I trust that every Parliament and every Government in this country, whatever its political complexion may be, will never relax its efforts in that direction—efforts which, I believe, ought to be extended, but, at any rate, not contracted. I am not now dealing with a matter of principle; but as a matter of fact it is quite obvious, if we are going to compare the Expenditure of two particular periods, that we must not take into account that portion of the Expenditure which is merely devoted to relief from obligations; and if we act on this very proper principle we shall find that the Expenditure of the year 1840 falls to £47,895,000, and the Expenditure of 1882 falls to £68,982,000. We may call that £48,000,000, and £69,000,000 respectively—that is equal to an increase in the Expenditure of 44 per cent. But then I think there is yet one other deduction that has been named to-night—named by my hon. Friend the Seconder of the Motion (Mr. H. H. Fowler) — which must be taken into view, and that is the enormous grants in aid of local taxation. That is a serious subject, and one which it is impossible to discuss here. On the whole, I was very well satisfied with the manner in which that was discussed by my hon. Friend, for he admitted that the incidence of local taxation was unfair, and required the amending hand of Parliament; while, on the other hand, he pointed out the dangers that beset our path regarding the sources of labour and capital respectively, from which the different funds are derived that are available for local and Imperial taxation; and he referred to the efforts first made by my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen); and I think it is a great honour to him to have first made the suggestion to Parliament that the proper method to proceed is this—fix in your own mind how much ought to be given to local taxation, and give it in a proper manner; give it by the allocation of taxes; give it in a manner which will leave in operation all the motives for economy in expenditure of money; give it in a manner that will not take the funds from labour and apply it to the relief of property. Whatever be done, let it be a straightforward and above-board proceeding, and then, in my opinion, the effect of that will be, on the one hand, to secure you against the serious political dangers incident to the present method of making grants in aid; while, on the other hand, the grants themselves will go infinitely further in the relief of the ratepayers than is the case at present. Again, I have only to concern myself with the practical amounts, and the amounts are these. In 1842—I cannot get the amount for 1840 or 1841, but I think 1842 may be considered as substantially the same thing—in 1842 the whole amount for local taxation was £620,000; in fact, the system was then absolutely in its infancy; but, in 1882, I believe the amount expended was fully £6,000,000—that is to say, it was multiplied nearly ten-fold during those 40 years. Deducting these sums again, I reduce the Expenditure of 1840 to £47,275,000, and that of 1882 to £62,955,000. Now, that, I believe, is a fair and trustworthy comparison, and the effect of it is to show that the total increase of Charges within that period of 42 years was £15,680,000, or, as nearly as possible, 34 per cent on the Expenditure as it stood at the earlier period. I am not stating that all that Expenditure is normal, just, or proper; my belief is that some portion of that might have been saved; my hope is that careful and close examination will enable us to save, if not a very large, yet a sensible portion of that money. But while we shall do everything for strict economy, there are extravagances which it is difficult altogether to exclude from it. And in admitting that there is undeniably an increase of about one-third, or 34 per cent, in the Expenditure, it may also be well and consolatory, so far as it goes, to recollect that during that period the population of the country has increased by 65 per cent; and in Great Britain—I cannot take an earlier period in hand, because we have no Income Tax before that time—since 1843 the taxable Revenue of the country has increased from £251,000,000 in 1840 to £540,000,000 in 1882, or by about 115 per cent. That is not in the least degree stated by me in any other view except simply for the purpose of reducing the cost to the exact proportions of truth; and if the figures I have given are in any degree useful for the purpose, I shall meet the approval and sympathy of my hon. Friend. I do not in the least degree imply by these figures that the question before us is not a very grave one, nor do I mean them to carry any deduction, great or small, from my previous admissions. I thank my hon. Friends for the efforts they have made. I promise them that the Government, in accepting the Motion, will accept it with the fullest intention to do all it can, and to direct its limited resources in furtherance of its purpose; but I would point out to them that, after all, the resources of every Government upon such a subject are limited resources, that the real and principal effect of its best exertions must depend upon the effective support which it hopes to receive from the vast power and authority of the House of Commons.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had treated this question in a very different manner from the way in which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer treated it in his Budget Speech last night; and he could not but congratulate the hon. Members who had moved and seconded the Resolution upon the brilliant success they had attained. He would only make two remarks on the speech of the right hon. Gentlemen, now that the Government had accepted the Resolution; and would suggest, in the first place, that it would have been better if the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had indicated more clearly the course he intended to take with respect to the proposed Committee of Inquiry. He hoped that some definite announcement would be made on this subject, either in the course of the present debate, if it were prolonged; or if, on the other hand, the debate should not be prolonged, then he trusted those explanations would be given when the adjourned discussion on the Budget was taken. In the next place, it seemed to him that the financial comparison of the right hon. Gentleman might more properly have been made between the years 1871—at which time the last Liberal Government was in the full vigour of its power—and 1882, than between the Expenditure of 40 years ago as compared with the present. That period was far too remote, however interesting it might otherwise be, to be applicable to the circumstances of these days, having regard to the increase in the wealth and population of the country, the increase of luxury, and the greater appreciation of the comforts of life. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had proved a great deal too much in his optimist speech of the preceding evening, from which no one could possibly have expected that the Government was about to "cave in," if he might use that vulgar expression, to the demand of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands); but the Prime Minister had referred to the impossibility of controlling the growing expense of the Army and Navy, and the Civil Service. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer had had great advantages in that respect from having been previously both at the Admiralty and War Office, for he was thus able to control the expenditure in both those Departments. The right hon. Gentleman had alluded in his speech of last night to the manner in which the Estimates were voted—that was in net, and not in gross. The feeling he (Mr. Sclater-Booth) entertained with regard to that was that the Treasury showed symptoms of weakness by assenting to that change. The object seemed to be to keep the Public Departments down to the amount laid before the House. While believing that that change was indicative of weakness on the part of the Treasury, he did not intend pursuing the subject, because he believed that the control of the Treasury was, after all, the one economical power on which they could rely. The Treasury, he believed, were pure in their desire to keep down expenditure. He agreed with the hon. Member for Burnley that they ought to go back to the year he had named, when, as he had said, the last Liberal Government was in the zenith of its power. The Army Estimates for that year amounted to £11,762,000; whereas those for the year 1881 were £16,109,000; for 1882-3, omitting the Vote for Egypt, £15,458,000; and for 1883-4, £15,606,000. He thought the Government had given no answer which would justify the excess of nearly £4,000,000 over the Army Expenditurre of 1871. So, again, with the Navy. In regard to that branch of the Service, he had very little jealously as to the expenditure. The Navy in 1871 was supposed to be provided for by £8,740,530. In the first year of the present Government, the Vote was £10,600,000; in 1882-3, £10,333,000; and for the present year, £10,757,000. So that the cost of the Army had increased £4,000,000, and that of the Navy, £2,000,000. What was there to justify that increase from the point of view of the Government? The hon. Member for Burnley had pointed out that, since 1870, we had withdrawn troops from Canada and other Colonies, made a retrocession of a Province in the North of India, and cleared out from South Africa. The Localization scheme was in working order, the Short-service system in force, and the Purchase system practically at an end. Whether we had received value for our money he could not say; but although the war in Egypt had been carried out in the most satisfactory manner, he had been told that the efficiency of the troops employed was not good, that the shooting was bad, and that the guns used at the bombardment of Alexandria were not so good as they ought to have been. When the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) introduced the Army Estimates, the hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary to the Treasury stated that they were going to do certain things for some officers who had made themselves very troublesome—namely, that they proposed to give them increased pay and promotion. But the consequence of that would be that increased charges would fall on the Expenditure of subsequent years. That was an indication to him (Mr. Sclater-Booth) that the details of expenditure at the War Office were not subjected to that close supervision on the part of the Department that was desirable, and still less of the Cabinet as a whole. As to the Civil Services, there were two great causes for the augmentation in expense. The first was the increase in the subventions to local authorities, and the second, that of the Education Department. The latter was generally considered satisfactory by the House. But it occurred to him that such expenses ought to be subjected to the most searching control, and he hoped it would be one of the first subjects submitted to the promised Committee of Inquiry. As to the former, he could only say, from his experience of those subventions, that he believed they were always attended with beneficial results. He believed that if no subventions had been granted, no relief from local rates would have been given during the last nine years since a Motion on the subject was carried His hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), and others, had spoken of the taxpayer groaning under the injustice of being called on to pay taxes on spirits; but what was that to the distress of the small taxpayer, who was called upon to pay money out of his pocket in direct taxes, a form of taxation far more painful than indirect taxation? He felt that the interest in the Motion had been very much brought to a close by the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. That was a very important statement. Whether the policy of embarking on a review by the House of Commons of Public Expenditure was a good one, or whether it was practicable, or whether the House had time and knowledge at its disposal for the purpose, he did not pretend to say. All he would say was that the Estimates they were now familiar with were very different from the somewhat flimsy and imperfect Estimates of former days. The explanations on the face of the Estimates were very clearly given, and the House had not much difficulty in dealing with the questions that arose upon them. Whether the Committee would be able to do much more, or whether it would break down under their complexity, he would not pretend to say. The decision at which the Government had arrived was an important one, and he would rather refrain from expressing an opinion upon the subject.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, who had the following Amendment on the Paper:—

> "That this House, while recognising the necessity for, and the advantages to the Nation of, an increasing expenditure for the purposes of education, and for the promotion of literature, science, and art, and for other agencies having for their object the social, moral, and intellectual improvement of the people of Great Britain and Ireland, is of opinion that the present amount of expenditure on the Army and Navy, and on certain departments of the Civil Service, calls for the earnest and immediate attention of Her Majesty's Government with a view of effecting reductions in these branches of the Public Service,"

said, he was not surprised that Her Majesty's Government had accepted the Resolution of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), because that Resolution was couched in so vague a way that it was without any direction to the Government as to the character of the means by which the reduction was to be effected. Moreover, in addition to the vagueness, his hon. Friend had defined the word "efficiency" in a manner which protected any Government in any expenditure it might adopt. For his part, he would have preferred a Resolution of a more definite character, pointing out to the Government and the House, not only that reduction was necessary, if it were necessary, but in what particular direction it was for the good of the country that it should be effected. As the Resolution now stood, the hon. Member for Burnley and the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) would be able, if the Egyptian or any other war were to arise, to support the war as they did before, and then, a few months later, to cast reflections upon the conduct of the Liberal Party for not carrying out its principles of peace, retrenchment, and reform.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, resuming, said, although his hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton gave it as his opinion that the constituencies would be more intelligent when the next General Election took place, and would demand more economic expenditure, it by no means followed that expenditure would be less in amount. The Motion, as he had said, was of the vaguest kind, and it would be quite possible for any Government to carry out this Resolution as it stood by retrenching only in respect of education and matters of a similar character. The question was not as to the amount raised, but how it was raised, and how it was spent. If we were advancing in education and civilization an increase of expenditure was necessary. With regard to the aid given to local expenditure, which had been so much objected to, he was of opinion that that aid would become more and more necessary. Taxpayers did not object to expenditure upon free libraries, museums, and baths, &c., provided that the local taxation was levied in a fair and uniform manner. Until that was the case the demands on the central purse would be larger, because many wealthy people in large towns paid absolutely nothing to the rates, as they had their houses immediately outside the borough bounds. It was the struggling shopkeeper who paid a sum for local taxes altogether out of proportion to his position. That had a demoralizing effect in our social life. Certain things were absolutely necessary for the welfare of human beings if they were to be educated to higher tastes, and that could be done only by the State, or the State combined with the local authorities. Take the education question for example. A few weeks ago he was standing in a cottage in Dorsetshire, where the head of the family was earning only 12*s.* a-week, and the children were living on bread and water, because the father was striving to pay arrears of 3*s.* 3*d.* education rate. We should want about £1,000,000 to make all the elementary schools free, so as to prevent such cases. But one step in education necessitated another. The Prime Minister the other day ridiculed a statement of his that the expenditure on education would come by-and-bye to equal the expenditure upon the Army. Every step we took made that more possible. The problem we had to solve was how with a more educated nation we were to satisfy the tastes which education developed. A poor man could not have a picture gallery of his own; but in his corporate capacity he could possess picture galleries, as well as museums, libraries, baths, and parks, provided out of the rates and taxes. He was no believer in the theory of the strict economist that everything should be left to the action of supply and demand. The modern democracy were getting out of that idea and insisting upon a certain amount of rest and enjoyment, and that the State should help them in that matter. He challenged the hon. Member for Burnley to go into any public meeting and excite a strong feeling by the statement that we were spending £86,000,000 a-year. But an audience of the working classes would be enthusiastic when he spoke of what was spent on making the life of the people richer and fuller, while they condemned the expenditure upon Royal Parks and Palaces, and upon a "gunpowder and glory" policy. At present, the "man-slaying business" was placed at the top of our civilization, and the enormous expenditure of the country in connection with the Army and Navy served mainly to keep up a military caste. Aid and encouragement must be given to the people in those matters which led to social improvement. This, of course, meant expense; but there were certain directions in which the National Expenditure could be cut down to meet it. In the expenditure of the Army, Navy, and Civil Service alike there were many opportunities for this reduction, for much of that expenditure was unnecessary and extravagant, and yet, if but a small portion of the increase paid to the Services were requested to supply works of art throughout the country it would certainly be refused. Last year there was an increase of £10,000 in the expenses of the general staff of the Army. The accumulation of charges on account of old wars and the Army and Navy Establishment, of the present day ran away with 8*d.* or 9*d.* of every 1*s.* of our Expenditure. If reductions in certain portions of the Army, Navy, and Civil Service Expenditure were made, it would not be necessary to talk of a reduction in the Education Estimates, as one hon. Gentleman opposite had done. He did not, however, believe in the promises of any Government to make reductions in those matters, for they would not have the power to do so as long as the House was constituted as it was, and until the people insisted on it. It must be borne in mind that although there was a large increase in the aggregate wealth of the country, the poorer classes were still pretty nearly where they were 15 or 20 years ago, relatively speaking; and he repeated that it was in the direction of improving the houses and the homes of those classes that extra money must be spent—sums very much larger than we were spending now—if the money of the nation was really to be spent for the benefit of the majority of the nation.

Mr. DALRYMPLE said, that though the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down took exception to the Expenditure that now prevailed, he did not recommend economy, because he proposed another disposal of the money of the country for the improvement of the homes of the poorer classes, among other objects, which, however popular it would be with owners of property, would not be very acceptable to the taxpayers generally. The Government, in his (Mr. Dalrymple's) opinion, had exercised a wise discretion in accepting the Resolution, because it was not impossible that if they had opposed it they might have been defeated. No one could doubt, however, that the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in introducing the Budget on the previous night, had attempted largely to discount the speech of the hon. Member for Burnley; and on that account he could not help thinking that the determination of the Government to accept the Resolution was an after-thought. It was understood that the Government were very anxious about the economizing of public time; but he put it to the House whether the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to which he had alluded was likely to promote that object? Was it not likely it would have precisely the opposite effect by leading to more extended discussion? The present discussion had had at least one important result; it had led to the resuscitation of the independent Member who criticized the Expenditure boldly and clearly. The fact was as refreshing as it was wonderful. He remembered when the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) enjoyed the special benediction of the Head of the Government because of the interest he displayed in financial questions; but then the Conservative Government was in power at that time, and anyone observing the demeanour of the Prime Minister to-night must have felt that something else than benediction was likely to fall on the hon. Member for Burnley. The Prime Minister had declared that the responsibility for the growing Expenditure lay not with the Ministry or with Parliament, but with the nation. Such expressions never fell from the right hon. Gentleman when he was attacking his Predecessors, and yet it could hardly be doubted that much of the expenditure for which the late Government was severely blamed was very popular at the time. He (Mr. Dalrymple) had been astonished at hearing the right hon. Gentleman say, in regard to the expenditure in Egypt, that at least we had our money's worth, for in his Budget Speech the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in referring to the Vote for £6,000,000 of a few years ago, had spoken derisively of a Vote for what proved to be no war, and for a sum part of which was not spent. It seemed to him (Mr. Dalrymple) that if ever there was a case where we had our money's worth, it was when a judicious expenditure and preparation had prevented war. The Prime Minister further had accounted for part of the increase of the Expenditure by the growth of the population; he thought he could remember when the right hon. Gentleman derided such a notion. And the right hon. Gentleman on one occasion warned his hearers against being induced to excuse high expenditure because of the increased grant for education, and yet the cost of education was one count of the excuse of the present Government.

Mr. SPEAKER: I wish to point out to the hon. Member that he is entirely out of Order in referring to statements made in another debate in the course of the present Session.

Mr. DALRYMPLE would bow at once to the ruling of the Speaker; but it was a mistake to suppose that he was referring to any speech delivered in debate in the course of the present Session. He had only referred to a speech which the right hon. Gentleman had delivered in Edinburgh at the end of 1879. Though the present Government had been in Office for several years, their Expenditure had been extremely high, and he could not but rejoice that the Resolution had been brought forward by the hon. Member for Burnley, as that showed how great was the necessity for such a Resolution. As it had been accepted by the right hon. Gentleman, it must be assumed that practical means would be taken for giving it effect.

Mr. BROADHURST said, it had been his official duty for a great number of years past to be constantly waiting upon different Governments, mainly for the purpose of increasing expenditure. He was secretary of a large body of people outside, on whom, in the main, the welfare and prosperity of this country depended; and what they contended was, that increased inspection of factories and workshops, or, in other words, a stricter enforcement of the law which had for its object the bettering of the health of the people who supplied the labour of the country, was a good, and wise, and just purpose to which public money could be applied. It had also been his duty to ask the Government to increase the expenditure for educational purposes, as machinery was becoming more and more complex, and greater technical training was requisite to extend the system of technical instruction to the children of the artizan classes of this country. In these circumstances, he had some difficulty in speaking in favour of a general Resolution for reduction of Expenditure all round. With reference to the two fighting branches of the Service—the Army and Navy—in which hon. Gentlemen opposite took so much pride, these, as science advanced, would require greater and greater knowledge and skill from those who joined them. The present Government had inaugurated in Egypt a new method of warfare—the armoured train—which would require technical skill in those who carried it on of a high character. Therefore, the higher the class of men they required the greater would be their expenditure in proportion, and in these two branches of the Government Service, so far as he could see, there was very little hope of any considerable diminution in expenditure for years to come. He believed the people of the country were in favour of economy; but he did not think they were in favour of economy in education, or in the protection of life and limb and health of factory operatives, miners, and other classes of people who were compelled to work together in large numbers. He thought the direction in which they should mainly look for a diminution of Expenditure should be, to a considerable extent, in the foreign policy of Governments. Every time they extended their boundary lines they incurred a permanent source of increased expenditure. Much saving, too, might be effected in the Civil Service if a system of pay for work actually done and for cessation of pay on cessation of work were established, and if the whole system of pensions was abolished. He thought that public servants should be well paid, but that no pensions should be granted to them after they had ceased to do service to the State. There was an enormous army of pensioners, who were pensioned for no adequate services. He thought also it might be shown that in the various Dockyards of the country the work which was done could be produced at far less cost than was now incurred. It was in these directions that we should look to see an effort made to cut down our Annual Expenditure. Economy in our Public Departments would never be obtained by general Motions like the present. A control over the Budget by some authority in that House was the only possible way of bringing about economy. If they could have a

Royal Commission composed of business men belonging to that House, with full and complete powers to overhaul many of their spending Departments, he was certain that they could present a Report to that House that would point out a way, not to lessen efficiency, but to secure equal efficiency, with an enormous decrease in the cost of administration. However, he was glad that the Government had accepted the Motion, and was still more delighted with the statement of the Prime Minister that the Government would, at an early date, endeavour to appoint a Committee that should have the control over, not the present, but the future Expenditure of the country.

Mr. SALT said, he did not expect that this Resolution, good as it might be, and generally accepted by the House as it might be, would result in any very large diminution in the Expenditure. He thought, however, it might serve to check the tendency of growing laxity in regard to this matter. If it did that he thought it would accomplish a useful purpose. He believed the country felt that in the present condition of affairs, from various causes, a very large Expenditure was unfortunately necessary; but we ought to avoid, as far as possible, drifting into carelessness in the matter. He found that, in spite of the declarations made formerly in the direction of stringent economy by Gentlemen who were Members of the present Administration, that Administration in their second and third years of Office expended more than the late Administration did in their second and third years of Office. Of course, there were reasons for this, and the conclusion to which he had come was that there was a general Expenditure necessary to the country that could with great difficulty be reduced by economies either in one direction or in another. A good deal had been said about the control of finance by Committees; but, in his opinion, the real control must be exercised by the Committee of the Whole House. In recent times they had not had sufficient opportunity of considering the Estimates in detail. In 1882 there had been Supplementary Estimates in February, Votes on Account in March, and again more than once later in the Session, a Vote of Credit for the War, and Supplementary Estimates towards the end of the Session, and the Navy Supplementary Estimates in 1883 before the end of the financial year. He would suggest the observance of three rules—first, that there should be great economy in every detail of expenditure, especially with regard to the Civil Service; secondly, that the Financial Statement should be made once only in each year, and that it should be complete in the first instance; and, thirdly, that when expenditure had to be incurred an Estimate should be made and placed before the House. These were rules founded upon great authority, yet all these rules were grievously violated during the whole of the Session of 1882. Under the present system of putting Estimates before the House it was absolutely futile to throw the responsibility for them upon the House of Commons. In order to secure proper control over the Expenditure of the nation, with a view to enforcing due economy, it was necessary that the Estimates should be placed before the House in such a time and in such manner as to afford discussion upon them both fully and in detail.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR said, he looked forward with great anxiety to the early formation of the Committee of Inquiry into the Expenditure of the country, and particularly to the mode in which the Inquiry was to be instituted, so as to insure the success which he was sure the Prime Minister desired. He took the view that, in sifting the expenditure of the Departments, there should be individual or special inquiry into each one of the Departments, and that the large Departments should have distinct inquiries into separate portions of the total expenditure. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman that the inquiry of 1828 was of exceedingly great value, but only in a restricted sense. He knew no set of Papers which were more useful to a statesman than those which were the result of that inquiry. Still, that Committee had not recommended any material changes. It mainly collected information in the various divisions of administration, and these documents, though severally of great value, were as a whole of less importance by reason of their confused arrangement. The Committee of 1847 was a very powerful one, from its composition and mode of conducting its inquiry, and he had taken a great interest in that inquiry from his Relative, the late

Mr. Hume, having taken a prominent part in its constitution. But though it extended over three years, and carried on its inquiries in a most effective manner, yet, owing to the vast scope of the duties of the Committee and the long delay in making its final Report, no useful result had in reality been produced. The main reason, he supposed, was that there was no one in the Government qualified to use the information collected at that time for a practical purpose. The inquiry which he himself thought would be advisable was such an inquiry as the Chancellor of the Exchequer presided over in 1873. It was mainly limited to a portion of the Civil Expenditure and to the extent to which the control of the Treasury was efficiently executed; and, having ascertained that this power was not well applied, it reported in the year in which it was formed, and advised the House to re-appoint the Committee in 1874; but owing to the change of Government this was not done. He also thought that several separate inquiries should be instituted into distinct parts of the Expenditure, so that each class might be thoroughly inquired into and reported on in the Session in which inquiry was formed. For instance, a Committee should confine its inquiry to the Civil Expenditure proper, including the Consolidated Fund Charges, which would make the inquiry extend to only about £6,000,000. That sum, he thought, would be sufficient for any Committee to undertake to revise in that close way which could only be the result of an examination of details. He therefore urged the limitation of the usual inquiries to that extent. As to Grants in Aid, these at present amounted to £6,000,000, and ought to be inquired into by another Committee altogether. With regard to Military Expenditure, he maintained that they had not obtained in the Army that economy and degree of efficiency which he thought they were entitled to have expected from the abolition of Purchase, which, in the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon, had practically purchased the Army from the officers. He strongly advocated separate Committees for different parts of the Military Expenditure, now in all about £28,000,000. The purely Military Expenditure would supply £6,000,000, the Supply Services about £5,000,000, the Engineering Department about £1,000,000, and the balance would be in the Military Manufacturing Departments, which much required to be inquired into. Another important point had been raised as to the extent to which economies could be effected in the expenditure on the Army and Navy. No doubt, the proposed inquiry ought to lead to economies in the present Expenditure, with existing establishment of men and ships; but as to any diminution therein, he must confess that he did not know that anyone could say what number of men were required for the Army or what number of ships were required for the Navy; but, at all events, Parliament, by means of these minute inquiries, could pronounce on whether the money expended was well, as well as economically, laid out. There was, however, one great difficulty to be from the first overcome, in finding out what the expenditure was on each class of Charge, owing to the difficulty of collating the figures from the Estimates, and he could only hope that, for the sake of fame of their great Leader, the inquiry now proposed would be an effective one.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND said, he desired to make a few observations, in the first place, upon the speech of the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst). It was not necessary for him to defend the character of the servants of the Government against the charge brought against them by that hon. Member. That charge was received with murmurs by those immediately around the hon. Member. He (Sir Henry Holland) would only say that he believed no Government was more loyally served than the Government of this country. [Mr. Broadhurst explained that he was only speaking of Dockyard servants.] Well, he (Sir Henry Holland) would confine his defence to those officers; and he thought that, with respect to them also, the charge was unfounded. As to the hon. Member's attack upon pensions, he would only say that, if pensions were granted for no work done, everyone would agree that they ought not to be given; but it was a very different matter, and, as yet, an open question, whether the country did not gain by a system of pensions coupled with lower pay and salaries than could, but for the pensions, have been given. He begged, also, to repudiate most absolutely the charge which the hon. Member seemed to bring against the Conservative Party, that they were not interested in the social welfare and improvement of the working classes. He should have thought that the measures passed by the late Government would have been a sufficient answer to such a charge as that. The hon. Member had hardly taken to heart the pregnant words uttered that evening by the Prime Minister, to the effect that expenditure would not be really and effectively checked unless the House set itself resolutely against yielding to applications which tended to increase expenditure. The hon. Member seemed to advocate, as necessary, the increase of salaries of one class of Government servants. Now, it was just in cases of this kind that the House ought to be on its guard. He was not going to argue the question which had been lately raised, whether Civil servants might present Petitions through Members of Parliament for an increase of their salaries; but he was satisfied that the House ought to be on its guard with reference to general applications of this kind. It must be remembered that a Civil servant, when he took a place in a Government Office, knew exactly the conditions as to pension and salary upon which he took it; and it should require some very strong and exceptional case to justify an alteration of those conditions. And the House should not lightly, and without full consideration, support such an application against the Government of the day. Turning now to the question more immediately before the House, he was very glad to find that the Government were prepared to assent to the Resolution moved in such an able speech by the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands). He trusted that Committees would soon be appointed; and he ventured to suggest that there should be at least three Committees—one to deal with the Army Expenditure, another with the Navy Expenditure, and the third with the Civil Service Expenditure. The subject was so important and so wide-spreading that he was satisfied that it would be impossible for one Committee to deal properly with it within reasonable limits of time. He was the more glad that this Resolution had been accepted, as he had for some time entertained a growing opinion that some kind of inquiry must be made by a Special Committee into the Expenditure of the country. It could not be denied that the present mode of inquiry in a Committee of the Whole House was almost useless, owing, in part, to the lateness of the hour and of the Session at which these Estimates were, as a rule, brought on, and in part to the very hasty study given by Members on the instant to the items. Some curious item as, for instance, a salary to a ratcatcher, attracted attention, and a question was asked upon it; but it was manifest that this practice did not tend, practically, to check expenditure. Then, again, a question was raised upon some Estimate, and the Government of the day undertook to consider it; but, the year following, the same Estimate appeared again, perhaps even in an aggravated form; a question was again asked, and it appeared that the matter had not really received consideration. To take an example of this, he (Sir Henry Holland) had, for three years, ventured to remonstrate against the regular habit of largely under-estimating the amount required for telegrams; but the same course was continued with little or no explanation. This year there did seem to have been some little improvement in criticizing the Estimates, not that the amount of any Estimate was in any case altered, but the points had been more fully discussed. He fully admitted, however, that there might be some danger, if a Standing Committee on the Estimates of each year were appointed, lest the responsibility which properly rested on the Departments might be shifted to the Committee, and lest the heads of the Departments should feel less anxiety in keeping down the Estimates. No danger of that kind, however, could arise from the proposed Committees, who would not be appointed to consider and criticize the Estimates of any particular year, but the general Expenditure of the Departments and of the country. There were two points connected with the Military and Naval Departments into which he hoped the Committees would closely inquire. The first was into the stores and manufacturing branches of those Departments. It was well known to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to the hon. Member for Burnley and others, that for many years the question had been discussed whether the Comptroller and Auditor General should be required and empowered to audit these store accounts, and within what limits such power should be exercised. The question was one of great difficulty, and he trusted that the inquiries of the Committees might lead to a decision upon the subject. The second point into which a Committee should inquire was as to the extent to which works of considerable importance and expense, for which Parliament had made a grant, were postponed, so as to allow the sums saved by such postponement to be expended in works—doubtless of emergency, it might be, in many cases—which Parliament, however, had not sanctioned, and which had not, indeed, been brought under the notice of Parliament. He would not detain the House any longer, but only express his belief that some good would arise from the investigations of these Committees, though it might not be so great or so immediate as some Members seemed to anticipate.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I confess, Sir, that I have seldom listened to a more interesting discussion on Finance than has taken place in the present debate, and I should like to include in this remark the most interesting speech of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer the other night. I think the discussion will tend to remove a great many misconceptions on the part of the public, and to give an insight into the real state of present finance; and I am glad to think, and I hope that I express the opinion of the House generally, that there has been less exaggeration than usual and a greater effort to look every single circumstance in the face. If we have to contemplate increased Expenditure, at all events the causes of it have been fairly discussed and analyzed as contrasted with the causes existing previously. We had, early in the evening, a speech from the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), and later on speeches from the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), and the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings), and the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst), all of a very interesting character. I think that the opinions of the two latter Gentlemen are particularly suggestive, and must be taken in view when we consider what is likely to be the future of finance. I should wish, in the first place, to say how much more I agree with the view taken by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton as to the mode in which the Expenditure ought to be presented to the public than I do with the view of the hon. Member for Burnley. The hon. Member for Burnley stated that the totals ought to be presented to the public, because they are the only intelligible figures. I venture to think they are the most fallacious figures. I will illustrate what I mean by supposing that under an Act of Parliament this year, or next, the whole of the £5,000,000 or £6,000,000 now given to local authorities in subvention of rates were removed from our Imperial Expenditure and placed upon local expenditure. The nation would practically pay the same amount; but we should be able to say that we had reduced the total of our Imperial Expenditure by £5,000,000 or £6,000,000, and in a year or two the particular reason for the reduction would be forgotten, and credit would be erroneously taken for a decrease in Imperial Expenditure. I understood from the Prime Minister that we are paying off annually £7,000,000 of the Debt, and we are giving £6,000,000 for local subventions, which make altogether a total of £13,000,000. That £13,000,000 is not expenditure in the ordinary sense of the term. It is not expenditure which justifies the charge of extravagance, although I object to the form of the local subventions entirely, and trust that measures may be taken to remove them from our Imperial Finance. With respect to what the nation spends in the national accounts, the way in which these two items are dealt with is misleading, and gives a false impression when the totals are presented. I think my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer rendered signal service last night in analyzing the different parts of our Expenditure to show how much is raised by taxes, and he was ably followed up today by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton. A statement has been made that a National Expenditure of £86,000,000 would not startle a popular audience, but that what would startle them was the manner in which that amount is distributed and spent; but I believe a great many audiences have been worked upon with regard to that total of £86,000,000, because it seems extravagantly high, and I rejoice that this discussion will have thrown some light on that subject. I was deeply interested in the comparison the Prime Minister made between the Expenditure in 1840 and the Expenditure now, and the way in which he reduced the present Expenditure to £63,000,000, as compared with £48,000,000, spent in the year 1840. But there are questions connected with the comparison which ought to be pressed still further. We ought to inquire whether the country does not now require a number of services to be rendered which were not called for previously, and whether the whole standard of government has not been raised; and, if so, can we be surprised that in the course of the last 33 years the cost of government has increased in the same ratio as the increase of population? I certainly do not wish to discourage economy, which the whole House seems resolved upon. There are three modes, it appears to me, in which expenditure can be increased—namely, when more work is required to be done by the nation; secondly, when its servants are paid higher; or, thirdly, when there are more persons to do the work. With regard to this last point, I am not sure that the Civil Service is not over-manned, and that if the hours were increased and salaries raised, a better result would not be obtained. On the second point, as to rates of salary, there is a vital question on which I desire to say a word or two. Out of the total Estimate of £26,000,000 the House must recollect that £12,000,000 represents the remuneration paid to individuals, excluding the pay of the Army and Navy. How do you propose to remedy any abuses which may exist with regard to the payment of that large amount in wages, salaries, and pensions? In debates like this to-night the House is always willing to advocate some reduction of the Estimates; but when the case of individuals comes before us, the sympathies of the House are almost invariably on the side of an increase of pay. Business men often find fault with the manner in which the Government conduct their affairs; but the position in which they are situated is entirely different. How, I would like to ask, could the business man maintain the discipline of his establishment if some public force stood between him and the men he employed? We have before us at this moment a case which will illustrate my meaning. Certain members of the Civil Service desire to come before Parliament to present a Petition in favour of an increase of salaries, and the question is, ought they to be allowed to do so? No one would deny to public servants the right of petitioning the House on any general question—in favour, for instance, of marrying a deceased wife's sister, the abolition of vaccination, or the reduction of the general Expenditure of the country, or upon any general question they pleased. But when they endeavour to petition the House on matters relating to their employment by the State, it appears to me that the matter stands upon an entirely different footing, and that it ought not to be allowed. If encouragement is given to such a practice, enormous difficulties will be raised between the State and its employés, and what hope will there be for a decrease in the large sum paid in salaries and pensions? With regard to the question of pensions, the only plan of attempting to deal with it is by applying the remedy to new comers into the Service. The hands of the State are bound as far as the old servants of the State are concerned, for the contract with them is already made. You cannot deprive a man of a pension which has been allotted to him by his contract with the State; and if a public servant has already entered upon his period of service, it is impossible for the State to vary its contract with him. I think it only fair that this consideration should be stated in a debate of this kind, because, otherwise, we may believe that a reduction is possible when it is really impossible. The only way of meeting the question is by introducing new elements into the contracts made with future servants of the State; and with them it may be possible to re-arrange the system on such terms that payments will be made only for services received. But the system of pension is by no means uncommon. The Railway Companies are now beginning the very same system, a system to which, in my opinion, there is great objection; but I believe the imagination of the public would be moved and disturbed if the public servant of 40 or 50 years' standing were to be discharged without provision. I believe that we should hear complaints that he had been "turned adrift without any provision," and that a future House of Commons would say that it could not face the poverty of these men, and a system of pensions would again be introduced. The value of the pension is recognized in the Dockyards when the men press to be placed upon the Establishment in order that they may secure it, and this principle of bestowing pensions upon old servants, the House must remember, is not confined to the State servants. We ourselves know that when a servant has been long in a man's employ we cannot bear to see him go without receiving something when he leaves. But I wish also to say a word or two about the increased demands which are made in every Department of the Estimates. You must bear in mind that the public would no longer be satisfied if their servants were not better housed and supplied with a larger number of cubic feet of air than they formerly had. I think it was the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) who called attention to the large sum of money expended on public buildings, and which is included in our Estimates. I have often thought myself that we were extravagant in our public buildings; but I have had the privilege of being at the Local Government Board, and I know what doctors are, and I know how the public would denounce the authorities, and how sensational articles would be written, if it were otherwise. I was much struck by a statement made by the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings), who declared that increased expenditure on a great variety of purposes is, and will be, more and more required. I do not wish to exaggerate one word of it; but I am anxious that that speech of the hon. Member should be understood, because it appears to me to be as full of meaning as it is full of interest. The hon. Member for Ipswich, speaking of Birmingham, said that the inhabitants required baths, museums, libraries, parks, and pure water, and that it was the duty of the local authority, as it was the duty of the State, to provide for such things. The hon. Member will have the sympathy of the House and the country in regard to many of these items; but he must not afterwards complain of the Estimates. Let this be noted that, when in future years the Estimates are swoollen on account of greater demands for those items, it is not due to the extravagance of this or that side of the House, but rather to the development of public opinion, which demands, as the hon. Member tells you, that a greater portion of the public income should be devoted to promoting the happiness and comfort of the working classes. The argument of the hon. Member is this—we educate the working classes, and give them artistic tastes, and therefore we must satisfy those cravings which a better education and an artistic taste produce. I do not mention these points in a spirit of controversy; but some hon. Members seem to think that it is not possible for us to look forward to much reduction in many of these directions, and they hope for a reduction in expense by reducing the cost of the Army and Navy. But how far that reduction itself would be easy and would be sanctioned by the working classes is not so simple a question as some hon. Members seem to think. So long as a vast portion of our food comes from abroad there must be protection for imports, and there is no class of Her Majesty's subjects who would suffer more from panic of war and war itself than the working class, who must therefore be deeply interested in the foreign policy of the country. Hon. Members who hold these views must acknowledge that I do not overstate the case. They would not wish that the security of the country should be compromised for a single moment, for to do so would cost more than any savings which could be effected. But I am entirely at one with those hon. Members in thinking that the expenditure of the Army and Navy should be carefully criticized, and that, as it is unproductive expenditure, it is peculiarly the duty of the House to watch the expenses for those Services. I only venture to make an humble protest against the view that the working classes are not concerned in the efficiency of the Army and Navy. I have ventured to place these considerations as to the wants of the people before the House, because I believed that, while vitally affecting the whole course of our future Finance, in these discussions we ought not to speak simply of the Civil Service Estimates having increased in consequence of laxity on the part of the Government on the one side or the other, but that it is in consequence, to a great exent, of a change of public feeling. There can be no doubt, however, seeing that all expenditure which is to be incurred, whether for old or new demands, is to be taken from the pockets of the people, that it will be the bounden duty of the people to watch with anxiety all such demands. I trust that when the Resolution has been passed it will not be found that the House of Commons will shrink from applying its own doctrines of economy to concrete cases, but that it will remember, when it has to deal with demands made for whatever purpose, that it is through the taxation of the people that these demands have to be met.

Mr. PELL said, he considered the speech of the right hon. Gentleman an apology for the extravagance of the Government. He had, too, to express the surprise he felt when the Prime Minister told the House that the State paid £6,000,000 in subvention of local taxation. The Estimates for the year pretended to show that the subventions in aid of local taxation amounted to somewhat more than £6,000,000, and for England and Wales alone to over £3,000,000; but the Returns of the Local Government Board, the Department charged with that portion of the public administration, placed the amount of those subventions for England and Wales at something less than £3,000,000. He thought there was one portion of the Prime Minister's speech in reference to this subject that was likely to cause serious misconception, and he desired, therefore, to make a few remarks on it. He would first point out a few of the items of National Expenditure which the right hon. Gentleman had described as subventions in aid of local taxation. One of them was a sum of £214,400 contributed for rates on Government property. Another was £252,000 for Criminal Prosecutions. There was also a large sum —namely, £1,013,700—down for Prisons and Reformatories, and £500,000 was for the Metropolitan Police. There was also a large sum—namely, £398,000 —for the Dublin Police. All these charges were treated by the right hon. Gentleman as subventions in aid of local taxation, yet the Government did not dare withhold such contributions, which were absolutely necessary for public security and the conduct of public affairs. With their recent experience in Whitehall, and that afforded at Bow Street only a few hours since, what Government would withdraw those contributions, which the right hon. Gentleman spoke of as subventions? Out of the sum total of £6,000,000 there was a further sum of £1,442,000 contributed towards the charge of maintaining the Irish Constabulary, and he would ask whether any Government would refuse to contribute that sum and leave the Irish people to defray the entire charge for maintaining that force? He had thus accounted for a total of £3,820,000 out of the £6,000,000. The hon. Member for Midhurst (Sir Henry Holland) had suggested that there should be three Committees to inquire into the expenditure of the three great Departments of the State. He would suggest a fourth Committee to inquire into the expenditure of the Local Government Board, which was constantly urging local authorities to spend more and more money, frequently on the most frivolous objects. Inspectors of all kinds were scattered all over the country suggesting expenditure, and all this money was spent without any form of local government having been established. This central authority was most difficult to reform, and, indirectly, was one of the most uneconomical authorities in the State. He thought some inquiry was necessary into such a mainspring of extravagance in the country.

Mr. W. FOWLER said, the conclusion he had drawn from listening to the debate was, that economy was very attractive when they did not look too closely into it. He thought the present discussion had shown the immense difficulty of arriving at economy in the Expenditure of the State. There was everywhere a tendency to indulge in increased expenditure. He agreed that the question of subventions was a very difficult and important one. These subventions had often been abused. He knew of one case in which, in consequence of the subventions for the prisons, the local authorities finding themselves in possession of funds, determined to build a new townhall, justifying it by saying that the ratepayers had become accustomed to a particular scale of taxation, and did not object to pay the rates. And it was the same in the State. He had been looking with some interest into the Civil Service Estimates of 10 years ago. A good deal had been said of the increase that had taken place in these Estimates, but that increase was the natural result of the increased expense of government. This could not be otherwise. In Class II. of the Civil Service Estimates, there was an increased expenditure of £300,000, the Board of Trade getting £75,000 more than in 1873; that was owing to the number of additional duties thrown upon it. The Stationery Department cost £90,000 more than it did 10 years ago. Then, in Class III., the Metropolitan police, the county and borough police, and the English and Scotch prisons showed a large increase. The cost of the Education Department had also increased enormously, and there was a heavy additional charge for lunatics. These several items accounted for the great part of the increase of which the House had heard to-night. The fact was, that it was impossible to carry on government as cheaply as was possible 10 years ago. The result of a Committee of Inquiry would not be so important as hon. Members supposed. The inquiry would only convince them that the expenses of living and carrying on government must naturally increase. Constant applications were being made for increased payment, and in many of the Departments the pay was, as a matter of fact, extremely low. He would only add that he was very glad the Prime Minister had accepted the Motion of his hon. Friend.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I will detain the House but a very short time while I make some observations on what has passed this evening. The tenour of the debate has been in harmony with the views of the hon. Members who brought forward this Motion, and to whom, I may safely say, the whole House is much indebted for the service they have rendered and for the temperate and able manner in which they stated their views. No one can doubt the extreme importance of the subject. No one, on the other hand, can help feeling that it is one of very great complication, and the openings which it affords at every turn for controversy more or less heated. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) has, however, very dexterously avoided controversial matter, which, no doubt, will arise out of the inquiry in which we are about to engage. I would not on the present occasion attempt to mar the character of the discussion which has been carried on in such a spirit by introducing remarks which might be discordant with it; but, at the same time, I must put in a *caveat*, and say that at the proper time it will be necessary for me very strongly to contest some of the facts that have been alleged with a view to showing the action of Conservative Governments, and especially of the late Conservative Government, in matters of economy. I feel with the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) that the discussion of last night and to-night will do a great deal of good by diffusing a considerable amount of information with regard to our financial system; but I venture to say that to take the discussions of these two nights only, it would be an incomplete and erroneous impression that would be spread with regard to many important points. I hope, therefore, the time will come when we shall be able to go more fully into the discussion of the Budget when the debate is resumed, as I trust it will be, on Monday. With regard to the proposal which the Government have now made in answer to the Resolution, I must concur, to a certain extent, with those who think, like the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, that the labours of the Committee are not likely to produce any great reduction in the Estimates of the year. Nevertheless, I do not think that the labours of the Committee will be thrown away. I believe they will do a great deal in the way of considering and harmonizing the system of our Expenditure. A great many questions will come before that Committee which have not been raised in any way before any other Committee. We have had Committees in former years which have sat upon the Army, the Navy, and the Civil Service Estimates, and those Committees have done a certain amount of service; generally speaking, they have made recommendations of an unimportant character which have been more or less adopted, but usually set aside. Notwithstanding, those Committees have done a certain amount of good, for they have awakened the attention of Members and of the country to various points that required to be looked into. I wish to say that I think it is particularly desirable that we should fairly and carefully look into our financial system and Expenditure now that certain new elements have been, and are likely to be, introduced into it. You cannot take a fair and proper view of the Expenditure of this country by taking the Imperial Expenditure alone. If you wish to take a fair and proper view of the Expenditure of this country, you must include the local expenditure, and when you begin to deal with the whole subject of Imperial and Local Expenditure, then you will consider the question of the mode in which that Expenditure is to be met, which involve various modes, not only of shifting the burden, but of easing the pressure of that burden. If we go in for all those different services, such as those indicated by the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) in his interesting speech, and, I believe, by the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings), if we encourage that intervention to a great extent, which those hon. Gentlemen seem to contemplate, we necessarily increase —and very largely increase—the expenditure that must be incurred. You want to consider these questions in both their aspects. We are very much in the habit in the House of one day coming down and speaking for economy, and the next day coming down and speaking in favour of some new service being undertaken, or some consideration being shown to individuals, or some other matter which introduces increased expenditure. In regard to expenditure, it may indeed be said of Members of the House that they are ready to—

> "Compound for sins they are inclined to,
> By damning those they have no mind to."

We cannot help seeing, as has been pointed out, that the tendency of the democratic spirit of this country is to make the sovereign people a very expensive kind of sovereign. When we bear in mind that the greater part of the burdens which will have to be borne in order to fulfil all the desires and to consult all the wishes of that sovereign will be pretty sure to be thrown sooner or later upon property, we who are interested in the preservation of property have at least as good cause to promote economy of expenditure as any other Party. I entirely repudiate the ideas which some Gentlemen seem to entertain, such as those of the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), who said that the Tories delight in expenditure and are only too delighted to spend money anyhow. The Tories may have a stronger view of the necessity for expenditure upon a particular Service than their opponents—they may think that particular circumstances render it necessary to spend money upon a certain Service—but the last thing that a well balanced Conservative Party desire is to spend money or willingly to incur any expenditure that can be avoided. There is great danger when one hears one man calling for expenditure in this direction, and someone else for expenditure in another, of their being supposed to help each other in order that each may attain his own object. That process is known in America as "log-rolling." But at the present time it seems to me that there is a sort of anti-log-rolling going on, and that everybody is disposed to say—"I must have more expenditure for my own favourite subjects, and will stop you from getting anything for your favourite department." There have been various points of detail introduced into this discussion, on which, I have no doubt, a well-constituted Committee might throw a considerable amount of light. The question of pensions, for instance, is one deserving of great consideration and attention; but I am strongly of opinion that you will find it impossible to do away with the present system of payment of pensions without introducing much greater evils and probably greater expenditure. At all events, the great difficulty of interfering with the terms upon which men have entered the Service will prevent your performing any great operations. I bear in mind in my own early experience the great and successful pressure brought to bear by the Civil servants to abolish the deductions made from their salaries to pay or partly to pay for their pensions. I feel quite certain that if you put an end to the system of pensions, you will find some future House of Commons, after you had raised the salaries in order to get rid of the pensions, proposing to go back to pensions again. You must act, not only for the present, but for the future, and that in some just and well-considered scheme. Then there are various other questions which have been raised. I have been particularly struck by one practical observation of the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) as to the system of Dockyard management, and what he called the evils of limited liability management magnified ten-fold. These are questions all deserving of careful revision and examination. Whether the Committee will be able to do all these things, or will not break down entirely by attempting too much, is a matter which I do not desire to go into now. But I cannot help remarking that it is a little curious that this should be the upshot of the two or three years of economical Government, and that when the question of expenditure is brought forward seriously for discussion the recommendation the Government have to make is that they should devolve the subject for examination on a Select Committee. My own opinion is that, after all, the matter must rest not altogether or solely upon the House, but upon the House and the Government together. You may have a Committee, and I think you will do very well to have one, to investigate certain principles, and to lay down some conditions upon which our Expenditure must be made for the future, and to draw the attention of the House to the decisions it must come to when Expenditure is proposed, and to a proper system for its regulation; but when you have got that you must trust mainly to the Government of the day to be firm in applying the resolutions to which it comes, and it is still more important that there should be a clear understanding on the part of the House of Commons that they will support the Government. There are many arguments continually brought forward in small Houses, sometimes without very much warning, which tell a good deal upon the hon. Gentlemen who happen to be present, and which lead to unfortunate results. Once you begin to break in in that way a breach is made, and you go on still further widening it. But you must also rely upon the energy and watchfulness of the Government, and especially of the Treasury and the Departments. I know that it is by no means an easy matter to administer Departments in such a way as to bring about economy. But much more is done in the Departments and outside this House than the public and the House are at all aware of. And when it is said that the Treasury have not exercised any authority, and have not stood up for economy and so forth, the fact is that a great deal is done quietly before the Estimates are put forward, and the Treasury has to resist many proposals that would otherwise come before the House. You may say with truth in the words of Burns—

> "What's done we partly may compute,
> But know not what's resisted."

The heads of Departments, on their part, have great difficulty in resisting claims made upon them by those who are anxious, and properly anxious, for keeping the highest efficiency possible in their branch of the Service. But if the Treasury and the Departments are to be thrown over by this House, their authority is worth very little. Well, I think that the decision arrived at—though I hardly expected that it was going to be proposed by the Government to give a Committee—is in itself a right one, and that the House will do well to support and assist the Committee in the conduct of this investigation. But let not hon. Gentlemen think that by appointing a Committee they will obtain everything needed and secure economy. I hope that they will go further and set their faces against propositions which have as the necessary consequence an increase of the Public Expenditure.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Sir, there is much that has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman, especially in the concluding sentences of his speech, which I think will be thoroughly appreciated by the House, as it must be by everybody who either holds or has held public Office. All who have borne an important share in the Government must know that the duty of heads of Departments outside the Treasury consists very much in resisting pressure, and that having exercised what revision and care they can before they bring proposals before the Treasury, it is, after all, the function of the Treasury to consider, discuss, and as far as they can decide upon the recommendations for expenditure which come before them from the other Departments. And if the House of Commons does not support the Treasury it is hopeless to look for continuous economy in the Public Expenditure. I never hear except with great pain—and I am sorry to say I have often heard from all parts of the House—attacks upon the Treasury as if it were some public enemy of the Services of the country. On the contrary, the impartiality, and, at the same time, the knowledge of affairs which exist in the Treasury and the extreme desire for economical administration which it ought to have, entitle it to the support of the House. If it does not receive that support it is quite impossible for the House to expect that urging economy will have its proper weight. The right hon. Gentleman alluded to what the Prime Minister had said about the use which he hoped the House would allow us to make of a Committee or Committees to deal with the Public Expenditure. What my right hon. Friend said, and what I now repeat, is that if the House wishes that such a Committee or Committees should be appointed, if the matter is not to be made the subject of controversy, the Government are of opinion that that course would be a wise one, and they will then consider whether to recommend the appointment of one Committee or of several Committees. But if the question became a subject of doubt and disputation, and if it were unpalatable to a great part of the House, the benefit would be doubtful. I am very glad that the right hon. Gentleman has given his adherence to the appointment of a Committee or Committees. I hope this will induce hon. Members to give support to the proposal, so that with the appointment of a Committee or of Committees agreeable to the House we shall be able to assume that the House would carry out any proposal of the kind we can make, and that the assistance of the House will be given to us readily without any long debate or discussion. I must say one word with reference to what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth) and the hon. Member for Bute (Mr. Dalrymple) said, suggesting, so far as I was concerned, that the present proposal of the Government to adopt the hon. Gentleman's Motion, and the consequence of that Motion, would be a change of plan. The words that fell from the right hon. Gentleman were, that it was my intention yesterday to snuff out the proposal of my hon. Friend. Now, nothing can be further from the truth than that statement. I have always desired, in the interests of economy and the efficiency of the Service, that my hon. Friend's Resolution should be adopted by the House, and in speaking yesterday, although it was not my duty, and it would have been premature, to state that Her Majesty's Government were going to support the Resolution, I was very careful to say distinctly that it was the interest of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to obtain all the assistance he could from the House in the control of the Public Expenditure, and in the direction of economy, and that I hoped we should receive that assistance. ["Oh!"] I have a distinct recollection that these were the words I used. As I have said before, I do not wish to go at length into the debate, except to say that I quite agree with my right hon. Friend opposite that the debate, if it does nothing else, has been most instructive in showing to us distinctly that economy is acceptable to all sections of the House. Economy, it strikes me, is something like Free Trade. We used to hear a great deal about everybody being in favour of Free Trade, but always of Free Trade with an exception. And so it appears to me now, that while we all are in favour of economy, there are a great many Gentlemen in the House who wish to make some special exceptions, and those exceptions might possibly have the effect of neutralizing almost the whole effect of the general economy proposed. I listened with the greatest satisfaction and pleasure to the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). He put his finger on the weak point in the Parliamentary support of economy, and I hope that what he said will be remembered by the House, and that the Government will have its warmest support in resisting the growth of Expenditure. I hope also we shall have its support in the course we now propose to take in inviting the special co-operation of the House in a manner which I am glad to know is approved by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. There was a remark which fell from the right hon. Gentleman about which also I wish to be concise. He spoke of the debate on the Budget—of going into Ways and Means on Monday next. Now, in the first instance, we are pledged on Monday, as the Home Secretary stated in the beginning of the evening, to ask leave to suspend the Standing Orders, and to bring in the Explosives Bill. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Ways and Means cannot, under any circumstances, be the First Order on Monday. But, beyond that, we distinctly stated last night that we should not take Ways and Means on Monday. ["Oh, oh!"] I will give the exact words. We said that we should not take Ways and Means on Monday, except *pro formâ*, and that on Monday we should name a day on which we should take Ways and Means.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Certainly not.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Those were the words used by the Prime Minister, and were so understood by a great number of Members.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Certainly not.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): There is a limit, Sir, to contradiction. The arrangement was made between the Prime Minister and myself before the debate took place, and the words I have given were, I repeat, the precise words used. We cannot violate that distinct statement made to the House; but we shall take Ways and Means on the first day possible after Monday, and that will be on Thursday next, when it will be the First Order of the Day, always subject, however, to the necessity of taking a stage on the Explosives Bill.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I have listened, Sir, with great surprise to the concluding observations of the right hon. Gentleman. I own that prior to the statement which the right hon. Gentleman made, my right hon. Friends and I on this side of the House certainly understood him to mean that the Committee of Ways and Means was to be proceeded with on Monday. [The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): No!] That was the understanding on this side of the House, and upon that understanding we listened to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. On that understanding we cordially agreed on giving a stage, which was stated to be necessary so far as the Income Tax Resolution was concerned, and then the right hon. Gentleman thought it right to make a statement, which was certainly most aggressive, most controversial, and which was also one of the most extraordinary that had ever been made, in introducing the Budget, within my recollection of Parliament, although certainly it has not been a very long one. And now, what is the position the right hon. Gentleman takes? He says—"I have made my statement. I have got the Income Tax Resolution. I am under no pressure myself; the Government are under no pressure." And now, having made this statement, he says there shall be no opportunity of reply for a whole week. "Right hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House have as perfect a sense of fairness and justice in Parliamentary discussion as we have." Perfectly so; and I appeal, not only to the right hon. Gentleman himself, but to the Prime Minister, whether it is fair and right in Parliamentary procedure to make statements such as have been made, and then to shut out reply? You, the Government, are in possession of the ground, and can do it if you think fit. I quite admit it; but I at once and deliberately say that no more unfair exercise of Parliamentary or official authority has ever been attempted in this House. Now, Sir, I leave that statement to the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman and of his Colleagues. I entertain the view that procedure of this kind is not one which benefits the Party or the Government which makes use of it, and that it tends very much indeed to the disadvantage of the House generally, because, though I do not say it is the intention, it appears as if it was the intention to take advantage of those who ought to have the right of immediate reply to the charges made against them. Reference has been made to the appointment of a Committee. I have had some experience at the Treasury, and I wish to lay the greatest possible emphasis upon this —that the Estimates which are presented to Parliament are the Estimates of the Government of the day, of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Treasury of the day, and that they are responsible for every figure which appears in those Estimates. It is for them to say whether the amount they present to Parliament is a fair and proper demand to make upon the Public Exchequer and upon the taxpayer. It is for them to say whether the Department which is asking for Votes ought to have the Votes which they ask for; and though I cordially support the proposal which has been made for a Committee, I should deprecate it most completely if it were intended to weaken in the slightest degree the responsibility which properly attaches to the Treasury — in the first place, to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and next to the Secretary of the Treasury. And I believe I am assisting the Government of the day, whatever Government may be in Office, in insisting upon that responsibility, and in submitting that they are not justified in responding to or giving way to any pressure exercised either by any Public Department, or by Members of this House, or by public opinion out-of-doors. It is their duty to submit to Parliament the Votes which, upon full information, they deem to be necessary, and they must not allow themselves to be influenced by public opinion in or out of the House. If they do otherwise, and are not strong enough to put these Estimates before the House in the form they wish, they are not fit to occupy the responsible position which they fill.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The House will perhaps permit me to offer a word of explanation. There has been a complete misapprehension on the part of the right hon. Gentleman as to the view taken on this side of the House. Nothing can be more clear than that right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite are entitled to an early day to make their explanation or reply on this subject if they think fit. The whole question has arisen in this way. We had not the least idea last night that there was an anxiety on the opposite Bench for the appointment of an early day, and in consequence I stated, as far as my recollection goes, and I have taken the opportunity of confirming it since, by reference to the only authority at hand, that we should appoint Monday *pro formâ*, and on Monday would fix the day. The right hon. Gentleman says he and his Friends understood that Monday was fixed as the day on which the debate should go forward. Well, I believe Gentlemen on this side of the House understood the point as I have already stated it. These, I find, are the words put into my own mouth—

> "Therefore we should wish to appoint nominally the Committee of Ways and Means for Monday, with the intention of considering in the interval, when we find what takes place to-morrow night, what arrangements will be most convenient to the House."

We have not the least objection to go forward, as far we are concerned; but, after using those words publicly in the House, are we free to make a change, and say that we will take the Committee on Monday? I am afraid not. The meaning of the words appears to me to be quite clear; and if some hon. Gentleman, having taken up the matter in the opposite sense to that of the right hon. Gentleman, were to challenge us and say the Order was put down for a particular day only *pro formâ*, with the view of then fixing a day for the discussion, I should not know what reply to make to him. Nothing occurred last night to induce us to think there was a desire that the discussion should go forward on Monday. There was not the slightest reference made to that point. We shall be perfectly ready and pleased to do that which will meet the views of right hon. Gentlemen opposite, if we are free to do it; but it appears to me that we have lost our freedom.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Perhaps I may be allowed to say a word. My recollection is that we were under the impression that this debate would not finish to-night, and that it would be carried over till Monday. In reference to that, I asked the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister whether, in the event of the debate to-night not being finished, what early day he would give us for continuing the discussion; and I also asked what proceedings would be taken with regard to the Budget proposals. No doubt, the answer of the right hon. Gentleman was to the effect he has stated. Probably there was some misunderstanding on our part. What we understood was that, in the event of this debate being carried over till Monday, we should then have had to settle when the Budget proposals would be proceeded with; but no positive information could be given until it was known whether this debate would be carried over to-night or not. But if this debate, as it appears, is to finish to-night, we are anxious to press for an early resumption of the debate on the Budget. I cannot say more than that, because my right hon. Friend has explained what we feel about it. Things have been said about the finance of the late Government, and have obtained currency in the country, which we think ought to be answered as speedily as possible.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): As far as I am personally concerned, the sooner the debate takes place the better. I am anxious that it should be proceeded with at the earliest moment; and when I stated just now that it would not be taken on Monday, it was in view of the statement made by my right hon. Friend last night. I am prepared, therefore, to say this, that we will put down the resumption of the debate on Ways and Means for Monday. If no objection is taken when the Order is called to its being proceeded with, we shall be only too happy to proceed with it. If there is any objection, then we must adhere to what we said yesterday, because to do otherwise would not be fair.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I wish to call attention to a totally different subject. A great deal has been said tonight about the question of grants in aid of local taxation, and the sum of £6,000,000 has been quoted as having been granted by the Government in that direction. Now, this question will have to be debated probably at considerable length when it is brought forward; and I wish to ask the Secretary to the Treasury or the President of the Local Government Board by what authority that statement has been placed in the front of the Estimates this year? Hon. Members will see that there is prefixed to the Civil Service Estimates statements showing what are called "Grants in Aid of Local Taxation." Now, I believe that this is a perfectly novel matter in regard to the Estimates, and that it has never been done before the present Government came into Office. I want to know by whose authority the statement has been so put—whether by the Local Government Board or by the Treasury? But, whoever drew it up, I question its correctness from the beginning to the end. I need only quote one or two instances in order to show how very absurd it is that for one moment it should go forth to the public that the sum of £6,000,000 has been given by the State towards local taxation. Let me take the first item in the list—"Rates on Government Property." How is that a grant in aid of local taxation? I should have thought that all buildings, in all cases, would be subject to local rates. I agree that it is taking away an exemption which had been extended to Government buildings, I believe, very unjustly. But in no case can it be regarded as a grant in aid of local taxation. The local authorities intrusted with local taxation ought to have the right of taxing these buildings just the same as any other buildings. I will not go through many items in the list; but I will take the item of "Police—counties and boroughs." It is quite true that the amount paid for county and borough police has been very largely increased; but if you go back to the origin of the county and borough police, when Sir Robert Peel first brought in the Police Bill, it cannot be supposed that the charge now made upon the State is in aid of local taxation. Sir Robert Peel brought forward the Police Act as a question of policy. It was necessary, he thought, that we should have this borough and county police force established, and he said, and said truly, that it would be unfair to place the whole of the charges upon the locality, because the police were intended to be used for public purposes. Then, again, let me take another item. How can anyone possibly say that the Constabulary in Ireland is a local question? The Irish Constabulary is practically an army, and no contribution from the State towards its support and maintenance can be looked upon in the light of a grant in aid of local taxation. I want to know by whose authority this document has been drawn up? And I only mention the matter now for the purpose of giving full Notice that when the question does come forward, I shall certainly challenge the correctness of the statements contained in it. My hon. Friend the Member for Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) has already disposed of them to a great extent; but there is a great deal more yet that may be said. In regard to the Committee which the Government offer to appoint, I doubt very much whether it will ever proceed further, and if it does proceed further, then I think it is doubtful whether it will ever present a Report to the House. I cannot help thinking that if it is to act at all, and to effect any reduction of the Public Expenditure, it must go into the question of local as well as Imperial taxation. I believe that local taxation requires much more looking into by a Committee than the general taxation of the country, and I think that if a Committee is appointed, it ought to consider both branches of taxation. I only rose, however, for the purpose of making a remark upon this sum of £6,000,000, in order that it should not go unchallenged altogether; and if we are to have the debate deferred until Monday, I shall then be prepared to challenge the statement. I shall also be prepared to challenge another statement. I am not at all in favour of any system of subvention. I care not whether it is done by handing over a particular tax from a locality, or whether the money is paid to the locality, because both are practically the same thing. But I know that the assertion has been made over and over again, that it is because of the subvention by the State that the police of the country has been increased to a very considerable extent. Now, I know it has always been felt as a difficulty in the Home Office, from the time of Sir George Grey up to the present moment, that we have never been able to bring the local authorities up to the scale which Sir George Grey himself laid down. Everybody wished to see Sir George Grey's scale accomplished. [Mr. Gladstone: No.] I can only say that, in my own county, not a single policeman was ever added to the force unless there was a petition in favour of it from the ratepayers of the particular locality, which was sent by them to the Court of Quarter Sessions to be considered. That is the positive rule that has always been observed in my county; but I know that the demand for increased protection has grown on account of the increase of population. I have no wish to delay the House further tonight on this question; but I shall be quite prepared with facts and figures when it comes on for discussion again.

Mr. COURTNEY said, the right hon. Gentleman had called attention to the matter almost in the same language as that which had been employed by the hon. Member for Leicestershire (Mr. Pell). The right hon. Gentleman wished to know by what authority the statements in reference to the grants in aid of local taxation had been prefixed to the Estimate. He believed it had been the practice for the last two or three years, and he could only say that this year he had followed the exact form adopted last year. The right hon. Gentleman asked why or how it had come about. As to the exact form that was used, he (Mr. Courtney) was not in a position to give an explanation; but with respect to the items themselves, to which the right hon. Gentleman called attention, he thought there was a complete justification for the insertion of every item. The first referred to by the right hon. Gentleman was a contribution to the local rates upon Government property. It might be perfectly correct that that contribution should be made; but he remembered perfectly well that when it was first proposed the very point was raised that it should be made in aid of local taxation. The right hon. Gentleman had dwelt upon the question of the county police. Surely the right hon. Gentleman would not deny that a grant in aid of the county police was a grant in aid of local taxation?

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS remarked, that the force was used for Imperial purposes.

Mr. COURTNEY said, the police might be used for Imperial purposes; but they were, however, required for local protection as well.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that Sir Robert Peel distinctly stated, when he brought in the Police Bill, that the force was required for public purposes.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he must contend that the charge was a contribution in aid of local taxation. So also was the item which appeared in the Votes in regard to the Irish Constabulary. He thought, as a general principle, that the duty of maintaining the peace in Ireland was an Irish duty, and that any payment made out of the Imperial resources for the Irish Constabulary was a payment made in aid of local taxation. It was not desirable, at that hour of the night, that he should enter into any lengthened explanation; but he believed, as he had said before, that the insertion of every one of these items was amply justified. Indeed, he saw in the Votes some items which were not included as grants in aid of local taxation, which, when they came to take the question into consideration, might very properly be included under that head. Even in Ireland the charge for the police was primarily a local charge, and ought to be taken up as a contribution in aid of local rates.

Lord JOHN MANNERS said, he had only one word to say. He did not know whether any hon. Member representing Ireland was in his place on the present occasion; but if he was not, he would recommend the Irish Members to read the papers to-morrow containing the statement of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, that in his view the whole of the military police in Ireland ought to be charged on the local rates of that country. He believed the statement of the hon. Gentleman would sink deep into the Irish mind; and when the Government came to vindicate in greater detail the accuracy of the extraordinary statements to be found in the Civil Service Estimates, he hoped there might be some expression of Irish opinion on this novel doctrine of the Secretary to the Treasury.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I wish to point out that the present Government accepted the Estimates of the year 1880 from their Predecessors, and I find that the Civil Service Estimates for that year are signed—"H. Selwin-Ibbetson;" and at page 14 there is an item headed "Sums in aid of Local Taxation transferred to the Imperial Exchequer," and among them is included a grant to the Irish Constabulary. The Government, therefore, of which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) was a Member, appears to be responsible for the insertion of these items.

Question put, and *negatived*.

Words *added*.

Main Question, as amended, put.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, the present amount of the National Expenditure demands the earnest and immediate attention of Her Majesty's Government, with the view of effecting such reductions as may be consistent with the efficiency of the public service.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.—[BILL 123.]

(*The Marquess of Hartington, The Judge Advocate General, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

CONSIDERATION.

Order for Consideration read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill, as amended, be now taken into Consideration."

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK wished to know why, as it was Friday night, the Government did not propose to set up Supply again?

MR. GLADSTONE said, there was no intention of setting up Supply again, and there was no fixed rule in the matter that he was aware of.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he would call the attention of the Speaker to the matter; and, if necessary, he would conclude with a Motion.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he rose to a point of Order.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he would rise to Order. This question regarding the liability of the Government to set up Supply on Friday night had already been before the House, and had been argued at some length.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL rose to Order. He wished to know if the Question before the House was not the Report of the Army Annual Bill?

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he thought that the course now being taken by the Government was an interference with the rights of private Members. Some years ago the attention of the Government was called to their liability to set up Supply on Friday nights. The question was argued before the Predecessor of the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair, and it was decided that it was the practice of the House, since the time when Thursday was given over to the Government by independent Members, and the right of moving the adjournment of the House on Friday abrogated, that it was the duty of the Government on Friday to repeat the Motion for Supply. He had placed a Motion on the Paper on this subject in the Autumn Session; but he was unfortunately unable to bring it on.

MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman is not in Order in entering into debate. I understood him to rise for the purpose of putting a question to the Chair.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he intended to do so; but he wished to explain what the question was. He wished to ask the Speaker if, according to his recollection, it was not incumbent upon the Government on Friday nights, but not upon any other night, since the year 1861, when Thursday night was given to the Government, and the Motion on Friday for the adjournment of the House until Monday abrogated, to repeat the Motion for Supply, so that independent Members having Motions on the Paper should not be deprived of the privilege of bringing them forward?

MR. SPEAKER: I am unaware that there is anything in the Rules or Orders or in the practice of the House which makes it imperative on the Government to set up Supply on Friday any more than on any other day.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill, as amended, *considered*,

The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. Osborne Morgan) said, it was important that the Bill should pass through its stages rapidly, and he therefore asked the House to read it a third time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*The Judge Advocate General.*)

Mr. SEXTON asked the Government to consider, before the Bill was introduced next year, the important question raised last night as to the amendment of the law relating to the maintenance of the wives and children of soldiers. The majority by which the Amendment he had moved was defeated was a very narrow one.

The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. Osborne Morgan) said, he was afraid that he could give no undertaking upon the subject.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER said, there were one or two matters which he wished to point out before the Bill was read a third time, and he was sure the right hon. Gentleman the Judge Advocate General would answer the questions he proposed to put. In one part of the Bill it was provided that a soldier might be attested before an officer as well as before a magistrate, and he wished to know whether that provision had as yet been carried out in practice, and that a recruit on entering the Regular Army was attested by the commanding officer of a regiment, or whether he was still required to be taken before a magistrate in the same way as before the law came into operation? Up to the present time he had heard nothing to show that this provision of the Army Annual Act of last year had been carried out, and he believed that both the old soldiers and the country at large would like to know whether it had been confirmed by the authorities at the War Office. Also, in connection with this Army Annual Bill, he should like to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman who had charge of it, if he could furnish to the House an account of the number of men who had fraudulently entered during the past year? The question was raised last year, and he (Sir Henry Fletcher) thought it was a very important question for the Army at large. There was no doubt that many men had fraudulently enlisted; and he saw, on turning to the Report of the Inspector General on Recruiting, that under the head of "Fraudulent Enlistment," there were only two men who had been rejected. He thought if the real facts came out that there must have been far more than two men objected to on the ground of "Fraudulent Enlistment." He should like also to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman if he could give the House any information in regard to the new Military Code of Punishment which had been in force since the abolition of flogging, and which must have been in force during the past campaign in Egypt? It was a very important question, and he had mentioned it in the House on several previous occasions. We had since passed through a campaign in Egypt, and we had been told, by very high military authorities, that there had been scarcely any instances of punishment inflicted for any great or serious offence during the campaign. Of course, there must have been some amount of punishment, and he thought it would be satisfactory to the House if the right hon. and learned Gentleman could, on the present occasion, inform them what the number of court martials upon the men in Egypt had been during the campaign, and what the nature of the offences was for which they were tried? He would not detain the House further, but would simply ask these questions.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he had no wish to anticipate the reply of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General; but, before the right hon. and learned Gentleman answered the questions which had been addressed to him, he wished to express a hope that the Government would not consent to the proposal made by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) to send every soldier against whom a bastardy charge was made from the place at which he was quartered to any part of the Kingdom in which the charge might be preferred against him. He thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman had already made a mistake in the first concession he had made to the hon. Member in allowing the word "shall" to be substituted for the word "may." There was a very important principle underlying the matter. One of the fundamental principles of Military Law was that the pay of the soldier was entirely at the discretion of the Crown. No one had a right to the pay of a soldier except the Crown itself, in whose discretion it was to give it or to withhold it. In substituting a word which made the duty of the Government imperative, instead of permissive, the right hon. and learned Gentleman had already taken a step which might be fraught with very evil consequences. He wished also to point out to the Government that concessions of this kind had no effect in mollifying the opponents of the clause. He therefore hoped the right hon. and learned Gentleman would remain firm, and would not be too ready to adopt the suggestion of the hon. Member below the Gangway that a soldier wherever he was summoned should be sent down in charge of an escort to answer the charge made against him. If this concession were made, who was in a position to foretell what amount of expenditure might not be incurred in future? He hoped they would not, at some future day, have an Estimate brought in by the Secretary to the Treasury of the sum liable to be voted by the House to come in course of payment at the end of such and such a year of the expenses of soldiers summoned to attend bastardy cases all over the country. It was a most ridiculous proposition—a proposition only disprovable by a *reductio ad absurdam*. He therefore requested the right hon. and learned Gentleman to be firm, and not to give a sort of half-hearted answer as he had done a short time ago. He ought distinctly to tell the House, and all those who were familiar with the administration of the Department, that he meant to stand firm, and not to listen to the voices of what he might call "the humanity mongers," who, he was sorry to say, were quite a curse to the country.

The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. Osborne Morgan) said, he had certainly had no intention of giving a half-hearted answer to the question of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). On the contrary, he had told the hon. Gentleman that he could not give any undertaking in the matter. At the same time, after the discussion which took place yesterday evening, which he did not propose to go into again, the matter would have to be considered. In reply to the questions put to him by the hon. and gallant Member for Horsham (Sir Henry Fletcher) in regard to the 6th section of the Acts it did exactly what was asked—it enabled every recruit to be attested before an officer approved by the Secretary of State. He hoped that answer would be satisfactory. His hon. and gallant Friend further asked him if he could give the number of fraudulent enlistments attempted last year. He was afraid that he could only give the number of men who were tried and convicted. He thought the exact number would be found in the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting. The number was about 350, and it was less than it was the year before. His hon. and gallant Friend asked what were the number of general and district courts martial held in Egypt during the campaign. He had answered that question before, and not being prepared to answer the question again, he could only speak from memory. He thought the number was 361, or thereabouts, of which five were summary courts martial, and in only three out of those five cases was "summary punishment" awarded under the Act of 1881. In two of these cases the whole punishment was not actually carried out, but part of it was remitted. He was under the impression that an engagement took place in which the offenders behaved so well that the remaining part of the punishment was remitted, and there was therefore only one case in which the summary punishment was actually carried out in its entirety.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER remarked, that in the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting, it was stated that only two men were actually objected to for fraudulent enlistment, and now the right hon. and learned Gentleman said there were 350 cases.

The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. Osborne Morgan) said, he presumed that the two men in question were found out before they were enlisted. The 350 he had spoken of were cases of fraudulent enlistment actually successfully carried out, in which the offenders had afterwards been detected and convicted.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT had thought, when the right hon. and learned Gentleman answered the question of the hon. and gallant Member for Horsham (Sir Henry Fletcher), that he was going to give some explanation as to how the new punishment had affected the Army, particularly in the late campaign in Egypt. The question was one of very great interest, not only to the Army, but to the country, and he should be glad to receive some fuller information. The punishment was different from that which had been tried before, and they had now had a campaign in which it must have been necessary to resort to punishment of some kind or other, unless they had had an Army in Egypt far better conducted than any Army had ever been before. He wished, therefore, to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman, what course had been taken in regard to punishment, because the punishment prescribed was of a very peculiar kind, and could not be very easily carried out in the field? The offence of drunkenness and other offences must have been committed during the Egyptian Campaign, and the House had a right to ask the Government how the punishments had been carried out, and in what way they had been inflicted upon the men. At the present moment they were hearing a great deal about the condition of the Army, and a great deal about the young soldiers, and how well they had behaved. Therefore, they had a right to ask, and to expect an answer to the question, whether the new punishments had had the good effect which the right hon. Gentleman, now Chancellor of the Exchequer, anticipated they would have upon the Army? He would ask, in the first place, how many punishments had been inflicted in the course of the Egyptian Campaign, and, in the next, what the nature of the punishments had been?

The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. Osborne Morgan) said, that if the hon. and gallant Baronet had given him Notice of the Question, he would have been prepared to answer it. All he could say off-hand was, that, up to a week ago, all the punishments inflicted had either been penal servitude, imprisonment, or reduction to the ranks.

Captain AYLMER said, he did not know whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman was able to speak again. He had, however, risen before the right hon. and learned Gentleman did, and he hoped the right hon. and learned Gentleman would be able to answer one question he wished to put. It had reference to Clause 69 of the Act, which might be of considerable importance, although he confessed that he had not been able to find out what its importance was. There had always been a question in the Army as to what officers came under Military Law; whether, in point of fact, it affected officers on half-pay, and the non-effective officers of the Service? In former times, it certainly did not apply to them; but this appeared to have been changed now, and Military Law appeared to be applied to these officers as well as to officers on the Active List. He thought, before they were brought under Military Law, the House ought distinctly to know how many and what class of officers would be brought under that law, by the change now made, who were not under it before? It was a most important thing for persons who were not under Military Law before to find that they were now subject to the Act of Parliament.

The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. Osborne Morgan) said, that, with the permission of the House, he might, perhaps, be allowed to say that he had explained this point very fully on the second reading of the Bill. He thought the hon. and gallant Member could not have been present at the time. [Captain Aylmer: No, I was not.] He (the Judge Advocate General) would give the explanation again. Formerly, all officers on half-pay were really retired from the Service, and, therefore, were not under Military Law; but now, under the New Regulations, those on the Active List were really only waiting for employment, and it was, therefore, thought advisable to place them under Military Law. Officers who were on the Retired List would remain as they did formerly. If the hon. and gallant Gentleman would refer to paragraph 67 of the Royal Warrant of 1881, he would find both classes of officers dealt with.

Mr. ONSLOW said, he thought that as the noble Lord the Secretary of State for War, who was answerable for this very important Bill, was not present, and seeing that so many questions had been asked, it was desirable to defer the third reading of the Bill. He would, therefore, move that the debate be now adjourned.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Onslow,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* next.

BALLOT ACT CONTINUANCE AND AMENDMENT BILL.—[Bill 5.]

(*Sir Charles Dilke, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Attorney General.*)

SECOND READING. ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [19th March], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. BERESFORD HOPE said, this Bill was one of very considerable importance, inasmuch as it proposed a great Constitutional change in the country. That the right hon. Gentleman should bring it forward in so empty a House, and with an almost empty Treasury Bench, was really reducing the matter to a burlesque. His own position with regard to the Ballot was one which he desired to bring before the House at a time when it had not been previously exhausted by a long debate. But, as it was, he could not contend against the force of the Government; he could only protest against this Motion for the honour of Parliamentary Procedure, assuring the right hon. Gentleman at the same time that he should renew his opposition at the next stage.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, it was of very little use his rising at that particular time to protest against the second reading of the Bill. [*Laughter.*] The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade laughed at that statement; but he would remind him that the Bill had never yet been discussed upon its merits. The great question, and he thought it was one which the House should carefully consider, was this—had not the Ballot given rise to more bribery and corruption in this country than had ever taken place before? He ventured to say that, under it, more promises had been broken and more deception practised with regard to elections than under the old system of voting, a fact which he did not think even the President of the Board of Trade would venture to deny. Was it not true that under the Ballot the promises made had caused many candidates to expect that they would be returned for the constituencies they sought to represent, and that when the poll was taken the result was entirely different, owing to those promises having been broken? Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, especially the Radical section, appeared, to think it nothing for a man to say he would vote for a candidate, and then, very likely getting something more from the other side, vote in opposition to the promise he had given. In former times that could not take place; a man then wrote down his name in broad daylight, and it was seen and known how he voted. He ventured to say that this was a far more proper and far more honest way of proceeding. But there was another point to which he asked the attention of hon. Members. It was proposed by this Bill to enact that any constituency might alter the hour of polling, and this was to apply to that constituency alone, that was to say, the hour fixed upon would not be general throughout the country. This question was one which deserved the most serious attention of the House, and he appealed to the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill to explain the grounds on which this provision was sought to be enacted. He had always systematically and conscientiously been opposed to the Ballot, because he believed it to be neither in the interest of the British Constitution nor in the interest of the British people. No reason had ever presented itself to him for changing his views; and, although he should not now vote in opposition to the Motion before the House, he, nevertheless, protested against the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. WARTON said, nothing had astonished him more than the assumption put forward at various times from the Treasury Bench, that all parties in the country were now agreed as to the principle of the Ballot. He begged leave to say, on behalf of himself and many others, that this was by no means a correct description of the facts of the case. The Ballot Act, after all, was not the law of the land, except provisionally. The Act was originally only intended to remain in force until the year 1880, after which it had to be renewed annually; and he thought it was not too late even now to bring back the sense of the House and the country to the good old-fashioned mode of voting, under which an elector could speak out his mind freely without as at present, sneaking up to the ballot-box to give in his vote. He thought that those who aspired to be politicians, and still more those who called themselves statesmen, ought to watch with great interest what was called the current of public feeling throughout the country. It was most useful and interesting to observe in what way persons of different classes, different creeds, and, in a certain sense, persons of different nationalities exercised the franchise; but under the Ballot it was absolutely impossible to form any idea of the feeling of the various classes he had alluded to. Let the House consider the examples furnished by some recent elections. They knew that the late Attorney General for Ireland was triumphantly returned for his constituency only two years ago, against the Home Rule candidate, and it was said at the time that he was supported not only by Liberals, but by Conservatives. But another election for the same borough had taken place a short time ago, and on that occasion there was a very large majority for the Home Rule candidate. If it were not for the Ballot, they would know the classes of persons who voted at the two elections for that borough; that was to say, those persons could get the information who took pains to consider what was going on in the world. The same might be said of the Liverpool Election, at which, by some means or other, the Liberal candidate came in by a majority of between 200 and 300, and of others with regard to which it was a matter of pure speculation how the various classes of the constituency voted. Under the old practice, those who wished could take the polling books and see for themselves in what direction the current of public opinion was running. But this could not be done under the Ballot Act. Those who liked to legislate in the dark did not care for such things; they preferred to remain in ignorance of what was going on in the country, and only wanted to set up an idol to be worshipped in ignorance. He maintained the truth of the proposition that those who liked the Ballot liked bribery, because under the Ballot a man might take money from both sides for his vote without being discovered. The observations of Mr. Justice Manisty and other Judges were generally that corruption at elections was worse than it was before. The Government had throughout discouraged discussion of the Bill, and he should, for the reasons stated, feel it his duty to oppose on all occasions its passage through the House. He hoped to see the day on which another revolution of public feeling would bring back the old English institution of open voting, amongst other reasons, as a means of putting a stop to Radical meanness. He begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Captain AYLMER said, he rose to second the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport. He objected to the Ballot altogether, for reasons which he could not enter into on the present question, but which had already been stated to the House. One reason why he supported the adjournment of the debate was that they were about to have brought before them a very important Bill to deal with corrupt and illegal practices at elections, and he believed that had this become law a few years ago, the Ballot Act would never have passed through the House—that was to say, the stringent measures which it was proposed to take against bribery and corruption would have rendered the Ballot Bill unnecessary. The Bill he referred to would be in the hands of hon. Members in a few days, and he believed it to be the unanimous wish of the House that it should pass into law, and that it should have a fair trial, so that the country might see how far it was likely to put down corrupt practices at elections. That being so, and until some effect had been given to the measure, he hoped the Ballot Bill would not be passed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he deprecated the adjournment of the debate at so early an hour. The Bill before the House was the same in principle as that which passed the second reading last Session. In contained some alterations in respect of matters of detail which would have to be fully debated when it went into Committee; but as to the principle of the Bill, which had received the sanction of the leading Members of the Conservative Party, it was simply a renewal. The hon. and learned Member for Bridport had stated that the Government were wrong in assuming that all parties in the country were agreed upon the principle of the Ballot. The hon. and learned Member spoke in the name of himself and certain other Members; but it would be in the recollection of the House that the leading Members on the opposite Benches had expressed their approval of the Bill. The hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer), however, had the other night moved the adjournment of the debate on the second reading; and they had now the extraordinary spectacle of the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), and, indeed, every Member opposite who had spoken on the Motion for the second reading, condemning the principle of the Bill. That was certainly a new departure for the Party opposite to take, and one by which he thought they were not likely to benefit. He could not think the Conservative Party were wise in adopting a course which tended to prevent legislation on which the country had set its heart.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON remarked, that in saying that this was in principle the same Bill as that which was read last year, the right hon. Gentleman had omitted to state the circumstances in which that second reading took place. They were these. The Bill last year was on the Order Paper for second reading on the day following the adjournment of the House after the assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke; it came on contrary to the general expectation of the House, and was met by an almost unanimous protest from Members on those Benches, in which he believed the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) joined. The principle of the Bill, had, therefore, not been discussed. Personally, he was not in favour of the Ballot; but he did not think his objection would extend to the present proposal, if it were brought on at a time when adequate discussion could take place. The Bill contained some provisions which, to his knowledge, had never before been presented to the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would point out to the noble Lord that he must not discuss the Bill on a Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, he would defer to the ruling of the Chair. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had, however, preceded him in this matter. Unless his hearing was at fault, the right hon. Gentleman had addressed an admonition to the Conservative Party to the effect that, if they proceeded to oppose the Ballot Act as it was proposed to be continued in this Bill, they would find that such a course would not meet with the approbation of the country. That certainly appeared to be irrelevant to the Motion before the House. But his object in rising was to point out that the Bill had not been discussed, and that if it were pressed forward then, it would meet with the strongest opposition.

Mr. ONSLOW said, he regretted that the right hon. Gentleman should have thought it necessary to cast in the teeth of the Opposition the fact that the Bill was not opposed last year, in view of the circumstances under which the second reading was then taken. The argument of the right hon. Gentleman could not be accepted by Members on those Benches. On the occasion referred to the House was taken completely by surprise, hon. Members on that side having no idea that a Government Bill would be brought on at such a period; and that was the reason why, after a unanimous protest on their part, the second reading was taken. He cordially supported the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport for the adjournment of the debate. They felt it was perfectly useless to oppose voting by Ballot; but, although they objected to it, he and his hon. Friends had no intention of obstructing the Bill. There were clauses in the Bill which were of serious importance to the country. He had put down Notice of opposition to the Bill because it proposed to extend the hours of polling. That was a matter for very serious consideration. [" Question!"] He was giving his reasons why he should vote for the adjournment of the debate, and therefore he was perfectly in Order. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had not, either in the last or in this Session, given the House the reason why he proposed an extension of the hours of polling, and it was certainly due to the House and to the country, before they were asked to vote the second reading of this measure, that the right hon. Gentleman should say why he proposed this great change. As to the other parts of the Bill, there was very little to which they could object. As that part of the Bill which referred to the hours of polling would affect nearly every borough in England, with the exception of those in the Metropolis, the House had a right to ask the Government to give them an opportunity of explaining their views, and of ascertaining the views of the Government upon the subject. This measure affected great as well as small constituencies, and altogether it was such as ought not to be hurried through the House at 1 o'clock in the morning. It might be said that in a very short time small constituencies would be done away with. That might be the case; but, whether it was so or not, the constituencies would in future possess just the same power of voting. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to allow the debate to be adjourned, and to give the House, at some future time, the reason why he had imported the provision respecting the hours of polling into his Bill. He should vote with the right hon. Gentleman as to the other parts of the Bill. On the present occasion he cordially supported the Motion for Adjournment.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Onslow) urged as a reason for the adjournment of the debate that the Bill contained a clause providing for an extension of the hours of polling. The hon. Gentleman himself had given Notice of an Amendment which would raise the whole question; and when the Amendment was moved the Government would be quite prepared to discuss it. The Government had always felt that the question of the hours of polling was one for discussion in Committee, and not on the second reading of the Bill; but, at the same time, they would be prepared to meet as a question of principle the Amendment of which the hon. Gentleman had given Notice. As, however, the hon. Gentleman had not chosen to bring forward his Amendment to-night, he ought not to ask that this stage of the Bill should be postponed. The noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) made a statement which he (Mr. Chamberlain) had endeavoured to verify, but had been unable to do so. The noble Lord said that last year the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote) joined in the protest against the proposal of the Government to take the second reading of the Bill. Now, the Leader of the Opposition did not appear, from the examination of his remarks that he (Mr. Chamberlain) had made, to have done anything of the kind. The right hon. Baronet (Sir Stafford Northcote) was reported to have said—

> "I agree with the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) that the division on the proposal to adjourn the debate might be taken as a division upon the merits of the Bill; and as I do not intend to oppose the second reading of the Bill I shall not vote for the adjournment."

And then the right hon. Baronet went on to say—

> "I think, therefore, we have a right to ask the Government that they will put the stage of Committee at such another time as will enable the House to discuss it."—(3 *Hansard*, [269] 365-6.)

It would be seen that the right hon. Baronet did not object to take the second reading of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman saw plainly that if the Opposition supported the adjournment it might be construed in the country that they were committed to an opposition of the Bill; and he himself, according to his own statement, was not opposed to the principle of the Bill.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, it would be well if the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), instead of reading the speech of the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), were to read the speech he himself made when the second reading of the Bill was taken last year, because he would then find that he gave a most distinct pledge to the House that there should be a full and fair opportunity for discussing the Bill.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN begged the right hon. Gentleman's pardon; he could not give any such pledge.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, that if the right hon. Gentleman would only read his own speech he would see what he really did say. As the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had been good enough to refer to him, he desired to say he objected the other day to proceeding with the Bill, as he objected now, on account of the late hour at which the second reading was brought on. A quarter past 12 was not an hour of the night when any measure of great importance could be properly discussed. It was idle to bring the charge of Obstruction against any hon. Member who objected to proceeding with the Bill at that hour. It was about that time the other night when the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) said they could not discuss certain financial matters then raised on account of the lateness of the hour. It now, however, suited the purpose of the Government to proceed with the Ballot Bill, so that no objection was made as to the hour. He hoped the adjournment would be agreed to.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, that he voted with the Government 10 or 12 years ago upon the Ballot Bill, and wished to state the reasons why he now repented that vote. He could not conveniently do so at that hour, and he did not think it was right that they should be called upon to discuss the second reading of the Continuation Bill at 10 minutes to 1 o'clock in the morning. He should, therefore, cordially support the Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. ONSLOW said, that, in reply to the observation of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), he desired to say that the only reason why he had not brought on his Amendment was that he did not think the House was in a fit state to receive it, and because the hour was so late.

Question put.

The House *divided:* — Ayes 41; Noes 74: Majority 33. — (Div. List, No. 53.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. ONSLOW said, he thought he should be perfectly justified in moving as he now did, that the House do now adjourn.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Onslow.*)

Mr. BERESFORD HOPE said, he hoped his hon. Friend would not persevere with that Motion. They had made their protest, and the Treasury Bench opposite must see that a division at that hour of the night, with no preparation to resist the phalanx of the Government, and with only an indiscriminate remnant of the Opposition present, would not represent the fair and just opinion of the House of Commons in regard to the Bill. They had made a protest against the Bill being taken at an hour of the night when debate was impossible, and when nothing but shouting seemed to be left to the other side of the House. He must compliment hon. Gentlemen opposite upon their power of lungs. He thought his hon. Friends had better let the Bill go through, for, happily, this was not its last stage.

Mr. SIDNEY HERBERT said, he did not entirely endorse all that had fallen from his right hon. Friend (Mr. Beresford Hope); but, at the same time, he would support his suggestion that the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow) should withdraw his Motion. He failed to see that anything was to be gained by it; and he would propose that, as the Members of the Government present did not seem inclined to go to bed, instead of insisting on the Motion for Adjournment, they should properly discuss the Bill. The Opposition had made their protest—he did not speak as "an indiscriminate remnant," and he failed to see how that remark was justified—because he considered there had been considerable unanimity of opinion exhibited on the Opposition side of the House in the last division. They could only now let their protest be published. The right hon. Gentleman who had charge of the Bill had been singularly unfortunate in all the Bills he had had charge of, having had to bring them on at a late hour. The Opposition had protested against being asked to consider the Ballot Act Continuance Bill at that late hour, and they could do no more.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, he found there was a practical agreement on both sides of the House that as there was an important principle contained in Clause 6 of the Bill there should be a further opportunity of discussing it. The House had not had an opportunity of debating it either last year or this year; therefore he would propose that the Motion for Adjournment should be withdrawn, and that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister should undertake to bring on the Committee stage at a reasonable hour—["Oh, oh!"]—well, a "reasonable hour," he knew, was not a proposal to which an unreasonable man would assent; but his suggestion was that there should be an undertaking to bring on the Committee stage at a reasonable hour, so that the hon. Member for Guildford might have an opportunity of raising the point he desired to have discussed. At present, having made their protest, they ought, he thought, to allow the second reading to take place.

Mr. GLADSTONE: No doubt the next stage of the Bill will be taken at a reasonable hour. That, I think, is the assurance the noble Lord desires.

Mr. ONSLOW asked leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER: Shall we go on with the Bill on Monday?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Only if it is reached at an early hour.

Mr R. N. FOWLER: Before 10 o'clock?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Yes; not unless it is reached before 10 o'clock.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 9th April, 1883.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading—Second Reading—Committee negatived—Third Reading*—Explosive Substances (24), and *passed.*

Third Reading—Consolidated Fund (No. 2)*, and *passed.*

CHANNEL TUNNEL—THE JOINT COMMITTEE.

Message to the Commons, in answer to their Message of Thursday last, to inform them that this House has appointed a Committee of five Lords to join with the Committee of the Commons.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL—THE BOERS AND THE NATIVE TRIBES.—QUESTION.

Lord BRABOURNE asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he was able to confirm or contradict the rumours which were in circulation to the effect that a peace was about to be concluded between the Boers and the Chief Mapoch; and whether, if so, Her Majesty's Government had interfered or remonstrated with the Boers, with the view of obtaining favourable terms for the Chief Mapoch? He had received a letter from an officer of the Cape Mounted Rifles, and he asked permission to read it, because it gave information which their Lordships might be glad to receive. The writer said—

"Let me explain that Mapoch's stronghold is situated between Lydenburg, the base of operations during the Secocoeni War, and Fort Weeber, which was the main camp during the long campaign. Mapoch's country is extensive, and the road through it, by which most of our supplies had to come from Lydenburg, was kept open to transport by Mapoch. The boundary of Mapoch's country joined that of Secocoeni's, and never, during the long war, did we get attacked by Secocoeni's Kaffirs while on Mapoch's country. This says something for the way in which he kept his frontier. Another road, outside his territory, being shorter was tried on one or two occasions, and there we got such a slating that it was not used afterwards except by an occasional despatch rider. I had the pleasure of despatch riding for many months between Lydenburg and the forts, and can, therefore, speak with accuracy. Further, Mapoch furnished Kaffir runners to carry the more heavy portion of the mail from and to Lydenburg, and fed the despatch riders' horses, allowing their masters to rest and sleep at his kraal. All that was known to the Secretary of State was that Mapoch refused to pay taxes. The claim made upon him was, in the opinion of many English, a most unjust one, for although the Boers, prior to the annexation, claimed Mapoch as a subject, still the question could but occur to us on the spot, why, in that case, do Boer farmers living in this district pay taxes to Mapoch?"

The writer then went on to remark that—

"We hear of Mapoch because he is strong enough to make a fight of it; but what of the countless small villages of kraal Kaffirs?"

He next related the cruel manner in which the Boers seize upon and sell the cattle of these poor people under the pretence of collecting taxes; and then he gives the reason why they are so unfairly treated—

"Because, during the war between the Boers and the English, these Kaffirs refused to act as spies for the Dutch, and offered to fight for the English, if permitted. From first to last, these Kaffirs were thoroughly loyal to the English, from whom they now reap their reward. These same Kaffirs came to me immediately after the surrender of the Transvaal to the Boers, and asked, Baas, we were told distinctly that the Dutch would never again have the country back, that your great Chiefs had said so, that all we had to do was to be loyal to the English Government who would protect us. We were true to your Government, and we ask you now, Who has lied, Baas?"

THE EARL OF DERBY, in reply, said, the noble Lord seemed to have risen more for the purpose of supplying him with information than of asking him for information from the Government. With regard to the latter part of the statement read by the noble Lord, it seemed rather an argument against the retrocession of the Transvaal two years ago than against anything that had been done by the Government at the present time. He was not aware that it had ever been questioned that Mapoch did render important assistance to the English against the Boers during the war. It was quite true he did; but it was equally true that he then, and he certainly now, declined to consider himself subject to the authority of any Government. At the time when we administered the Transvaal he regarded himself as an independent Chief; and that was a contention which the Transvaal Government had never admitted. He (the Earl of Derby) could not say that, in those circumstances, the Boers were not right in taking steps to enforce what authority they possessed. Mapoch had made no appeal to Her Majesty's Government for support or assistance against the Boers. He was not able either to confirm or to contradict the report which his noble Friend had no doubt seen in Reuter's telegram in regard to the proposed terms of peace. If there was any question of peace between Mapoch and the Boers the Government would, no doubt, receive some information on the subject; but up to the present time they had none.

EAST INDIA—CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (NATIVE JURISDICTION OVER BRITISH SUBJECTS).

OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF LYTTON: My Lords, I rise, in pursuance of my Notice, to call attention to the recent action of the Government in India, with special reference to its effect upon the status of the Native communities and upon their relation to the British Power. I have been told that the terms of this Notice are vague, and it is true that they are vague. I will at once explain the reason why. I do not wish to raise by it any single specific issue, or produce any single specific effect, upon the action of the Government in India; nor, apart from the earnest, but I hope fair, criticism of measures and principles that greatly alarm me, do I wish to say anything which should embarrass the noble Marquess now at the head of that Government (the Marquess of Ripon) in a task of which I well know by experience all the difficulties and all the anxieties. But, my Lords, I do wish—and this is all I wish—to give, as gravely and as temperately as I can, timely expression to the fears, by no means peculiar to myself, which have been aroused by what is now passing in India, and to induce, if possible, a consideration of them which will not, I think, be the less serviceable because it leads to no immediate action in this House. Parliament is clearly without the knowledge which could enable it to interfere with advantage in the precise details of Indian legislation, upon which it would, therefore, do well to abstain from expressing positive opinions. But it does not follow from this that Parliament ought, in either House, to be a merely silent and passive spectator of all proceedings on the part of the Government in India. Cases may arise—and the present is, I think, pre-eminently one of them—when it may be most expedient that the authorities in India should be plainly warned—not in a factious, but in a serious and in an honest spirit—by their well-wishers in this country and in this House, against dangers into which they are running, or into which they seem to be running. Now, I am anxious to point out certain dangers of this kind which are, I fear, being incurred, without any adequate appreciation of their magnitude, in the management of by far the greatest of all our national enterprizes. But I can truly say that no one will be more thankful than myself to find that my fears are unfounded, and that the policy undoubtedly indicated by the facts I am about to bring under your notice has not been seriously adopted. This policy may be described in three words. It is the policy of gradually transferring political power in India from European to Native hands. Numerous public declarations have lately been made, and various important measures announced, by the present Government of India, all tending in that direction, and all calculated to create that impression. But in referring to them I shall confine myself to two illustrations. The first is contained in a Resolution published by the Government of India last May; and the second is the proposed alteration in the Indian Code of Criminal Procedure, which is now profoundly agitating the whole European portion of the Indian community. I propose to deal with these two matters in the order in which I have mentioned them; and, first, as regards the Resolution of the 18th of May last. The subject of this Resolution is the introduction into India of local self-government, and the point to which I invite attention is not one of detail, but of general principle. I am, and always have been, in favour of the extension of local institutions in India to any degree which is compatible with, and can be made subservient to, the maintenance and support of the British power in that country. Much has been done for many years past in this direction, both by administrative Orders and by Acts of the Indian Legislature; and I am as far from saying that no more can or ought to be done in the same direction as I am from wishing to engage your Lordships in a detailed discussion of this or that particular measure for the purpose. I quite agree that to a great, and perhaps to an increasing extent, our Indian Empire must be governed through the agency of Natives, paid or unpaid, as it was certainly acquired, to a great extent, through the courage and discipline of Native soldiers. It is, however, one thing to admit and even to insist upon this, and it is quite another thing to wish to see the character of the Government of India fundamentally altered. That Government is an absolute Government. It has been so established by Act of Parliament. It is dependent, like all absolute Governments, partly on military force, partly on the support it derives from the acquiescence of a docile population which has daily experience of its benefits. Such, I believe, it must continue to be if it is to exist at all, and I look with the greatest apprehension on any attempts to change its nature. I listen with the deepest regret to all language used by the Head of it in his official character calculated to lead the Native populations of India to suppose that such a change is contemplated by the ruling Power. I must now ask leave to read two of the leading paragraphs of the Resolution in question. It contains many other expressions to the same purpose; but these two set in the clearest and strongest light the sentiment which pervades the whole. Paragraph 5 of that Resolution says—

> "At the outset the Governor General in Council must explain that in advocating the extension of local self-government and the adoption of this principle in the management of many local affairs he does not suppose that the work will be, in the first instance, better done than if it remained in the sole hands of the Government district officers. It is not primarily with a view to improvement in administration that this measure is put forward and supported. It is chiefly desirable as an instrument of popular political education. His Excellency in Council has himself no doubt that, as local knowledge and interest are brought to bear more fully upon local administration, improved efficiency will, in fact, follow. But at starting there will, doubtless, be many failures calculated to discourage exaggerated hopes, and even in somes cases to cast apparent discredit upon the principle of self-government itself."

Paragraph 6 says—

> "It is not uncommonly asserted that the people of this country are themselves entirely indifferent to the principle of self-government; that they take but little interest in public matters; and that they prefer to have such affairs managed for them by Government officers. The Governor General in Council does not attach much value to this theory. It represents, no doubt, the point of view which commends itself to many active and well-intentioned district officers; and the people of India are, there can be equally no doubt, remarkably tolerant of existing facts. But as education advances, there is rapidly growing up all over the country an intelligent class of public-spirited men, whom it is not only bad policy, but sheer waste of power, to fail to utilize."

And, at the conclusion of this paragraph, it is added that—

> "The Governor General in Council has no hesitation in stating his conviction that the only reasonable plan for the Government is to induce the people themselves to undertake, as far as may be, the management of their own affairs, and to develop or create, if need be, a capacity for self-help in regard to all matters that have not, for Imperial reasons, to be retained in the hands of the Representatives of Government."

Other parts of the Resolution contain a series of directions as to the spirit in which these principles are to be applied, All over India a network of Local Boards is to be established, with a large preponderance of non-official members. They are to be constituted, wherever it is possible, by popular election. Honorary distinctions are to be given to their members, and the district officers of the Government are, as a rule, to be excluded from them; though these officers are to exercise some sort of external control by way of previous sanction in some cases, and by interference "in the event of gross and continued neglect of any important duty." Now, the first and most important point to be noticed here is the nature of the ground taken up. The measure is not intended to improve the administration of local affairs. An admission that this will not be its first effect, at all events, is made in the most pointed way. Its object is something quite different and much broader. "It is chiefly desirable as an instrument of political education." There may be failures; but—

> "If the officers of Government only set themselves, as the Governor General in Council believes they will, to foster sedulously the small beginnings of independent political life; if they accept loyally and as their own the policy of the Government; and if they come to realize that the system really opens to them a fairer field for the exercise of administrative tact and directive energy than the more autocratic system which it supersedes, then"—

Well, what then? One is led to expect the announcement of some sort of Millennium; but no such thing—"then it may be hoped that the period of failures will be short"—surely a rather meagre conclusion to draw from so laboured an introduction. My Lords, every line of this passage suggests to my mind topics so vast—I may say so momentous—that it would be impossible, in the limited time in which I should be justified in claiming your Lordships' attention, to do justice to any one of them. But I must ask you to remember that this is part of a document addressed by one of the most powerful Governments in the world to, perhaps, 200,000,000 persons accustomed to look up to their Rulers with a reverence and submission of which we in Europe have almost lost the tradition, and to attach an almost superstitious importance to all that is deliberately said to them by the immediate Representative of their Empress. What suggestions must these words convey to every one of those 200,000,000 who can read them, or get them explained to him by others? A change is to be made affecting every one of their daily relations with the ruling Power. The old system to which they are accustomed is to be superseded. A new system, of which they have no experience, is to be established. Business is not to be done as well as formerly; it is, indeed, to be done a good deal worse; but this is in order to attain a great end—an end so great as to be even more important than good administration. And what is that object? "Political and popular education"—not school education, but "political and popular education." "The small beginnings of independent political life" are to be sedulously cherished, and the officers of the Government are instructed to make every effort to "induce the people themselves to undertake the management of their own affairs." I do not press the noble Earl the Secretary of State for India to tell us specifically what these utterances actually mean. I hope they may have been merely well-meant, though ill-judged, rhetoric. But there can be no doubt as to what they will be taken to mean all over India by men of all races and of all classes. There they will be universally understood as the expression of a wish, on the part of the Government of India, to establish throughout India, as early as possible, a system of representative Native government, and as a solemn charge to all Indian officials, from the very highest to the very lowest, to throw themselves heart and soul into this project under pain of the severe displeasure of the Governor General in Council. Now, my Lords, it is, of course, essential that the Viceroy of India should be able not only to give orders, but to compel obedience to his orders; but a Viceroy's power over the prospects and cherished objects of all the authorities under him is so great that he holds most significant and almost menacing language when he tells them officially that they are expected to adopt his views as their own, and that the independent opinion of men necessarily his superiors in Indian experience is regarded by him only as "a theory to which he attaches no great importance." But what gives special significance to this injunction is that the object of it is here officially stated in so many words to be "that the people may be induced to undertake, as far as may be, the management of their own affairs." Will not this be read as meaning—nay, ought it not to be read as meaning—"We, the English Government in India, feel ourselves in a false position, from which we wish to extricate ourselves as quickly as possible? We must, no doubt, hold Office for a certain time in order to train up you Natives to take our places; but this is our only object. As soon as it is accomplished—and the sooner the better—we shall retire and leave India to be governed by whatever Body her Native Representative Assemblies may see fit to entrust with the task of government." This is the plain meaning of the announcement; and, as a matter of fact, it is, I find, the meaning generally, and not unnaturally, attributed to it by the Native Press in India. It may not be, and I trust it has not been, the intention as well as the meaning of it. But in that case the language I have quoted was surely unfortunate and imprudent, for it is calculated to convey a totally false impression as to the real position and purpose of the ruling Power, and to excite expectations incapable of being realized. On the other hand, if the words I have quoted were really and seriously used with this, or with anything like this intention, I apprehend that in so using them the noble Marquess now at the head of the Government of India has so far exceeded the powers conferred upon him by his high Office—an Office in which I do not doubt that he is animated by the most benevolent dispositions and the best possible intentions. But, my Lords, if it is determined to establish popular representative government in India instead of the government already established there by numerous Acts of Parliament, this step ought to be taken only by Parliament itself, on a full consideration of the momentous questions involved in it. It is far too high a matter to be left to the discretion of any Viceroy in Council for the time being. My Lords, of Parliamentary government in general I will say only one thing. I think that we ought to be on our guard against making an idol of it by inferring from its undoubted services to our own country its invariable fitness for all others. Even among ourselves it is not quite an unmixed good. Party is inseparable from it, and Party warfare is not favourable to deliberate political wisdom. On the other hand, of absolute government, as it exists in India, I will also say but one thing. This form of government is as well fitted for India as Parliamentary government is fitted for England, and for the same reasons. It is the natural result of causes which may be traced far back in the history of the country where it exists. It is the form of government to which the Natives of that country have always been accustomed, which they expect, understand, and submit to without the least reluctance, so long as it is well administered; and it has, in fact, been, and is being, administered with as much attention to the interests of those whom it affects, as much purity, and as much success, as any government in the world. If you will but desist from attempting, in the name of political education, to excite against it the dissatisfaction of its Native subjects, it has also as good a chance, if not a better chance, of permanence as any other government in the world. This Resolution observes, with truth, that the Natives of India are "remarkably tolerant of existing facts;" and of all the existing facts, of which they are remarkably tolerant, the British Government, as it stands, is one of the most prominent, the most important, and the most beneficent. Why, then, should the British Government go out of its way to stimulate and stir up—I may almost say to irritate and worry—its Indian subjects into a less tolerant attitude towards it—an attitude of chronic discontent and dissatisfaction, which they would not feel if left alone, and then to embody the discontent thus artificially created in institutions which they do not understand or wish for? I am sorry to say it; but really the only intelligible motive for so extraordinary a policy is a wish to introduce into India by artificial means that restless, dissatisfied, and intolerant spirit, which here in England we call Radicalism. The Resolution says, no doubt, that—

> "As education advances, there is rapidly growing up all over the country an intelligent class of public-spirited men, whom it is not only bad policy, but sheer waste of power, not to utilize."

But, my Lords, the proper way to utilize this intelligent class is not to withdraw them from British supervision, whilst, at the same time, assigning to them unaccustomed tasks in which you actually expect them to make administrative failures, but to employ them in posts where, under official control and guidance, they would themselves form a recognized and honourable part of the established Government. No one who really knows and understands them can doubt that they would infinitely prefer positions of trust and profit in the service of the existing Government to unofficial positions outside of it which would impose upon them much labour and could bring them no profit, unless they yielded to the temptations which would certainly beset them of jobbing and taking bribes. My Lords, I am well aware of the commonplaces about the educational influence of local institutions; but I own I attach as little value to that theory as the Governor General in Council attaches to the opinion of his district officers. I do not believe that any people in the world ever were, or ever will or can be, educated in this manner. The opinion that in England parish vestries have been the great instruments of national political education I believe to be utterly unfounded. Whatever may have been the germs from which, in remote antiquity, the first developments were made towards national unity, all that we now understand by local government was the direct work of Parliament—work performed not for the purpose of politically educating the country, but of getting some part of its business done in the way most congenial to its settled character and habits. Many, indeed, of our local institutions—as, for instance, Municipal Corporations and School Boards—have been simply transfers of large portions of political power from one set of institutions to another. They were the results of the political education which the country had received from the course of events; they were not the authors, they were not the instruments, of that education. The political education given by a Government to the people governed by it must always depend on what the one has to teach and the other to learn. The British Government in India is teaching, and has to teach, a great many other lessons to the people of India than how to raise rates and spend them on objects of local importance. It has to teach, and they have to learn, the very first principles of civilization, order, and prosperity. Great progress has been made in teaching these elementary lessons; and perhaps the greatest, though the least sanguinary, of all physical, intellectual, moral, and religious revolutions ever known in the world has been set going in India by the influence of the English Government. European knowledge is cutting the Native religions into pieces. European law is giving to Native morals a totally new standard. European science is altering nearly every circumstance of Native life; and the peace and order which has been introduced throughout the whole of that vast territory has enormously increased both the population and its means of subsistence. In one point of view, nothing can be better calculated to excite just pride and satisfaction, and no more impressive answer can be given to those who lament or condemn our relations with India than by pointing to these beneficial results of it. But, on the other hand, they suggest most serious reflections. Peace has its miseries and its anxieties no less than war; and when we think of the exuberant population of India, of its vast trade growing with almost fabulous rapidity, of the moral and religious revolution in progress there, I, for one, am obliged to believe that the problems lying at no great distance ahead of us are as much more formidable than those which have been solved by our Predecessors, as a social revolution is more formidable than a foreign war. How are these huge multitudes to be employed, and protected from famine and disease, from themselves, and their own proclivities? These questions are already dimly shaping themselves on the horizon of our power. I do not view the solution of them with fear. I do not doubt that the qualities and resources which have dealt successfully with the simpler and rougher problems of the past will, if they are exerted with undiminished sincerity and vigour, be found able to cope with the more subtle difficulties of the future. But of two things I am firmly convinced. One is that bad administration, even if by good luck it lasts only for a short time, is an evil so overwhelming and gigantic that no speculative advantages—such as political education—can for a moment be set in the balance against it. For what does bad administration mean in India? It means distress and disease and disorder; famine, cholera, and small-pox; the decay of civilization and the revival of barbarism. The other thing of which I am at least equally sure is that in India good administration must come from above. It cannot come from below. The Indian peasant perfectly understands that the Government must keep an Army and establish Courts of Justice; but he does not understand that sanitation and education and road-making are also administrative duties. This is quite a new, and it is even an unintelligible, idea to him. Entrust to his uncontrolled initiative the doing of such duties, and they will remain undone. In India all improvements of this kind have originated with the Government, and for all such purposes the district officers, practically, are the Government. Hence it is, my Lords, that the one condition which in India makes good administration possible, the *articulus stantis aut cadentis imperii*, is the full maintenance of the unimpaired power and authority of the district officers. These officers are both the eyes and the hands of the Government. In time of famine, for instance, the efficiency, the resource, the presence of mind, of a district magistrate may be literally a matter of life or death to thousands upon thousands of human beings. I speak of what I know by my own experience, and have seen with my own eyes. No body of men in the world ever conferred more splendid benefits upon any community than the district officers have conferred upon India. Unless I am utterly mistaken, the part which they will have to play in a time not far distant will be even more important than it has hitherto been. But now, in the most transitional, and, perhaps, the most critical period of our Indian Empire, we learn that the direct action of these officers is to be laid aside. The old "autocratic system"—that is to say, the system they have worked with such magnificent success—is to be superseded. A new system, which excludes their initiative and diminishes their authority, is to be established in its place. I can expect no one who has not personal knowledge of India altogether to understand how ominous these words appear to me. This new system, which is to supersede the direct authority of the district officers, and educate the Natives of India to do eventually without British supervision at all, how is it to be worked? In Bengal, we are told, it is to be worked by the Bengalee peasants, and that smaller class of Bengalees who are described as the educated men. Mr. Macaulay, the Government Secretary entrusted with the exposition of the new policy in the local Legislature, has officially described these two classes. The Bengalee peasant, he says, takes a keen interest in the affairs of his own village and its immediate neighbourhood, but knows and cares nothing about politics or representation, and has no idea of giving his time to the management of the affairs of other people. The educated Bengalees, a class which, as we know, consists of journalists and pleaders, have "political enthusiasm," the precise nature of which is not specifically explained, though I must say that such specimens of it as I have seen in the Native Press or elsewhere do not lead me to admire or trust in. Mr. Macaulay, however, explains that—

> "What we require is to establish a touch between the educated member of the Local Board with political enthusiasm, but without much local knowledge or interest, and the member of the Village Union Committee, with local knowledge and interest, but without political enthusiasm."

I hope I do not lay myself open to the charge of cynical scepticism when I avow that I have no faith at all in either of the two elements which are here indicated as the sources of political education for the people of Bengal. To ascribe to a number of superficially educated Bengalee pleaders or journalists that sort of political enthusiasm which would prompt them to devote themselves, as intellectual missionaries, to the profitless task of leading selfish, ignorant, narrow-minded peasants to recognize by degrees the working of general principles in the detailed administration of the revenues of pounds and ferries, is simply dull romance. It is not, in the most remote degree, founded upon fact. But the most serious thing is the effect which the new system, as it is called, will have upon the district officers. They are told that—

> "The system really opens to them a field fitter for the exercise of administrative tact and directive energy than the more autocratic system which it supersedes."

What does that mean? As matters stand, the magistrates of a district put the law in force through the whole of it; and, having the power to keep their district in proper order, they are held responsible for its being out of order. If, instead of giving the orders which the present law enables them to give, they are to be confined to "administrative tact and directive energy," in other words—as relates to a great part of their functions—to wheedling these independent Local Boards and preaching political sermons to them—they will be placed in an entirely new position, and their work will suffer accordingly. The vigorous magistrate will continually find himself thwarted by the prejudices of ignorant, narrow-minded peasants, set against him by the political enthusiasm of the showy and shallow flatterers, who are to be so carefully stirred into activity. The inefficient magistrates will be only too happy to excuse their own shortcomings by the system of divided responsibility now to be introduced. If cholera prevails, if education languishes, if proper precautions are not taken against famine, an admirable excuse will always be available—it is all the fault of the Local Boards. You will be told that the district officer was so sedulously engaged in fostering the small beginnings of popular political life, and inducing the Natives of his district to take the administration of its affairs into their own hands, that he had neither the time, nor the power, nor the permission to manage those affairs himself. What is worse, the excuse will not merely be always ready, it will be true in fact. The real belief of probably the vast mass of the Indian peasantry is that life is only just worth living, and not by any means worth taking much trouble about; that the evils sent by the unseen Powers ought to be borne with resignation, and that it is certainly extremely troublesome, and probably rather impious, to try to remove them. It must never be forgotten that in India the Government is the improving agency, and its district officers the local channels and instruments of its improving influence. In whatever degree the district officers are reduced from power to persuasion, to that extent there will be impediment, delay, and paralysis in the application of all the means by which the lives of the enormous multitudes called into existence by our policy can be made tolerably comfortable. My Lords, I will say no more about this Resolution, except that there are some statements in it with which I am happy to say I feel able to agree. I fully assent to what is said in it as to the arduous nature of the duties of the district officers, and the importance of relieving them from part of their work. Local institutions, worked by Natives, are no novelty in India; and so long as they are auxiliary to the authority of the district officers, and not a substitute for it, I see no harm in their extension. I now pass to another subject closely related to the one I have thus far been considering. I refer to the Bill for the amendment of the Indian Code of Criminal Procedure. It has already excited so much discussion, both in India and in England, that I need not go into the details of it at length. I will only remind your Lordships of the leading points. The Company's Courts, so-called, were originally instituted for the administration of criminal justice among the Natives of India according to Native, and especially according to Mahomedan, law. The King's Courts were established for the administration of criminal justice according to the law of England in the Presidency towns. Their jurisdiction covered all persons and cases in which Europeans were accused throughout the Presidencies where they are situated. The Criminal Law itself was made uniform for all persons by the Penal Code of 1861. The Criminal Courts continued to be, and still are, different according to the race of the accused person. At one time it was considered, and no doubt was, a great scandal, that practical impunity was secured to European criminals in many parts of the country by the circumstance that no Courts had jurisdiction over them except those of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay. To some extent this grievance was remedied by giving criminal jurisdiction over Europeans to the High Court at Agra, now removed to Allahabad, and to the Chief Court of the Punjab. A larger step in the same direction was taken in 1872, upon the re-enactment of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Jurisdiction over Europeans for all minor offences was then given to Sessions Judges and magistrates of the first class being themselves European British subjects. This change was not objected to by the European population. It worked perfectly well for 10 years; and when, a year ago—namely, in March, 1882—the Code of Criminal

Procedure was re-enacted for the third time, with certain alterations suggested by experience, no alteration was made in this part of its provisions, though they had been the subject of a good deal of discussion in 1872. There was literally only one person who had any observations to make upon the subject. This was a Bengal civilian, Mr. Gupta. He suggested that jurisdiction over European British subjects ought no longer to be confined to Judges and magistrates who were themselves European British subjects. My honourable and esteemed friend, Sir Ashley Eden, then Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, transmitted this note to the Government of India with an expression of his own agreement with it. But he did not do this till the Code of Criminal Procedure had passed; and as he is not alleged to have made any suggestion on the subject while the Code was under consideration, though his opinion must then, according to the usual course of Indian legislation, have been asked and given, the Government of India might well, I think, have let the matter rest. My Lords, having mentioned the name of Sir Ashley Eden, I cannot refrain from expressing my surprise at the imputation apparently cast upon that able and experienced officer, in a recent speech by Lord Ripon, of having gratuitously and carelessly thrust upon the Government of India unavoidable obligations in regard to this measure, without warning them of its probable unpopularity. It is undoubtedly true that Sir Ashley Eden recommended the careful consideration of Mr. Gupta's suggestion "on some future occasion, if a fitting opportunity occurred." But I believe, in the first place, that his action, so far from being gratuitous, was the result of communications previously made to him on behalf of the Government itself; and, in the next place, that he had the best reasons for believing Lord Ripon to be fully aware of the extreme delicacy of interference with the privileges of Europeans in India; while, on the other hand, he had no reason whatever to suppose that the Government of India would deem it either fitting or opportune to push forward this Bill immediately on the back of those other and more sweeping measures to which I have already referred, and which had already laid in the mind of the European community long trains of suspicion, alarm, and resentment, peculiarly inflammable by such a spark as this. But, be that as it may, my Lords, it is surely an unusual course for a Viceroy of India to throw the blame of unpopular measures upon his subordinates, however distinguished those subordinates may be. It seems, however, that the Government of India, for reasons of their own, resolved to take the matter up, not on some future and more fitting occasion, but at once. And they submitted it for opinion to the various Local Governments, with a strong indication of their own views. The Local Governments thus appealed to acquiesced; and to the introduction of the Bill the assent of the Secretary of State for India was then given, also in strong terms—terms which I think unfortunate, apart from the merits of the question, because they may, perhaps, be regarded as putting some difficulty in the way of the noble Earl the present Secretary of State, when he has to consider the degree of importance to be attached to the feelings since then expressed by the European community upon the subject. My Lords, I admit that if this subject is looked at exclusively from the official point of view, and with reference to no feelings but those of the Native civilians, the proposed change would, so far as it goes, be a proper one. It would render the functions of the judicial officers in India slightly more symmetrical in one particular. It would, no doubt, be satisfactory to a natural feeling on the part of Mr. Gupta, and perhaps of some few other persons similarly situated. From this point of view, the only objection to the change is that it strains at a gnat and leaves camels to be swallowed. If it is an anomaly that Mr. Gupta should not be able to try a European at all, it is surely as great, perhaps even a greater anomaly, that he will not be able to sentence him to more than a year's imprisonment, when he can sentence a Native to death. But to look solely at the feelings of the Judge in matters of this sort is, I think, to look at them from a totally wrong point of view. The important person in such matters is not the Judge, but the prisoner. My Lords, in these days, when everything is liable to alteration, it may possibly happen that some day your

Lordships' right to be tried by your Peers may, perhaps, be challenged. But when that happens — if it ever does happen—I venture to think that those who might then object to that right as an anomaly would scarcely be wise in resting their case upon a picture of one of the Judges of the High Court, writhing under the humiliation of being forbidden to try a Peer of the Realm for picking a pocket. Yet this, or something like this, is the sole reason given for a measure which has produced in India a state of feeling among the European population of which I do not think the importance can be overrated. I am bound to say that on one point the importance of the measure itself does not appear to me overrated by those who are now protesting against it. I am not surprised that Englishmen and women, living in a country where false charges, supported by artful perjury, are the commonest means of annoyance, intimidation, and extortion, and where they occupy a position necessarily isolated and necessarily invidious, should attach importance to a trial before a Judge who knows their language and understands their feelings and sentiments—an importance which may appear excessive to those who have not their experience on the subject. But that is not the point of view from which I wish to direct your Lordships' attention to this unhappy measure, which, for no adequate reason, has given bitter and deep offence to the whole European community in India, and especially to the unofficial portion of it. What has made the most impression on my mind is this —that in whatever degree it may be proved that the present complaints of the Europeans are extravagant and excessive, in that same degree does it follow that the violence of their language and the depth of their feelings must be ascribed to some other and more far-reaching cause. And, my Lords, I fear that cause is clearly indicated in the strength of their impression—an impression which has become at last irresistible—that the new policy illustrated by the Resolution I have already discussed —a policy by which for the last 12 months the present Government of India has been endeavouring to alter fundamentally the political status of the Native population, and their relation both to the ruling Power and the ruling race —is a policy unfavourable to their interest as Europeans, indifferent to their sentiments, and calculated to mortify, to humiliate, and to depress them. My Lords, India is the last place in the world where matters of feeling, or questions affecting the privileges and sentiments of races, ought to be disregarded. To order cartridges to be greased may be a little thing; but we know by experience it may have considerable consequences. The non-official Europeans in India are, as a class, inferior in importance only to the official and military Europeans. The only way of solving the prodigious problems to which I have alluded as arising from the immense growth of population consequent upon peace and good administration is by the growth of commerce and agriculture—that is to say, by the application of capital to enterprize and industry. The capital with which this is to be done is almost entirely English. The persons by whom its application is actually managed are also almost entirely English. For the Government of India to be on bad terms with, or to be distrusted by, the unofficial Europeans in India is like a quarrel in business between partners whose interests are identical, and who are bound together by the strongest ties of self-preservation. Unwelcome as the fact may be to certain theorists, it is a fact which asserts itself at every turn that the men who are now rapidly enriching India by the cultivation of tea, coffee, indigo, and cinchona, by the manufacture of jute, the working of mines, and the construction of railroads, are not the equals, but the superiors, of the races benefited by their capital, and governed by their countrymen. And it is another fact of equal importance that this inequality is recognized by the Natives of India as a just, a natural, and a necessary inequality. In that land of castes, divided races, and conflicting creeds, the dominant caste of White men excites, as such, probably less opposition and active dislike than any other. The political equality, which is the aim and the boast of European democracy, is not only unknown to the Natives of India, but it is repugnant to their feelings, and condemned by their religious authorities. The whole organization of Native Indian life is based on inequality. Our own Government of India is also founded on a wise recognition of this inevitable inequality. If you now place it on any other foundation, or administer it by any other principle, you may be certain that, as soon as your new system begins to bear fruit, the unofficial Europeans will leave India, and take their capital out of the country. Indeed, I noticed the other day a letter in a well-known paper, *The Pall Mall Gazette*, a letter from a gentleman who, disliking the indigo planters, expressed his hope that this Bill may become law, because he feels sure that in that case it will have the effect of driving them out of Bengal. The guarantee which our countrymen in India demand, and legitimately demand, for safety of their lives, their property, and their personal liberty is, that the country should be ruled by English people, and they themselves be governed by English law, administered in the main by English Judges. My Lords, I cannot too earnestly urge the impolicy, the folly, the danger—I might say the madness—of needlessly provoking the public discussion of these bitter and burning topics. Although, as the Governor General observes, the Natives of India are singularly tolerant of existing facts, they are quite capable of being lashed into fury against the Europeans; and although the Europeans are, as a rule, more or less indifferent to measures which do not immediately and directly affect their position, they are, as the present agitation shows, passionately, if not in every respect reasonably, attached to their privileges. Surely, in these circumstances, the removal of grievances which nobody feels, or anomalies which nobody perceives, is not a fit occupation for Indian statesmen. I do not say that the state of things I have described is an ideal one. There is much in it that is invidious. But it is the state of things you have to deal with in India; and the only practical question is—"What is the best way of dealing with it?" My Lords, there are two ways. One of them is to endeavour to place the Europeans and Natives on a footing of absolute equality by abolishing all laws and privileges that recognize any distinction between them. The other is to take things as they are in good part. To punish any proved act of injustice, and redress any serious practical grievance, if such a grievance can be shown to exist. But to avoid all language, and abstain from all action, likely to force into prominence inequalities you cannot remove. The first of these two policies appears to me unwise to an extent I will not venture to characterize. The second is, I think, commended to our common sense by the mere statement of it. And if I am asked what I should admit to be a serious practical grievance, I point at once to the grievance which, in this very matter, was removed by the Indian legislation of 1872, without any resentment on the part of those who were affected by the removal of it. Again, if you ask me what I mean by a proved act of injustice, I will take an illustration from my own recollections. I remember, my Lords, that the first instance in which I myself incurred considerable unpopularity in India was a case in which it appeared to me that the provisions of the law as they stood had not been employed as fully as they might have been, and as I thought they ought to have been, for the punishment of a European who had caused the death of a Native. But, except in very rare instances of this kind, when there is, at least, a strong *primâ facie* ground for believing that there has been a miscarriage of justice, I think you cannot too carefully avoid occasions of provoking, in India, the discussion of topics that tend to inflame the passions of separate races. And the fault I do impute to the present Government of India is that it has, on numerous occasions, used language, and that, in all matters affecting the future relations between Natives and Europeans, it has adopted and proclaimed with great parade a policy, certain soon or late to provoke, as it has provoked, and is still provoking, a most passionate discussion of such topics; a discussion in which I am afraid much has already been said on both sides that will not soon be forgotten upon either. My Lords, one last word upon this question of anomalies, and I have done. Anomalies are inseparable from our presence in India. When you have made all the alterations now proposed in the privileges and the rights of Europeans in India, their position there in relation to judicial matters will still be as anomalous as it is in China and Japan, in Turkey and Egypt. But if anyone believes that our position in India was acquired, and can only be maintained, by disregard of the elementary principles of morals, to such a person all our Indian institutions must, no doubt, present themselves in the light of revolting anomalies. To those who hold this view of our great Indian enterprize I have only one word to say—Leave it alone. A system which you regard as founded upon fraud and maintained by oppression can never come to good in your hands. You are attempting an impossible task. Imitate the honourable example of Mr. Bright, who once, I believe, declined the Secretaryship of State for India, because he could not place himself at the head of a military enterprize. I do not suppose, and I do not wish to imply, that views of this kind, which are openly avowed by Mr. Bright, but which could not be openly avowed with impunity by persons actually engaged in the government of India, are now being secretly harboured by such persons, with the intention of carrying them out in disguise, through measures introduced as inaugurations of a great political principle, and then explained away as mere removals of insignificant administrative anomalies. But, for that very reason, I am convinced that the authors of this unfortunate Bill cannot be indifferent to the alarm, amounting to panic, which it has caused. The measure involves no general principle which can be generally applied; it is not intended to redress any serious grievances; nor does it remove any anomaly deserving of serious notice. It is officially described as a small measure. But, my Lords, the alarm and resentment provoked by it are by no means small. If it was not intended to provoke them, is it worth while to prolong and increase them? Would it not be the part of wise and firm men—men strong and just enough to acknowledge a venial error — were the authors of this Bill now to say frankly—"Since you, the un-official Europeans, attach such unexpected importance to a privilege not considered important by us, it shall never be said that the Government of India preferred the introduction of Party spirit into India, and the stirring up of bitter feelings between its Native and European subjects, to the abandonment of a measure not intended to produce any great results, and the reconsideration of a policy which seems likely to produce results very much greater and graver than any which were originally contemplated in the adoption of it?"

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I do not in the slightest degree complain of the noble Earl, either on account of the tone in which he has treated an important subject, or for having taken an opportunity to bring it before the House. I entirely agree with him as to the great importance of our giving our attention to the policy that is being pursued in India, and also as to the great interest of the topics to which attention has been called; and I most fully agree with him as to the necessity for caution in dealing with that vast Empire. All I wish is that the task of defending the policy of my noble Friend (the Marquess of Ripon) was in the hands of one who had had greater experience of Indian affairs, and who could speak with greater authority than I can command. I shall have to trespass for some little time upon your Lordships' attention, because it will be my duty to answer the noble Earl in some detail. I will refer to the two subjects of local self-government and the Criminal Procedure Bill. With regard to the measure for local self-government in India, I cannot help thinking that the noble Earl, fastening upon three or four words of this Resolution in May last of the Government of India, has conjured up to his own view, and that of your Lordships, a bugbear which does not exist. The noble Earl has told us that he apprehends that the Government of India contemplates the introduction of representative and Parliamentary institutions into India. If any such thing were contemplated, I should not be surprised at the noble Earl's alarm. But if the Government of India contemplated taking steps for the introduction of such a change, they would not think of doing so without first obtaining the consent of Her Majesty's Government and of Parliament. I may say, however, that no such intention exists in the mind of my noble Friend (the Marquess of Ripon). Look at the words in the Resolution which have so frightened the noble Earl. The Resolution says that the measure is chiefly desirable as "an instrument of political education;" and the officers of the Government are bade "to foster sedulously the small beginnings of independent political life." In one sense every local institution which is to be worked by itself is a beginning of political life.

Everything, however small, is political, and in that sense it would be impossible to give the Natives any share whatever in government without making a beginning, as regards them, of political local life. But the assertion that this is but a step to pave the way to the introduction of Parliamentary institutions is one that I most emphatically deny, and is a construction of his words which my noble Friend never intended them to bear. I now come to what I perfectly admit is a most important policy, as shadowed forth in this Resolution. I hold that in dealing with an Empire such as India, perhaps one of the most important principles to be observed is not suddenly to introduce some entirely new policy, but to build carefully upon old foundations; and if I can show, as I think I can, that the Viceroy in this policy is merely following upon the steps of his Predecessors, and building upon foundations they have laid, I can somewhat calm the fears of the noble Earl. Let me first refer to the previous movements in this direction. I have here an interesting extract from a Resolution passed by the Government presided over by Lord Lawrence, who I do not suppose will be considered a person likely to take any rash or ill-considered views. On the 31st of August, 1864, the Resolution from which the following extract is taken was passed by the Government of India:—

> "One of the greatest advantages of this mode of providing for the police of towns is that it renders necessary the creation of a Municipality and a municipal fund; and although the application of this fund is obligatory to the extent of the cost of the police, beyond that limit its appropriation to Conservancy improvement, education, &c., is at the discretion of the municipal authorities. Great public benefit is to be expected from the firm establishment of a system of municipal administration in India. Neither the Central Government nor the Local Governments are capable of providing either the funds or the executive agency for making the improvements of various kinds in all the cities and towns of India which are demanded by the rapidly developing wealth of the country. The people of India are quite capable of administering their own affairs. The municipal feeling is deeply rooted in them. The village communities, each of which is a little republic, are the most abiding of Indian institutions. Holding the position we do in India, every view of duty and policy should induce us to leave as much as possible of the business of the country to be done by the people."

This Resolution is signed by Lord Lawrence, a man who, above all others, was distinguished for his knowledge of India and of the Indian Races; and does the noble Earl suppose that he would have been guilty of the extreme indiscretion now attributed to Lord Ripon's Resolution of publishing to the people of India that they were quite capable of governing themselves? But it was Lord Lawrence's opinion that it was our duty to leave as much as possible of the business of the country to be done by the people themselves. This policy is also in accordance with the view taken by Lord William Bentinck and Lord Auckland, and Lord Canning attempted to give effect to it in 1861 and 1862. Their words go just as far as the Resolution of the present Viceroy, which has been so much censured. Then I have another quotation to make which contains the opinions of a Viceroy whom, I am sure, the noble Earl must look upon with respect. Lord Mayo, who was one of the best Governor Generals who ever ruled India, and who, when establishing the system of allotting to the Provincial Government certain sums from the Imperial Revenue, took the first steps which led to the foundation of the existing system of municipal administration, said, in a despatch written on December 14, 1870, that the operation of the Resolution passed by his Government would afford opportunities for the development of self-government, and for strengthening municipal institutions, and associating Europeans and Natives in the administration of affairs. He added that he was aware of the difficulties of carrying such a scheme into operation, and was prepared for partial failures; but the object being "the instruction of many people and races in a good system of administration," he felt that the Local Governments and all their subordinates would endeavour to enlist the sympathies and co-operation of many classes which had hitherto taken no part in the administration of public affairs. Anyone who will read the Resolution of the present Viceroy, and compare it with the Resolutions of Lord Lawrence and Lord Mayo, will find that the Resolution of my noble Friend, as regards principle, is but a repetition of the principle already recognized by those Viceroys. I do not understand how anyone can shut his eyes to the fact that the policy which my noble Friend is pursuing is the old settled policy of many Viceroys, and that the principles which he has brought forward are the principles which have been entertained by the Government of India for many years. But my noble Friend, in acting as he has done, has acted not merely with the view of educating the people of India. There was also a practical reason for the course he took. Bear in mind these words which occur in his Resolution—

> "The task of administration is yearly becoming more onerous as the country progresses in civilization and material prosperity. The annual Reports of every Government tell of an ever-increasing burden laid upon the shoulders of the local officers. The cry is everywhere for increased establishments. The universal complaint in all Departments is that of overwork. Under these circumstances, it becomes imperatively necessary to look around for some means of relief; and the Governor General in Council has no hesitation in stating his conviction that the only reasonable plan is to induce the people themselves to undertake, as far as may be, the management of their own affairs."

The noble Earl said a great deal about the loss of position which, according to him, will be suffered by the district officers; but the very essence of the present scheme is to give assistance to these officers, and there is no intention to set them aside. I entirely agree that the district officers should have very considerable responsibility still as to the local work of their districts. It will be their duty to review the action of the Local Bodies, to check them when they are going wrong, and to insist that the work should be done. It would, of course, be a very unwise policy to determine to hand over the whole local administration of the country to Bodies which are yet untried. The noble Earl said that the Marquess of Ripon attached no importance to the value of the opinion of the local officers. But, as a matter of fact, nothing could have exceeded the caution of my noble Friend the Governor General; and, as the noble Earl will see, when the Papers which he apparently could not wait for are made public, his first step was to discuss the proposed change with the local officers themselves. Among the well-known names of Indian officials who have stated their approval of the principle of the proposal are Sir Ashley Eden; Mr. Rivers Thompson; Lieutenant Governor of Bengal; Sir Charles Aitchison, of the Punjaub; Sir Alfred Lyall, of the North-West Provinces; Mr. Morris, the Administrator of the Central Provinces; and Mr. Bernard, the Chief Commissioner of Burmah. Here are six of the most distinguished men in India, who, though, no doubt, holding different opinions as to the details of the measure, have yet pledged themselves to the principle of an extension of local government. But the noble Earl himself has said to-day that he is in favour of a cautious and wise extension of local institutions, provided that they are co-operative and auxiliary, and not independent of the Government. We propose nothing further. It is precisely what we are doing. To show that the Government in India is conscious of the necessity of keeping in view the circumstances of each district, I may state that instructions are given that each particular Province and district shall have such institutions as are best adapted to its condition. The noble Earl's view seemed to be that there are two conflicting and contending policies—the one the Democratic, the other the Autocratic—and he seems to think we mean to set aside the Autocratic form. If he means that the Government should be entirely Autocratic, I think that would be as unsafe in India as elsewhere. I repeat that there is no intention to change the Government of India into a Representative Government. The policy which is being pursued is one, the principle of which has been followed for years past, of admitting the Natives more and more to a share in the administration of the affairs of their country. Ever since the Mutiny, successive Governments, successive Secretaries of State, and successive Viceroys have introduced more and more the Natives of India into the management, not only of small village affairs, but of offices and very important functions of all kinds in the Empire. Surely you cannot build from the top and have no basis. Are you to bring together the most able men at the summit of your Government and make no use whatever of those humbler members of the community who might assist you? I am, I may assure your Lordships, in favour of cautious advance, whether in this or in any other matter; and I believe the Marquess of Ripon also to contemplate a wise and cautious advance upon the lines already laid down. I believe he is taking this step at a moment when a fresh step is demanded;

and I feel confident he will obtain the support of Parliament in the course he is pursuing, as he will receive the cordial and continual support of Her Majesty's Government. The next subject to which the noble Earl referred was the Criminal Procedure Bill; and I think it is to be lamented that this measure has evoked such a strong feeling among the European population in India—fears which I think are unfounded. To explain this matter it is necessary to state what the nature of the measure is, because there has certainly been a great deal of exaggeration connected with it. The peculiarity of this Bill is that it gives jurisdiction to Natives, and I am not to be understood as forgetting that in the observations I am about to make; but what I desire to show your Lordships is that the Government of India have not suddenly adopted some new course, but that they have really been acting in accordance with views held by previous Governments. Your Lordships are, no doubt, aware that there was a time when Europeans in both civil and criminal matters were subject only to the High Courts; but in 1836, for the first time, they were made subject, as regards civil actions, to the Companies' Courts. I mention this, because it bears on the matter so far as excitement on the part of the Europeans is concerned. Your Lordships must be familiar with the account of what then took place in the well-known *Life of Lord Macaulay*. The alarm and excitement were then great; it was said that perjury and false accusation would prevail; that no man's property would be safe, and that it would be impossible for Europeans to remain in the country. However, the Act was passed; the Courts have ever since administered justice in civil causes to Europeans as well as Natives, and no one now thinks of complaining. As long since as 1849, when Lord Dalhousie was Governor General, a Bill was brought forward to entirely abolish the exemption of Europeans from the criminal jurisdiction of magistrates in the Provinces, and it did not provide that all the magistrates exercising jurisdiction over Europeans should be Europeans. But it did not pass, because, on its being sent home, it was suggested that it would be well to postpone for a time such a considerable change. The next step was, in 1856, to refer the whole subject of Indian Law to a Commission to consider the reform of judicial establishments in India. That Commission consisted of Lord Romilly, Sir John Jervis, Sir Edward Ryan, Sir John Macleod, Mr. Cameron, and Mr. T. F. Ellis; and they reported as follows:—

> "We assume that the special privileges now enjoyed by British subjects are to be abolished; and we, therefore, make no provision for such exceptional cases. In the system which we propose, all classes of the community will be equally amenable to the Criminal Courts of the country."

In consequence of that Report a Bill was introduced by Lord Canning, in 1857, bringing Europeans under the jurisdiction of the magistrates, including Native magistrates; but, the Mutiny shortly after breaking out, it was not proceeded with. But this question of the reform of Indian Law was resumed as soon as quiet was restored. In 1860 the Indian Penal Code was passed. In 1870 the Indian Law Commissioners made another Report. At this time they were Lord Romilly. Lord Sherbrooke, Sir John Macleod, Sir Edward Ryan, Sir Robert Lush, and Sir W. M. James. They reported—

> "We concur with the Commission which prepared the Code in thinking it desirable that a general and uniform system of Criminal Procedure should be applied to persons of all classes without distinction, and we regret that greater progress has not been made in giving effect to this principle."

A measure was introduced in accordance with that Report; but it was amended, and the exemption of Europeans from the jurisdiction of Native magistrates was maintained. In 1872 the matter came up again. The Criminal Procedure Act was then brought under consideration, and this particular point was discussed at the time. It is a remarkable fact that, there being a division of opinion in the Indian Council on the subject, it was resolved by a narrow majority that Europeans should not be under the jurisdiction of Natives. The Members voting in the minority were Lord Napier of Merchistoun, then acting as Viceroy, Lord Napier of Magdala, Sir George Campbell, Sir Richard Temple, and Sir Barrow Ellis, who moved the Amendment. I should mention that in 1857, also, as now again, there was great agitation among the Europeans against the proposal; and that agitation showed itself in a similar way in 1865, when it was proposed that Grand Juries should be abolished in the Presidential towns. The alarm of the Europeans then was extreme; and to show your Lordships how frightened they were I will read to you a short extract from a Circular issued by a landowners' association at that time. The Circular said—

> "On the abolition of Grand Juries there would be no protection to gentlemen from being accused of crimes of which they were entirely innocent whenever the local magistrate was supposed to be inclined to believe in such charges, and of being put upon their trial whenever a credulous or prejudiced magistrate would be found."

At a public meeting held in Calcutta very strong language was used. One speaker regarded the abolition of Grand Juries as—

> "The thin end of the wedge, which threatened to bring down and destroy the whole fabric of our Constitution."

I wish to speak with every respect of the Europeans in India; but on every occasion when any diminution of their privileges has been proposed they have been in the same state of excitement; and what is far more important is this—that the consequences which they so confidently predicted on these various occasions must follow from the changes made have not followed in any one case. That re-assures me, and makes me hope that when this Bill passes into law it will prove as innocuous as have the previous measures to which I have alluded. Your Lordships are aware that the policy of opening the Civil Service to Natives has been carried out to a large extent recently. It has long been desired that the intention expressed by Her Majesty in Her Proclamation should not be made a mere intention, but should be carried into effect to a considerable extent; but it is obvious, for various reasons, that the number of the Natives entering the Service of India through the ordinary channel of competition in England must be very small. In order to counteract that, rules were made, by which it was provided that one-fifth of the number appointed by the Secretary of State to the Covenanted Service of India shall every year be appointed by the Viceroy from among the Natives of India; the consequence of which is that at least one-sixth of the number yearly appointed are, under these rules, which were made under the Government of the noble Earl (the Earl of Lytton), necessarily Natives. Now, it is quite obvious that, under these circumstances, we must look forward to an increasing number of Natives holding high posts in India, and to see every year more and more of them appointed. I wish upon this subject to quote one authority, and one only. In the despatch of the noble Viscount (Viscount Cranbrook), dated the 7th of November, 1878, he says—

> "The class of appointments for which Natives will be most eminently fitted is, no doubt, the judicial; but in exceptional cases I can well understand that a Native of high executive capacity may be usefully selected for an administrative office."

It is quite clear, then, that these rules specially contemplated the extension of judicial offices to the Natives of India; and, therefore, as one-sixth every year of the officers of the Civil Service are to be Natives of India, besides those who obtain entrance to it through the examination here, a considerable number of the magistrates must eventually be Natives. Now, I ask your Lordships whether the Government of India were so very rash in considering whether or not the time had come to make a change, when throughout the country there will, before long, be a very considerable number of Natives holding judicial offices? I know it may be said—Why cause this great disturbance about so small a matter? But I think it proves the wisdom of the Government, and is a proof of their caution. What they said was—" We see what is going on; we know what must take place; let us, therefore, try this experiment in good time." Well, my Lords, that is one of the practical reasons which have weighed with my noble Friend in dealing with this subject. The Viceroy took the very proper course of consulting various Local Governments; and, upon the whole, there was a very decided consensus of opinion on their part that the change was desirable. They differed somewhat in detail; but in principle they were agreed. Lord Ripon has, I believe, been supposed in some quarters to have endeavoured unduly to shift the responsibility for what has occurred on others, and specially on Sir Ashley Eden, the late Lieutenant Governor of Bengal; but the Viceroy's argument amounted only to this—" If I am blamed for not having foreseen that this storm would arise, at all events other gentlemen well acquainted with the people of India made the same mistake." That is not an unfair argument; in fact, he says —"I simply swim in the same boat with Sir Ashley Eden;" and, my Lords, I think Sir Ashley Eden may fairly be quoted in favour of the measure. My noble Friend omitted to read the last paragraph of the letter of the 20th of March, 1882, from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal. Now, it is as follows:—

> "For these reasons, Sir Ashley Eden is of opinion that the time has now arrived when all Native members of the Covenanted Civil Service should be relieved of such restrictions of their powers as are imposed on them by chap. 33 of the new Criminal Code of Procedure, or when, at least, Native covenanted civilians, who have attained the position of district magistrate or Sessions Judge, should have intrusted to them full powers over all classes, whether European or Native, within their jurisdictions."

What the Bill does is this—it gives four classes of magistrates jurisdiction over Europeans in the Provinces, such magistrates being possibly Natives. The first are the Sessions Judges, who are officers holding sessions in each large district. The next are the district magistrates, who are also officers of great importance. The others are the Assistant Commissioners in non-regulation Provinces, and the cantonment magistrates being magistrates of the first class. As regards the Sessions Judges and district magistrates, there is a general consensus of opinion that they ought to be intrusted with this jurisdiction, though it has not been so with regard to the other two. Now, then, let us see the amount of their jurisdiction. The Sessions Judge, as regards a European, may sentence him to imprisonment not exceeding one year, or inflict a fine, or both. The magistrate may inflict imprisonment not exceeding three months, or fine up to 1,000 rupees, or both. This being the limitation of their powers, what are the safeguards? In the first place, there is an appeal to the Sessions Court from the magistrates, and there is an appeal from that to the High Court. By the Criminal Procedure Code, 1882, the High Court has practically unlimited power of interference with magistrates' decisions—(1) Section 435 of the Code authorizes the High Court to—

> "Call for and examine the record of any proceedings before any inferior Criminal Court;"

(2) Section 437 gives the High Court power, on examining any record, under Section 437, to order a further inquiry to be made; (3) Section 439 enables the High Court—

> "In the case of any proceeding the record of which has been called for by itself, or which has been reported for orders, or which otherwise comes to its knowledge,"

to exercise any of the usual powers of a Court of Appeal—namely, (*a*) it may reverse the finding and sentence; (*b*) it may alter the finding, maintaining the sentence; (*c*) it may, with or without altering the finding, reduce the sentence; or (*d*) it may alter the nature of the sentence. A further special provision authorizes the High Court to enhance the sentence. Then, consider how the whole circumstances of the country are now changed. In introducing these reforms we are only adapting ourselves to the times. Formerly things might be done in the mofussil, as it is called, which the Government did not hear of for many weeks. Now we have railways and telegraphs, and a Press which certainly is not deficient in criticizing official acts; and with all this machinery it is impossible to suppose that anything would be done by a Native Judge which would not shortly be reported to the Government if it aroused the jealousy of the European portion of the population. Such a state of things affords the best guarantee that justice will be done. But I do not say that this alone would justify us in conferring jurisdiction on the Natives. The question is, whether they will exercise that jurisdiction wisely? Now, Natives have exercised jurisdiction over Europeans for many years past, and have sat in the highest Courts of Justice. The present Advocate General to the Government of India is an Armenian Native of India; and a short time ago a Brahmin, whose name I will not venture to read to the House, was standing counsel to the Government, his duty being to conduct prosecutions against Europeans. The noble Earl said, no doubt, that this Criminal Procedure Bill must be read by the light of the local government policy; and he thought that the proposal to extend the jurisdiction of the Natives would not otherwise have attracted so great an amount of attention. This may be so; there may be in the mind of the Europeans a feeling that there is too great a desire on the part of the authorities to extend the privileges of the Natives. It is a question, and a high question, of policy; and it is natural that the Europeans should be jealous. But has it not been our intention, for many years past, to give the Natives a higher position; and does not that necessarily, to some extent, lessen the privileges of the Europeans? I do not hesitate to say that this is a necessity arising from our policy. I believe it to be for the ultimate safety and security that there should be a gradual introduction of Natives into our Service; and I should dread to see this country lay down the rule that we would abide by a high autocratic policy, ruling by the sword alone, rather than by conciliating and obtaining the good wishes of the Natives. That is the spirit in which the Viceroy of India has addressed himself to these questions; and I believe it is a policy which will not diminish, but strengthen, our rule in India.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: The noble Earl who has just addressed your Lordships has shown, by his able speech, that there was no occasion to apologize for the short period of his acquaintance with Indian affairs; but I think the noble Earl, in diminishing the scope and effect of the policy of the Government of India, has taken a different view of it from that taken by the Governor General himself in the first instance. As a despatch of mine has been adverted to, I will not take first the question of local self-government, but begin with the measure upon which the noble Earl spoke last. I have ever been, and am, most anxious that considerations of Party should not enter into Indian discussions, but that every subject connected with India should be kept clear from Party lines, and should be treated upon its own merits. I think also, as I have expressed in the despatch, that we should avail ourselves of all the knowledge of those educated Natives of India, and of their services in places adapted to them. I have always, since the time when I first took an interest in Indian affairs, been of the opinion of Sir Stafford Northcote, Canning, and many others—that it was an essential part of our system to employ the most trustworthy Natives, and employ them largely; and, indeed, it would be impossible that we should be able to govern a people of 200,000,000 without so employing them, and I am just as anxious now as I was at the date of the despatch referred to that it should be so. But with reference to Executive appointments, the noble Earl will see that I laid down a different rule. While asserting their fitness for judicial work, I distinctly said I was not prepared to extend those to them, because difficulties might be raised by their coming into collision, as superiors, with Europeans. Sir Ashley Eden has been cited here, and in India, as a strong advocate for Mr. Ilbert's Bill; but he limited himself to the Covenanted Civil servants, in recommending the appointment of Natives who had risen to a certain position to the posts in question; he was leaving India, and left the Government there the duty of testing unofficial opinion, and selecting a suitable time. But with regard to the measure itself, a peculiar course seems to have been taken by the Governor General in the recent discussion upon it. Everyone seemed disposed to rid himself of the responsibility of its initiation, and there was a general inclination on the part of everyone present to relieve himself of the odium of having been the person to introduce it. Mr. Ilbert, the Legal Adviser to the Government, said it was most unlikely that he, who had so recently come to India, and necessarily knew so little of those affected, should have proposed the measure; and the Governor General did not seem to like the notion that he had suggested it; or, from a generous disinterestedness, threw upon Sir Ashley Eden the suggestion, and upon Sir Alfred Lyall the formation, of this great, but by no means popular, measure. And here I may point out certain disadvantages of a system which sends out a legal Member of Council, fresh from England, naturally desirous to connect his name with new legislation, though I am far from the opinion that such Members have not done most efficient service. Still, the means being by, to do ill deeds makes ill deeds done; while the Governor General may too often have reason to say, like King John to Hubert——"Hads't not thou been by, this measure ne'er had come into my mind." In this way the Legal Adviser, inexperienced and new, is the instrument of hastily bringing in measures which are as hastily withdrawn. But we are told that the step taken is logical and inevitable. If we are to govern India according to the principles of logic, and take one step after another in accordance with them, the Europeans may well show that alarm which the noble Earl seems to make so light of. Suppose we were to apply those principles to the Army or the Executive Government of India, and say that because the Natives have filled adequately subordinate posts, therefore we are to imply that they are qualified to act independently of the Government without being controlled by them. That is the whole matter at issue. You are proposing to give them a jurisdiction which they never had hitherto, and a position which, if founded on the ground of logical progress, will carry them very much further than this Bill. In all the resolutions of the Indian Government, I find the statement that the time has arrived for these changes; and I want to know what there is to show that the time has arrived when every one of these disturbing measures is to be put into execution, and why? According to the admissions of the Government of India, there was no demand for this Criminal Procedure Amendment Bill on the part of the people, or on the part of anyone, but Mr. Gupta. Therefore you have this—that after 10 years of deliberate sanction to this particular exemption, and submission to it by both Europeans and Natives, when there was not a single grievance alleged, and nothing to show that everything was not working as it should be, you take this time for stirring up this question and raising these animosities. Indeed, the authorities put before us give but a faint idea of the kind of feeling in India on this subject. Those who have seen the letters from every part of India must be convinced how real and genuine is the feeling against the Bill. Nor is it doubtful that it has elements of permanence which former agitations had not. Look at the language of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal upon this point, and add to it the large subscription, it is said of £30,000, to give duration to the opposition of the European community. Mr. Rivers Thompson gives the solemn warning—

> "I should be wanting in my duty, if I failed to press upon the Government that I hope that in their abstention from any personal contact with public feeling, they will not allow themselves to think that the calm, which I trust will supervene, is any indication of apathy or indifference. It may be the opinion of the Government that this is a case of temporary excitement which will soon be over. Still, I feel that in my whole experience of India this is unmistakably the strongest and most united and unanimous expression of public discontent which I have ever known. I believe that the last stage will be worse than the first; and if there is any thought that this is a transient ebullition of feeling, I believe that view will in the end be proved to be wrong. I therefore wish that the Bill may be withdrawn."

Far be it from me to say that there are not a great number of Natives who would do their duty conscientiously. I only say that we are here attempting to deal with two separate peoples, who have different objects, different sentiments, and different modes of life, caste, rank, treatment and estimate of women, exemption from appearance in Court, and other circumstances separating Indian life from English. Those who are in favour of the Bill may say what they will; but when we find that an association has been formed by Europeans, and £30,000 subscribed for carrying on resistance to this measure, there can be no doubt that there is considerable feeling in the matter. And I regret to hear the noble Earl say that he hoped the Bill would be carried. It is a most serious matter when we come to consider that the Europeans in the Provinces will have to submit to men whom they will not look upon with respect, or consider qualified to govern them. In 1872, when this measure was considered, it was deliberately rejected by the Governor in Council. If you say that the time has now come for making these changes, why was it not considered the time then? There was then the possibility and probability of Native Covenanted Civil servants attaining an high position. Sir Fitzjames Stephen has thought the measure so dangerous that he has conceived it to be his duty to write a letter, which most of your Lordships have probably seen, to show how strongly he feels that they were right in 1872, and that there was no occasion to vary from that position. As to the anomaly which exists under the present system, why our whole position in India is, to a certain extent, an anomaly. You cannot rectify that. It exists, to a great degree, in the force of character in the dominant race; in a great degree in the peculiarly submissive and trusting disposition of a great portion of the Natives. They are ready to hang on to the stronger race, and do not want to be deprived of their services. I will venture to say that, in many instances, a Native would be better pleased to be tried by an English than by a Native Judge; and, further, that a Mahomedan, going before a Hindoo Judge, would consider himself far more liable to be dealt with unjustly than if he were going before an English one. Then the noble Earl said that there was great authority on his side. There was one most remarkable fact which must be admitted, and that was that the Local Governments were in favour of the Bill. Why, the reasons for that were two—first, because the Bill had been pressed upon them by the Governor General, whose strong opinions in favour of it were known throughout India; and, secondly, because they did not foresee what was going to happen. Nay, nothing is so astonishing as the ignorance shown by them of non-official feeling. And yet the Marquess of Ripon himself did not appear to be unaware of what was likely to happen, although he seemed to have expected that Sir Ashley Eden should have prophetically warned him. In a speech made months before, on Mr. Stokes' Bill, the noble Marquess said—

> "I should be very glad, if it were possible, to place the law in regard to every person in the country, not only on the same footing, for that the Bill, I hope, will practically do, but to embody it in the very same language, whether it relates to Europeans or Natives. But no one who recollects the history of questions of this kind in this country can doubt that to deal with that special chapter which regulates the procedure with regard to Europeans and Americans would be to deal with very difficult and very delicate questions. Cases have arisen in which the Government has been beaten in the Legislative Council. We all know the agitation which has taken place, and the strong excitement which has arisen in past times on questions of this sort. They are not to be entered on without very full consideration."

But they were entered upon without consideration, and without seeking from the non-official Europeans in the country any information as to their feelings. There was not a single person who seemed to have felt their pulse at all; they appeared to have been unconscious that the non-official Europeans had any feeling at all on the matter, until it flashed on them like a spark of gunpowder. Had it been foreseen, in all probability there was not one of those officials who thought the time had come, but would have said that, "although we may approve of the principle of the Bill, this is not the time nor the occasion for introducing it." But if the hour had not come, the man had, and the Government of unrest has stirred conflicting elements which it will take long to appease. I know that my noble Friend says there have been Reports on this subject, and in favour of it; they were considered in 1872 by a competent Council. I have not heard from the noble Earl that they were considered carefully and deliberately by the Council at home. It would certainly have been desirable that the opinions of those who were opposed to it should have been known.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY was understood to say there was no dissentient.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: It is quite absurd to say that an administrative difficulty has arisen which requires the adoption of this change. The administration difficulty has been started; but it would be quite competent and easy for any Government to provide sufficient English Judges to meet all the demands—which, I am happy to say, are not great—in regard to the trial of English criminals. It is not because they are guilty of crime that Europeans dread this measure, but because, being innocent, they dread to be accused before Judges who do not understand their feelings. An English man or English woman may have been misunderstood by, or supposed to have wronged, some Native who procures false evidence, or resorts to forgeries, too common, alas! in many parts of India; and the injury done him or her cannot be redressed by telling them to appeal to a distant Court. But if the failures of justice—and you contemplate them — should come out, and there should be signs of partiality or injustice from want of appreciation of English habit, feeling, or action on the part of these Judges, the outcry which you despise now will swell to much greater dimensions. With respect to Mr. Ilbert's Bill, the Government, with the fact that a storm had arisen in India against it, and with the difficulties they will find in giving effect to it, are, as I understood the noble Earl, determined to carry it out. I hope that may not be so. I hope that the Government, with its hands so full of questions so momentous—such as the disturbance of the Bengal Settlement, the question connected with local self-government, and other matters of infinite importance which the Government have stirred in India—will be content with these subjects, and will not add to them changes calculated to excite the feelings of a class which has been most obedient to the law, and which has given no just cause of complaint since this matter was finally settled in 1872. Is there no danger that the excitement may extend to the question of Natives trying Europeans in the Presidency towns, where that system has been acquiesced in, under special circumstances, and without the idea that it was to be a premise for the logical conclusion of this Bill and of other measures which may spring from it? As to the Local Self-Government Bill, the measure is one which should be well discussed, and put prominently before the country, so that it may know what is going on. We are, unfortunately, without full Papers on the subject; and, therefore, we are at a loss to know what has taken place in regard to it in various parts of India. But I believe I am correct in saying that, with respect to this scheme of local self-government, there is hardly a district officer in India who has not emphatically condemned it. Among those who are with the people, and who have been acting with them in such local self-government as at present exists, there are, I believe, but very few who give to this Bill their approbation in its main provisions and its entirety. Everybody will admit that there should be an improvement in local government in India; that you should take steps, as far as you can, to improve the Natives, and make them more acquainted with the necessity of sanitation, vaccination, and so on, and to call out their faculties in assisting those who administer the local affairs of the country. But this measure of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Ripon) is founded on a totally different principle. The object of the noble Marquess's measure is, wherever there are local governing committees to take from them the European and English representation, and leave them purely Native Bodies, and make them ultimately elective. The object is to eliminate the official European element. On that single point I venture to say that there is hardly a man in India, or in this country, who has been connected with the active Administration, who is not of opinion that it would throw the country into barbarism if they went as far as was proposed by the noble Marquess. The missive went forth from the noble Marquess that there was to be throughout all India a network of local self-government for the purpose of political and popular education, with a design to elevate a people who must be dependent into independent political life. We are not without some experience on this subject. One authority, Mr. Lee Warner, cited, when favourable, on any point by the Government of India, has said that if this withdrawal of official control, as contemplated in the Resolution of May 18, is literally carried out, the political future of the country will be sacrificed, and the principal work of the last 20 years will be undone. That I believe. Sir Salar Jung, the great Native Administrator, whose death we all regret, did this very thing; he gave over the local administration to Local Bodies for seven years. The time came to an end very shortly before his death; and what was the result? The good roads that were given into their custody were gone; everything was in confusion; and all the works they had destroyed by their negligence and inefficiency had to be recommenced. Then you propose that to these people shall be given sanitation. In the large towns, where there is more watchfulness, the people can act in masses if the managing bodies fail in their duty, and there is a Press and men of intelligence to enforce the law; but even the sanitary arrangements of the Municipality of Calcutta itself are far from satisfactory, and I have seen statements that a large proportion of sewage added to the hydrant water would make the mixture served out in the municipal tanks. This was said by the Government analyst. Are you to give over vaccination to Hindoo peasants? They would rather resort to the goddess of small-pox than to the matter which Dr. Jenner introduced, and sanitation generally is alien to their habits. There is no question that the object you have in view would be frustrated by taking away the centre of authority; he must be the person to take the initiative; but now this power is to be taken away from him. The noble Marquess is afraid of dissension within the Boards. He speaks of the effect produced by the absence from them of the pressure of official control. It is well known how hard it is to spur these Boards into action. The noble Earl has quoted Sir Ashley Eden and Sir Alfred Lyall; but they have expressed opinions totally opposed to his views. As to the former, I am authorized to say that his statement was that under no circumstances would it do to have Local Boards of which the district officer was not Chairman; and as to the latter, I feel sure that I remember seeing, though I cannot lay my hand on the Paper, that the non-officials required were not to be found in his Province. Do you suppose that there is such unanimity of sentiment throughout India that the Local Boards, without European officials, can check that hostility of castes and sects which divides the various factions and parties, and which only the presence of European officials prevents breaking out into full force? Do you suppose these Boards will act with cordiality and unanimity? It is one of the noble Marquess's fundamental principles that there should be small districts. How can you expect to find in these small districts education and intelligence, or persons capable of managing these Local Boards? Do you suppose the local gentry will care to meet on these Boards the traders to whom, perhaps, they are in debt; that high caste and low caste, Hindoo and Mahomedan, will fraternize and act together for the benefit of the whole; that no jobbing for parties and individuals will prevail? It is admitted by one of the most eminent officials you have that such proposals, if carried out, will throw back India 20 years. Then, where is the money to come from? The other day I was told of a large district, the revenue of which amounted to 2½ lakhs. I have calculated that if that district were divided into small districts of 10 square miles, and the 2½ lakhs were divided among those districts, the share for each district would be 300 rupees; 300 rupees to spend for sanitation, water, and other works! What would be the result? These works, which are necessary in India, are inter-dependent; but if you have a separate Board for each small district with no official President, with a civil engineer, who is never to take the initiative—for that is expressly laid down in the Resolution—how could these works be properly managed? The noble Earl says that care must be taken to instruct these Boards in drainage operations. That must be done by the Government engineer; but he is to be the servant of one Board or of many, and how is he to solve the problem of serving many masters? It is important in India to give an exhibition of power, and there is no power so strong as the power of initiation. But what is now proposed will promote the idea that this power has passed into the hands of the Natives. The Government engineer is not to initiate, but to be a servant in a small locality, with 300 rupees to spend upon public works! If the Government has engineers to spare for such work as that, there is certainly room for economy. The Chairman, if it is necessary for a time to have a European official, is not even to vote; he is to leave the members of the Board to themselves, and they are to take the initiative. But if there is no control within—you say there is to be control from without—friction with individuals is to be replaced by collision with the whole Board. Suppose that your controller without enforces works, and you come to taxation in order to supply these needs forced upon you through control without—suppose it came to be a question of local taxation; if the matter were left to these Local Boards, they would certainly fix taxes upon articles of primary necessity. If you check them in this, they will not care to serve on the Boards again. If they cannot collect the taxes as they like they will soon fall away. I do not know whether your Lordships' attention has been called to a law made by the Emperor Nicholas, establishing similar bodies in the villages in Russia. In the neighbourhood of large towns they did do something, but elsewhere they entirely failed. Twenty-five years ago one of the greatest dangers this country has ever passed through took place in India—the Mutiny. Many are now living in India who remember the shock of those occurrences; but great numbers have come, and are coming away, and its lessons are fading from men's minds. Now, notwithstanding that experience, after 25 years you venture again to rouse the ambitions of the people. The educated, talking, professional Natives of India—what are they? I will not speak of them in my own words. What does Mr. Monro say of them? He says that among the large and influential classes he finds a desire to obtain benefits for themselves; much clamour and much public speaking, but little public spirit; much grasping at power and position, and much talk of Constitutional principles, but little practice of Constitutional morality. But, my Lords, let us come nearer home. We were told that one of our great advantages would be that we should have the services of the educated and Europeanized Natives in this country. You are trying in vain, I think, to graft on Eastern civilization Western institutions. There is no Democracy, there is no "demos" in India to which you can appeal. If you give local institutions, they will end in embarrassment and confusion. Let me tell your Lordships what one of these highly Europeanized Natives in this country, who are to be of such service in governing India, says of our rule. He is very likely to be satisfied with the petty details of unpaid local government. He says, in a speech which is published by the East India Association, that—

> "Events have taken a course which has made England the worst foreign invader that India has ever had the misfortune to have—that India did not get a moment's breath from the rush of Europeans that took place."

He goes on to say that—

> "At present the Indians are loyal, but that they may any day become disloyal; there is but a short step from one to the other."

What is it that the Government now propose to do? Suppose a difficulty were to arise between the Natives and the governing Power—between the sword and those who submit to the sword. What would happen with these thousands or tens of thousands of Local Boards meeting in secret to plot rebellion, with no European present? Directly you take away the Europeans from the local committees you will take away the authority which gives excellence and stability to the work done in India; and you will attempt to use materials for building for which the Natives of India have neither the force, nor the desire, nor the will, in any way, for it is wholly alien to their feelings. If paid for the work they might do it; but, otherwise, the objects are such as they take no interest in. Unless this scheme is carried out carefully, it will act in a most disastrous manner to the interests which the Government now profess to support. In Bombay local funds' committees abound, but with an official Chairman. Some unpleasant differences had arisen between the Governor General and the Government of Bombay, in consequence of the course taken by the former. The Government of Bombay was ready, even against its judgment, to endeavour to carry out the scheme of the Governor General; but when it was proposed to take away the Europeans, who were the life and soul of the committees, the Government of Bombay strongly protested that such a measure was not compatible with safety, and that it was practically a subversion of their existing system. With reference to the language of mine to which reference has been made, I said that it was perfectly proper that Natives should be employed in judicial capacities for which they were specially fitted. But my language cannot be distorted so as to make me appear to approve their being given a jurisdiction they had not previously enjoyed. I meant that they should be permitted to exercise judicial functions among Natives, holding the same relative position that they had always held towards Europeans. I admit that it is most desirable, if you can, to teach the people to manage small local affairs, and to become acquainted with the most important interests of their own localities. But to conduct the education of these people by taking away their teachers from the midst of them is an absurdity. It was the "association of Natives and Europeans to a greater extent" that was advocated by Lord Mayo; but the plan of the present Governor General is their dissociation. To lay down for the whole of India one fundamental principle that must be acted upon, whatever the circumstances might be, is what the Government of India has done, though it leaves the mode of carrying this into effect for a time to Local Governments. Local Boards are to be elected at some future date in every locality by the resident electors—something very like household suffrage. I do not believe that these wild and extravagant schemes can do anything more than excite in the minds of the Natives of India, and particularly of the portion called the Europeanized Natives, hopes and passions which may be difficult to quench, and which may lead at any time—though I hope to God they will not — to such difficulties as arose at the time of the Mutiny, and your scheme, as laid down on May 18, will inevitably fail. If it does fail, it brings discredit on your Government and confusion in India; while, if it seems to succeed, it will but lead to further demands on the part of the Europeanized Natives which will in time destroy the dominance of England in India.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: If, my Lords, I had been asked in what tone and manner a subject of this nature would be treated by the House of Lords, I should have expressed some confidence that whatever differences of opinion might exist as to policy between the different sides of the House, yet the same tone would prevail on both sides, and that all would agree that our aim and object in the government of India should be to govern equally, justly, and impartially, for the benefit of all subjects of the Crown. I should have said that the object of noble Lords taking part in such a debate would be to mitigate any exaggerated jealousies and antipathies of races, to avoid saying anything which might be offensive and irritating to any class of the Natives of India, and to appease, instead of inflaming, panic and needless alarm. I should be doing injustice to the noble Earl who introduced this discussion if I did not say, after making due allowance for the doubts expressed by him as to the policy of the Indian Government on certain points, that the tone and the character of his speech was in accordance with my expectations. I wish I could say the same of the speech your Lordships have just heard. The speech of the noble Viscount was full of arguments from panic, not from policy, and full of reference to opinions expressed by Englishmen of such a character as are calculated, not to mitigate, but to inflame the antipathies, jealousies, and passions of race. I heard the speech with regret. It seemed to be mainly addressed to vituperation of the Viceroy for a supposed attack, which he never made, upon Sir Ashley Eden, and for, as was most groundlessly alleged, putting pressure upon the Local Governments to obtain from them opinions in accordance with his own views. With the exception of that part of the speech which consisted of vituperation of the Viceroy, I heard little or nothing from the noble Viscount in the way of argument. There was a marked contrast between the speech of the noble Viscount and that of the noble Earl. In parts of his speech the noble Earl went far to admit that, under certain conditions, the Criminal Law Amendment Bill might be proper. The truth is that the question before your Lordships has, off and on, been under discussion in India for 33 years; and the principles which it is now proposed to adopt have, over and over again, been recommended by the highest authorities in India and England. So far back as 1857 Sir James Colvile said it must be adopted in time. Surely, after so much consideration of the matter, and such frequent postponements, the action of the Indian Government cannot be said to be precipitate. It is a remarkable fact, which justifies the Government of India in seizing every opportunity of establishing sound principles on a subject of this kind, that to abolish exemptions invariably takes much time. It took much time, for example, to get rid of the general exemption of European British subjects from the jurisdiction of the Local Courts, although those Courts were in the hands of British Judges. Panic after panic was caused by the proposal to do away with that exemption; and it was not until 40 years after the power to abolish it had been given that the thing was done. The noble Viscount referred to the opinions of Sir Fitzjames Stephen, a learned Judge, for whose high character and great abilities I have as much respect as the noble Viscount has. Indeed, the respect which I entertain for him has, perhaps, caused me to regret the more that he should have been led to publish anything which might have a tendency to increase the difficulties of the Indian Government on this subject. But what did he say of the state of things which the Indian Government could not find an opportunity of abolishing until 1872? His words are—

> "In the state of the law before 1872 the position of European British subjects undoubtedly did constitute a serious practical grievance. In the remoter parts of the country they enjoyed something equivalent to impunity in

> criminal cases which were not of sufficient importance to attract special attention. The expense and delay, for example, of having a trial in Calcutta for an offence committed, say, on a tea plantation in Assam practically prevented prosecution. This grievance was felt more and more as a large number of Europeans were introduced into India belonging to a class likely to commit less crime."

The noble Viscount seemed to think that there was no class of European British subjects in India likely to commit petty criminal offences, which must be repressed by prompt punishment; but that, evidently, was not the opinion of Mr. Justice Stephen. To say that the time has not arrived for the passing of a measure which a country has long wanted simply because an outcry has been raised against it would be to invite an outcry in every case of the proposed abolition of any privilege or exemption. It is remarkable that the legislators of this country did not form the opinion that the Mutiny made it necessary, in order to preserve our position in India, to keep Natives out of public employments. On the contrary, they thought that the true lesson to be learnt from the Mutiny was that confidence should be placed in those Natives who were willing to serve the Government, and that they should be given an interest in the government of their country. That policy was first established by the Act of the Imperial Parliament which vested the government of India in the Crown, and which made provision for examinations for the Covenanted Civil Service of India, to which Natives were to be admitted. Then, in 1861, when the High Courts were established, the British Legislature provided that there should be Native Judges in them. That provision is fatal to the argument that it is not proper that British subjects should be liable to be judged in criminal as well as in civil cases by Native Judges. Then came the Act of 1870, which enabled the Local Governments to appoint any Native to any office or employment in the Indian Civil Service, which terms were intended to include the office of Session Judge and district magistrate—the judicial offices with which we are now dealing. The noble Viscount having to justify and explain his own despatch, written in 1879, says—"It is true that we intended that there should be Native Judges for Natives; but we did not intend that they should have jurisdiction over Europeans." But if Native Judges are trusted to adjudicate justly in cases in which Natives are concerned, why should they not be trusted in cases in which Europeans are interested? How can you trust a Hindoo Judge to do justice to a Mahomedan, or a Mahomedan to a Hindoo, if you cannot trust the same man to act with impartiality and integrity in a case affecting the interests of a European? It should be remembered that the exemption at the present time is an exemption only of natural-born British subjects, their sons and grandsons. Native Judges have jurisdiction over all Frenchmen, Germans, Italians, and Europeans of any nationality not entitling them to the privileges of natural-born British subjects; also over those who are subjects of the United States of America. You trust the Natives now to exercise the power of judgment over these Europeans; and by the arrangement made in 1879 you have made it necessary that one-sixth in every year of all the Civil Service in India shall be filled with Natives, in addition to those who pass examinations in this country. The consequence will be that in a few years you will have more than one-sixth—or at least one-sixth—of the Session Judges and district magistrates belonging to that class of Native Judges to whom you now object to give criminal jurisdiction over British Europeans; and if the policy proposed is not carried out, the effect will be, under these circumstances, to revive, in one-sixth part of your Local Courts, the very state of things which existed in 1872. This would happen also—that a European subordinate would have jurisdiction over cases which his superior Judge was disqualified from trying. The question might be asked, What has been our experience hitherto of Native Judges? My Lords, for many years, while I was at the Bar, I practised in Indian cases before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and during those years there were few such cases of any considerable importance in which I was not engaged. I had, therefore, good opportunities of observing the manner in which, in civil cases, the Native Judges did their duty; and I have no hesitation in saying—and I know this was also the opinion of some of the most eminent Judges who sat on the Judicial Committee during that time—that the judgments of the Native Judges in India did not suffer by, but bore favourable comparison, as a general rule, with, the judgments of the English Judges there. I should be sorry to say anything in disparagement of those English Judges, who, as a class, were most anxious to carefully discharge their duty; but I repeat that I have no hesitation in saying that in respect of integrity, of learning, of knowledge, of the soundness and satisfactory character of the conclusions arrived at, the Native judgments were, as a rule, quite as good as those of the local English Judges. And since 1861, my Lords, we have had further experience of Indian Native Judges in the High Courts, where they have had jurisdiction over Europeans. How have they used that power? Have they not deserved the confidence of the public? I venture to say they have. What are the objections against the principle? First, there is the idea of national privilege; and I can only say that, if that be the principle we should act upon, we are condemning ourselves, for we judge Hindoos and Mahomedans by English Judges. If it is to be the universal notion that every man of a particular race or religion should be tried or judged by Judges of his own race or religion, all I can say is that it is not our practice in India, any more than at home, and I hope it never will be. Nothing but a very degraded state of the Judicature, or inability on the part of the superior Government to keep it in proper order, can justify the application of that principle. Another argument brought forward is that, in this matter, the opinion of unofficial Europeans in India should be preferred to that of officials. I would ask, my Lords, who are the Government of India—the unofficial class? Does the responsibility of government rest with them? Have the unofficial class better means of forming sound opinions on such a subject than those who govern? It appears to me, my Lords, that this argument is an astounding paradox. It is quite true that the opinion of the unofficial class may be entitled to respect, and it should not be ignored; but, in a matter of this kind, to put that opinion, in point of value, above that of the official—the governing class—is a surprising paradox. My Lords, I contend that the effect of the policy proposed on the minds of the Natives would be most salutary. Its effect on the official class of Natives must be beneficial, as proving that trust is reposed in them, and giving them fresh motives to be faithful to that trust. And what would be the effect of it on the unofficial classes? They will perceive in it a further advance in the beneficent policy of treating all the subjects of the British Crown with fairness and justice—proof that it is the aim and object of the British Government in India not to increase or exaggerate, but to diminish, as far as they can, those antagonisms of race which have hitherto been attended with so much disadvantage. The noble Viscount spoke once or twice as if we had no choice between one or the other of two extreme courses—to do nothing or to remove all anomalies; but things more or less anomalous must exist in every system. Why should we not take a middle course, as the Government of India has in this case, I believe, succeeded in doing? I do not go into the details of their scheme; but I cannot help submitting to your Lordships that what is being now done is the necessary sequel to the steps which the Imperial Parliament has obliged the Government of India to take, for the admission of Native Civil servants in India to judicial office.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, the noble and learned Earl (the Lord Chancellor) had stated that his noble Friend (the Earl of Lytton) preached the doctrine that, because there had been a panic, therefore legislation should be suspended. He had done nothing of the kind. He had merely called attention to the extraordinary outburst of feeling on the subject in India. Some of the arguments used by the noble and learned Earl savoured to him (the Earl of Carnarvon) much more of the arguments they had lately heard used by the Colleagues of the noble and learned Earl in "another place" as to Irish conciliation. He did not doubt the good intentions of the present Governor of India; but his fear was that the humanity and sympathy of Lord Ripon were carrying him beyond the limits of policy and prudence. The English in India looked upon the proposed change as an inroad upon their property, liberty, and status. The non-official classes of India had never been so united as they were on this subject; the English Press was unanimous; and nine-tenths of the Civil Service were agreed upon it. The noble and learned Earl seemed to ignore all those distinctive differences between England and India. His argument was an abstract one; but he (the Earl of Carnarvon) wished to lay down two propositions—first, the vital necessity of preserving the harmony between the Government of India and the non-official population; and, in the second place, that if, indeed, there were a drift of opinion in the direction of the change indicated by the Ministerial advocates, and if that opinion had been running for many years in the same direction, it was most important that when the change was made it should come gradually, and not by leaps and bounds. If he was not mistaken, the state of the case was this. In 1872 a compromise was arrived at; between 1872 and 1882 there had been a very great growth of the non-official population in India; and, of course, the greater the amount of the English population, the greater the necessity for insuring to them all the proper safeguards of justice. In 1882 the Criminal Code was once more revived; and, that being so, he could not help asking why it was that in 1883 a question obviously of fundamental importance should be brought up, and he could not understand upon what principle such a course as that was taken. As he understood from the other side, it had been argued that this change flowed out of the change which his noble Friend (the Earl of Lytton), as Governor General of India, had made; but he apprehended his noble Friend would deny that, for his change had amounted to this—that one-sixth of the Civil servants in India might be appointed from the Natives. He failed to understand that there would be the least administrative difficulty in this, for the railways and telegraphs would give ample opportunities for avoiding any which might arise. It would be perfectly possible to appoint Natives in those Provinces when there were very few Europeans. Anomalies they must have in India so long as they retained their power there. If the Government really set themselves to work to sweep away anomalies, the first which they would have to remove was the British Government itself. It was strange that, although they had had many authorities cited, not one word was said about the opinion of the Judges. It had been argued, indeed, that as Native Judges tried civil cases, there could be no reason why they should not also try criminal. But it was in criminal cases that so much distrust existed in the popular mind. It was said that, as we permitted Europeans to try Natives, why should not Natives try Europeans; and why, when Natives tried Europeans in the Presidency towns, should they not do so elsewhere? But the analogy would not hold good. In the Presidency towns the Courts were placed in the full blaze of public observation. You had newspapers and reporters; and although it was true that a European convicted in the Provinces could appeal, still he might be thrown into prison and his character receive a slur from which he could not redeem it. Besides, before the appeals could be heard, he might be kept in prison for a long time. There was a case not long ago where an Englishman in Upper Burmah was condemned and placed by a Native authority in prison with an iron collar round his neck, and detained for a considerable period. Supposing that had been done by one of these Native Judges in India, how strong would have been the feeling if it was known that the sentence was unjust? The Government contended that they were only logically carrying out the system as it at present existed; but if they proposed to justify their position logically they would have to go a great deal further; for, as it was, Native Judges would have different powers from English Judges, and a logical view necessitated putting both on the same footing. This, indeed, was what the Native Press was already clamouring for, and he did not suppose Her Majesty's Government were prepared to sanction that. It was said that an overwhelming consensus of great authorities was in favour of the change. The opinions of Commanders-in-Chief were more valuable on military matters than on questions of Imperial policy in India, as to which their views were almost always traditional. Why had not the opinion of the Judges of the High Court of India been given? In the discussion which took place on the subject in the Council, Mr. Stewart Baillie, a distinguished civilian, remarked that he failed to perceive either the extent or the depth of feeling aroused in favour of the measure;

while an eminent Indian, a Member of the Council, said that while under the dictates of prudence he was in favour of the measure, yet his heart was against it. With regard to the question of privilege, it must be remembered that the privilege was not of the Judge, but of the prisoner, and that it was common to the whole of the countries of the East. There was nothing in English law making such an exemption. If Englishmen were subjected in distant Provinces to the jurisdiction of the Native magistrates, cases of hardship and abuse must arise. It appeared to him reasonable that Europeans should desire to be tried by a Judge of their own nationality. It must be remembered that the English population were always in the position of a garrison, and that nothing ought to be done which was calculated to alienate the loyal sentiments they possessed towards us. He deeply lamented that such a measure as this, which would lead to an antagonism of race, had been brought forward; and he hoped that, in spite of the language that had been used that evening, the Indian Government would reconsider their determination to press it forward. If the measure were so serious as some persons said it was, they should pause before they carried it through; while, on the other hand, if it were a merely trivial matter, they should, with kindness and confidence, give way to the strongly-expressed feeling of the European inhabitants of India.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK said, there could be no doubt that the subjects brought before the House had attracted great interest in India. He had listened with attention to the speech of the noble Earl who had succeeded him in the Government of India, and to the arguments which he used. That part of the speech which dealt with what was called local self-government might, he thought, be dismissed without much difficulty. It was evident that the noble Earl misapprehended the scope and extent of the measures introduced by the Viceroy. As was clearly pointed out by his noble Friend the Secretary of State, Lord Ripon had been simply carrying on the edifice which had been begun by his Predecessors.

THE EARL OF LYTTON: Am I to understand that I am in error in assuming that the district officers are to be excluded from the Local Boards?

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK said, he would notice that particular part of the subject later on. The noble Earl had characterized the measures of the Viceroy as an introduction of Radicalism into India. But there was no foundation for such an assertion in fact. It was 30 years since the question of municipal institutions in India was first mooted, and since that time many men who knew most of the feelings and dispositions of the people of India had pressed on the Government to give more powers of local self-government to the people. The noble Viscount who spoke last had called the creation of small Municipalities in India absurd; but he (the Earl of Northbrook) recollected the question of the size of the Municipalities in India being discussed in the Legislative Council by men of the highest experience, who had spent their lives in that country. Mr. Clive Bayley, who had experience of three Provinces of India, said, in 1873, that he could mention many small towns—places almost too insignificant to be called towns—which had enjoyed municipal institutions, and had worked them with great credit and very satisfactorily. In the same debate Sir Barrow Ellis, another eminent authority, said that in the Presidency of Bombay there were many small Municipalities which had been carried on with complete success. The noble Viscount asked whether there was any administrative officer in India who would assert that it was desirable that the members of those Municipalities should be left to manage their own affairs without the intervention of an European officer. Why, it was the very men who knew most about the country, who had said that the defect of those municipal institutions was that, on the whole, the civil servants, no doubt in their desire to secure the efficient administration of Municipalities, were rather in the habit of forcing their opinions on those bodies, and of not giving the people sufficient scope in the management of their local affairs, so that they did not take the interest which it was desirable they should take in such matters. For example, he would give the House the opinion expressed, as long ago as the year 1861, by Sir Donald M'Leod, a most experienced officer, who had filled the Office of Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab with great distinction. Sir

Donald M'Leod said that the genius of the Natives was essentially suited for municipal organization, and that—

> "Municipal institutions were as well adapted to the Natives of India as to those of England."

He further said no Government official ought to be associated with, or allowed to interfere in any way in, the nomination of Members, and that—

> "In short, the Municipal Body should be, as regarded essentials, really independent so far as interference of our officials goes."

He would put that opinion against the opinion of the noble Viscount, who said that no district officer was in favour of the people managing their own local affairs. Again, quite lately, Mr. Crossthwaite, a Member of the Legislative Council of the Governor General, with as great a local experience of the North-West Provinces now as any man could have, gave his opinion entirely in favour of local self-government, as explained in Lord Ripon's Resolutions; and added that he would have gone even further, and given those Local Bodies at once still more power than was proposed by Lord Ripon; that we were more likely to make a mistake in giving too little power rather than too much to the Local Bodies; and that we must give confidence to the Natives, and try to get them to work with us in the management of their affairs if we wished to enlist them as efficient aids. The noble Earl who had succeeded him as Governor General had declared that Lord Ripon's plan of local self-government was a scheme to change the fundamental nature of the government, and to establish representative government in India. Now, the Viceroy of India was surely more likely to understand the meaning of his policy, and to interpret it correctly, than the noble Earl. What did the Viceroy say as to the intention, of his own policy? There were Resolutions of the Government of India published on the subject, and afterwards a discussion in the Legislative Council of India on the first of the Bills being introduced into the Legislative Council for the purpose of giving effective shape to those Resolutions. Lord Ripon, on that occasion, gave a description of his policy, which was diametrically contrary to the interpretation which the noble Earl and the noble Viscount had put upon that policy. The noble Viscount said that the Viceroy wanted to have a stereotyped system all over India; that no district officer could have anything to say to those Municipal Bodies; that all India was to be given representative institutions, and there was to be no latitude in the matter. In his speech, made in the Legislative Council, in November, 1882, upon the Central Provinces Bill, the Viceroy spoke as follows:—

> "In drawing up the Resolution of the 18th of May last, the Government of India very particularly pointed out that they had not the slightest intention of laying down hard-and-fast rules of a uniform character for the extension of local self-government throughout the whole of this vast peninsula. It would have been an exceedingly absurd idea if it had ever entered into the heads of the Government to do anything of the kind. The circumstances of different parts of India are most various. We have in this country races almost on the verge of the savage state; and we have, on the other hand, large populations marked by a very considerable advance, political and social, and counting among them men of very subtle and developed intellects. It is, of course, obviously impossible to deal with a country in that condition upon any uniform plan in regard to a system of local self-government.
>
> "Therefore, what we proposed was that, laying down a few broad and general principles, those principles should be applied according to the peculiarities and requirements of the different parts of the country in different ways, so as to meet those requirements and to suit those peculiarities; and we especially and clearly pointed out that we thought it was very desirable that the mode in which the principles of that Resolution were to be carried out should be varied, not only from province to province, but in the different parts of each province itself; because we wanted to make trial of various methods of procedure, various modes of composing the local boards and electing and controlling them, in order that, after experience, we might learn in the course of time what were the best methods of dealing with these matters, and what might be the system generally applicable, at all events, to the great divisions of the country."

Viscount CRANBROOK explained that he had read from the words of Lord Ripon's Resolution.

The Earl of NORTHBROOK said, he disputed the correctness of the noble Viscount's interpretation. The noble Viscount had better read the passage.

Viscount CRANBROOK said, he had quoted the words in which it was stated that the Government of India wished to extend throughout the country in every district a network of Local Boards to be charged with definite functions.

The Earl of NORTHBROOK said, he must complain that the noble Viscount had read part of Lord Ripon's words apart from the context, and from subsequent utterances, in which he said that it was impossible to establish a uniform system, and that it was necessary to take into consideration the requirements of different parts of the country; and that the Government hoped by experience to find out the best mode of dealing with existing circumstances. He protested against the noble Viscount placing interpretations on Lord Ripon's policy which his explanations did not justify.

THE EARL OF LYTTON remarked, that the noble Viscount had read a passage in which Lord Ripon had distinctly spoken of establishing a network of Local Government Boards.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK said, he thought Lord Ripon was more likely to know what his intentions were than either the noble Earl or the noble Viscount. With regard to Sir Ashley Eden, he (the Earl of Northbrook) believed that his noble Friend (the Earl of Kimberley) had correctly referred to Sir Ashley Eden's opinions, who, without being an advocate of any particular scheme, was, on the whole, favourable to an extension of the policy of local self-government. How far Sir Ashley Eden considered that the district officers of Bengal should be dissociated from the Local Bodies of Bengal he did not know; but he thought that Sir Ashley Eden considered that those officers should have more control than his successor—Mr. Rivers Thompson—proposed to give them by the Bill he had introduced into the Legislative Council of Bengal. As he had not himself seen the Bill, he could not say more upon that subject. It should be clearly understood that what might be suitable for one part of the country might not be suitable for another. The real policy of the Government was indicated by Lord Ripon's opinion which he had quoted. As his noble Friend the Secretary of State for India had said, it was not a new policy; it was a policy which had been carried on for the last 20 or 30 years by successive Governments in India. He himself (the Earl of Northbrook) had been engaged in the year 1873 in passing Acts establishing municipal institutions for many different Provinces in India. If the noble Earl opposite, who succeeded him in the Office of Viceroy, had applied his abilities to the subject of local self-government, he was satisfied he would have arrived at the same conclusion as he (the Earl of Northbrook) had — namely, that this was not a new policy; but that the Government, in carrying it out, were only carrying out what had been considered right, proper, and safe for the country.

With regard to the other question before their Lordships—the alteration proposed to be made in the Law of Criminal Procedure—his noble Friend behind him, and the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack, had told their Lordships clearly how small was the change proposed by the Government of India, and how consistent it was with the policy of the Parliament of England, and of successive Administrations of this country, whatever might have been their political opinions, as well as of successive Governors General of India. Whether it was Lord Dalhousie, with his Imperial instincts, or Lord Canning, with the responsibility laid upon him of dealing with the Mutiny, or Lord Lawrence, with his great knowledge of the internal organization of the country, or Lord Mayo, associated from childhood with the Conservative Party: all alike held that, so far as was possible in India, there should be no distinction of class or race, and that there should be one law for all Her Majesty's subjects. Was this disputed by noble Lords opposite? Did they remember the Charter Act of 1833? By that Act India was, for the first time, opened to Europeans. Before that time no European could settle in that country unless licensed by the East India Company. When it was then proposed that Europeans should be allowed freely to resort to India, it was also declared that Europeans and Natives should be subject to the same laws, Lord Ellenborough expressed himself against the proposal in language almost identical with that used to-night in their Lordships' House, and he received an answer in the other House of Parliament from no less a man than Thomas Babington Macaulay—an answer which was given in one of the most eloquent of his speeches, and which was received with cordial approval by Mr. Wynn, who having been President of the Board of Control, represented the Conservative Party upon the subject in the other House. In 1833 Parliament passed a clause enacting that—

> "No Native shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them, be disqualified from holding any place, office, or employment."

And the Court of Directors interpreted those words in an explanatory despatch to mean—

> "That there shall be no governing caste in British India; that whatever other tests of qualification may be adopted distinction of race or religion shall not be of the number."

When the Crown assumed the government of India, after the Mutiny, under a Conservative Government, it was announced that all Her Majesty's subjects—

> "Of whatever race or creed, were to be freely and impartially admitted to offices the duties of which they might be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity duly to discharge."

These were the words of the Queen's gracious Proclamation of the year 1858. When Governor General of India, the noble Earl opposite, in May, 1878, urged a great increase in the employment of Natives; and in recommending his views to the noble Viscount (Viscount Cranbrook), who was then Secretary of State, said that he desired—

> "The new Native Civil Service to be regarded as a branch of the Covenanted Civil Service; no distinction being made in the duties, or responsibilities, of those particular posts which will be open alike to both branches, and the status and position of officers holding the same posts being the same, whether they were taken from the one branch or the other."

This proposal received the warm approval of the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Cranbrook), and was carried into effect. How did the noble Viscount reconcile that with the statement he had just now made that the Natives introduced under those rules were not members of the same Service as the Europeans? If words meant anything, the declaration made by the Viceroy meant nothing less than that the Natives who had been admitted into the Covenanted Civil Service were to be in the same position as the other members.

Viscount CRANBROOK said, the noble Earl did not seem to be aware that they could not be made members of the Covenanted Civil Service without an Act of Parliament.

The Earl of NORTHBROOK said, that an Act of Parliament was passed in 1870 giving ample power to appoint these gentlemen to the Covenanted Civil Service.

The Earl of LYTTON said, that he had recommended that, under certain conditions, Natives appointed by nomination in India should, without passing a competitive examination, be constituted into a branch of the Covenanted Service. But it had been ascertained that the Act in question distinctly excluded all such persons from that Service; and, therefore, the Native civilians appointed under statutory rule were certainly, in the present unaltered state of the law, not members of the Covenanted Service.

The Earl of NORTHBROOK said, that the noble Earl and the noble Viscount seemed to be anxious now to appear less generous than they really were. Whether they had been more generous than they intended or not, they had, undoubtedly, deliberately sanctioned the admission of Natives into the Covenanted Civil Service, for this was the first rule sanctioned by the noble Viscount, under the Act of 1870, upon the recommendation of the noble Earl—

> "Each Local Government may nominate persons who are Natives of India within the meaning of the said Act for employment in Her Majesty's Covenanted Civil Service in India within the territories subordinate to such Government."

The rule would be found in Papers presented to Parliament in the year 1879. He thought that he had proved that this had been the policy even of the noble Earl; and the only question was, whether race distinctions were to be kept up in this particular case which was now under consideration. That was the principal point, and it was a small point. The race distinction was introduced in 1872, and he was very sorry for it. In introducing the Criminal Procedure Act the Government of Lord Mayo had not raised the question of race disqualifications between magistrates and Judges of the same rank in the Service; but the mistake, as he (the Earl of Northbrook) considered it, was made in Committee upon the Bill, when the race distinction was introduced which had given rise to the present difficulty with which the Government of India were endeavouring to deal, and he might inform their Lordships that some of the most practical men in India were against the provisions which became law in 1872. No man had calmer judgment or greater respect for his fellow-countrymen than Lord Napier of Magdala; but he was opposed to the race distinction. Two Civil servants of high reputation, Sir George Campbell, Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, and his successor, Sir Richard Temple, were likewise both opposed to it; and the opposition was initiated by Sir Barrow Ellis, a man of great experience and remarkably sound judgment. Therefore, when it was said that there was no one in favour of the policy now carried out by the Government of India, a great mistake was made. He did not, indeed, remember any subject in which the weight of authority was greater than with regard to the abolition of this race disqualification. It had been attempted to undervalue the opinion of the different Lieutenant Governors; but anyone who was acquainted with them would be satisfied that the opinions they had expressed represented their honest convictions. It had been said elsewhere that the Viceroy had endeavoured to force this Bill upon India by his majority in the Legislative Council against the opinion of the non-official Europeans. Nothing could be more contrary to the fact, for nothing could be more calm, more deliberate, or more regardful of public opinion, than the manner in which Lord Ripon had proceeded since the Bill was introduced. In his speech in the Legislative Council in India upon the measure, Lord Ripon showed how superior he was to all feeling of irritation—a feeling which might well have been the result of the attacks to which he had been subjected. Upon the answer to a very simple question depended their Lordships' estimation of the Bill. Were the Native officers in the Covenanted Civil Service fit to exercise the functions which the measure would impose upon them, or were they not? If they were not fit, by no means allow them to exercise those functions; but if they were fit, no question of race ought to stand in their way. It was a mistake to suppose that the Native magistrates and Judges whom the Bill affected were inferior men. The measure would only confer jurisdiction upon magistrates of the first class, who had served 12 or 13 years in the Civil Service, and passed the necessary examinations, and who were selected by the different local Governments as fit and proper persons, and upon Sessions Judges, who were officers of still longer service and experience. It had been said by the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Carnarvon) that the Government proposed to take from British subjects in India privileges which they enjoyed in Turkey, Egypt, China, and Japan; and he asked whether the Secretary of State for the Colonies would permit such a monstrous thing as the exercise of jurisdiction by a Native Judge over a British subject in Ceylon or Hong Kong. But it should be borne in mind by those who made use of that argument that the system of law in Turkey and the Levant was not adapted to the cases in which Europeans were concerned. Consular jurisdiction was, therefore, exercised under Treaties. In India, however, the Criminal Law was far more simple than the Criminal Law in this country, and was applied to all the inhabitants of India. As regarded the Colonies, the noble Earl was mistaken. In Ceylon there were Native magistrates and a Native Judge of the Supreme Court who exercised jurisdiction over British subjects, and in Hong Kong a Chinese magistrate had exercised a similar jurisdiction. In the High Court of Calcutta Native Judges had for 20 years exercised criminal as well as civil jurisdiction with very great credit to themselves. In the Presidency towns Native magistrates had possessed for many years criminal jurisdiction over European British subjects without any complaint, and civil causes affecting European British subjects were satisfactorily dealt with all over India by Native Judges, to whose merits their Lordships had just heard the highest testimony given by the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack. In his (the Earl of Northbrook's) opinion, the Viceroy had taken a right course in endeavouring to remove the race disqualification introduced in 1872 with respect to criminal procedure; and he felt confident that the prophecy that danger would result from the proposed step would not be fulfilled. Before sitting down, he wished to say that he had watched the career of his noble Friend (the Marquess of Ripon) with all the interest which anyone must feel who had experienced at one time the responsibility of the high Office he now filled. He had noticed the able manner in which Lord Ripon was dealing with many important questions of administration in India, and he had always observed in him the most anxious desire to do his duty fairly by all classes of Her Majesty's subjects, alike to the Natives of India and to his fellow-countrymen. He hoped that that discussion would show, at any rate, that Her Majesty's Government were prepared to give him their hearty and entire confidence in regard to those measures which he had introduced, believing that they were right in themselves, and that they were not likely to produce any of those ill effects which noble Lords opposite seemed to apprehend from them.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, at this late period of the evening I shall not prolong the debate but for a few minutes, as I feel that both sides of the subject have been very fully discussed; and, besides, I feel that there is some difficulty in following the noble Earl who has just sat down. He is a man of great authority, but I think he crushes his opponents with the weight of his authority. Whenever anyone tries to fulfil his duty as a Member of this Legislative Assembly, and ventures to criticize the course which any agent of Her Majesty's Government has thought fit to pursue, his only answer is—"Which ought to be right; they on the spot or you?" Well, that is an excessively compendious system of political philosophy, which would speedily put an end to Parliamentary debate. It would only be necessary for the Government to publish such opinions as they were able to collect in favour of their policy, and forthwith to proclaim them, and to put up a noble Lord with the authority of the noble Earl, who would exclaim—"I am Sir Oracle; let no dog bark." In this way, it would only be necessary to suppress any attempts at criticism on the part of the Opposition. In the remarks which I am about to make I will endeavour, as far as possible, to refrain from giving any opinion of my own, and speak rather from the facts of others. I confess that there is some difficulty in doing that, because information is not the strong point of the argument which we have had to-night. Now, it appears to me that a phrase which the noble Earl dropped furnished a key to the discussion. He said that we must go back to first principles—we must adhere to a generous policy. In other words, the Government of India is to be conducted on vague sentiment and *à priori* reasoning, and that is very much the principle on which Lord Ripon appears to have gone. "You must get rid of these race distinctions," said the noble Earl. My Lords, that is a very fine popular phrase. It may be very fitting for popular use; but does the noble Earl get rid of these race distinctions? He laid it down as an inexorable principle that no person was to be excluded from office on account of his race—that no person was to be prevented from holding any appointment for any reason except unfitness. But are these the principles on which the Government of India is to be conducted? Is there really to be this universal admission to office without the slightest regard to race? Is there any man who will have the hardihood to tell me that it is within the range of possibility that a man in India should be appointed Lieutenant-General of a Province, or Chief Commissioner, or Commander-in-Chief of the Army, or Viceroy, without any regard whatever to his race? That he should be appointed simply with reference to his fitness? My Lords, I do not see what is the use of all this political hypocrisy. It does not deceive the Natives of India. They know perfectly well that they are governed by a superior race, and that all this talk is hollow and unreal. There was considerable difference of opinion as to what Lord Ripon meant in the Minute that has been quoted; but surely Lord Ripon must know what his own opinions are, and I think the words of the Minute very clearly show it. Perhaps I may be permitted to point out that a speech made in debate in the Council can be no kind of answer to the words that are written in the Minute. A speech is not official in the sense that a Note or Resolution is; and though the latter may not have the weight of an Act of Parliament, it has all the force of an official act. The noble Earl referred to the point that Lord Ripon was ready to allow considerable liberty in the application of the principle in question; but it by no means followed that Lord Ripon has not authorized a very large, and, as we think, a very revolutionary change, extending over the whole Peninsula. The two propositions are in no way contradictory of each other; and this phrase about setting up a network of Local Boards is not an isolated phrase picked out, as the noble Earl said, without considering the contexts of other parts of the document. After discussing the question of the latitude of application, and saying that a large latitude of application must be left to the law, the document goes on—

> "But there are, nevertheless, fundamental principles, which, after every allowance has been made for local liberties, must be universally followed and frankly adopted if the system is to have a fair trial."

Then the next sentence is to the effect that efforts are to be made, as far as possible, to establish a network of Local Boards. Therefore, when the noble Earl speaks of this reference to a network of Local Boards as an isolated phrase, he is guilty of that want of examination of documents which he has charged against noble Lords on this side of the House. I do not think, my Lords, that the attempts of the noble Earl to minimize the marked changes which the Marquess of Ripon has made are at all borne out by the words of the Resolution itself. The noble Earl sought to show that Sir Ashley Eden was in favour of this system set up by Lord Ripon. I have received from Sir Ashley Eden a card of very recent date, which is as follows:—

> "I said that under no circumstances would it do to have Local Boards of which the district officers were not Chairmen."

That is a point of vital importance. No doubt there were Municipal Bodies in India from a very early time, and that they exist still. No doubt the genius of the Indian people is suited to Municipal Bodies of this character. But the question we want to know, and that has raised so much feeling and apprehension, is whether or not these Local Boards are to be under the district officers of the Provinces, or whether they are to have any dependence, however qualified, upon these officers? We wish to know whether these Local Boards are a germ or not? We live in days of evolution; in days when the doctrine of evolution has a high position in both science and politics. I must say that anybody who wished to alarm the English population could not have done it better than by the language in this Minute. It is full of the catchwords of cosmopolitan Radicalism. The Governor General begins by saying—

> "That the municipal institutions were not quite so successful in all cases, and that the problem before the Government is one of no slight difficulty. The attempts hitherto made have been made with too little success, and the best men do not present themselves as candidates."

All that does not look as if the change was very congenial to the population of India. But then the Viceroy asks where the remedy for this is, and he says—

> "The remedy must lie in ascertaining, by patient and practical experiment, how best to call forth and render effective that desire and capacity for self-government which all intelligent and fairly educated men may safely be assumed to possess."

I believe that in the Teutonic races intelligent men do generally wish to possess self-government, and have generally been successful in attaining it. But that, speaking of all races, all periods, and all climes, all intelligent men desire, and have a capacity for self-government, is the most startling statement of historical philosophy it has been my good fortune to come across. These commonplaces of Radical philosophy have, no doubt, alarmed the people, and they wish to know if this desire and capacity for self-government is to be carried out; for people who have a desire for self-government may, perhaps, extend it to political affairs, and when the Viceroy says we are to call it forth, we fear there are wider political schemes connected with it which may justly alarm Europeans. With respect to this matter of the alteration of the Criminal Law, it has been so thoroughly discussed that I do not wish to say much concerning it; but I desire to observe two things. In the first place, we have been assured by the noble Earl that those who are concerned with the actual government of the Provinces are immeasurably superior Judges to those outside. But the Natives who could be appointed to these Judgeships are mostly, if not all, Natives of Bengal, and the present Governor of Bengal is an opponent of the scheme. I think we have wandered from the path in trying to deal with it on first principles. The question is, what will the political effect of it be upon the European population, and through the European population upon the prosperity of India, which depends upon them. That is the whole question. I do not agree with the noble Earl that it is simply a question whether these Judges are fit or not. The Lieutenant

Governor of Bengal said that this was unmistakably the most united demonstration of popular discontent he had ever witnessed. I will not say what these Judges will do; I only want to say what the European population expect them to do; and I will, therefore, read from a speech of a Member of the Legislative Council, Mr. Robert Miller, in which he said—

> "I will appeal to the universal Indian experience to bear me out; false evidence is cheap. I am stating a fact well known to every zemindar, to every ryot and European who was ever engaged in litigation, that the practice of bringing false charges for the purpose of ruining a rival in business is a well-known practice."

This is a fact of which European capital is to take account before it allows itself to be locked up in India. Apprehensions of that kind are likely to move men of business very deeply, and you will easily believe they are not lightly entertained. There are similar speeches delivered at public meetings, and some are expressed in language so violent, that it is better not to repeat them. The *gravamen* of our charge is that a great Malthusian difficulty confronts you in India, and that you show no sense of the policy required to meet it. The population is increasing at an appalling rate, faster than the resources of the country are increasing at present; and if you hope that the resources will increase faster than they do now, it is to England and to English capital alone that you can appeal with success. It matters not whether there be Administrative inconveniences or not; they must be settled by Administrative re-arrangements; but the interests of the Europeans cannot be permitted to be ignored. The Government by their policy have brought themselves into this position. If the charges are true, and if the effect of this Bill is great, a great injustice will have been committed. If the effect is small, the Government have committed a portentous folly. For the sake merely of gratifying the feelings—or, if you like, the legitimate ambition — of a small number of Native Government servants, the Government are promoting an hostility which will be far more dangerous than the hostility of the coloured millions of India, and they are alienating from the shores of India that capital and industry by which alone the millions of India can live.

EXPLOSIVE SUBSTANCES BILL.

FIRST READING.

Bill brought from the Commons.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY, in rising to move, "That Standing Orders Nos. XLIX. and XXXV. be suspended," said: My Lords, a similar Motion to this was made in 1847; therefore it will be in accordance with precedent if the House thinks fit to take the course which I now have to propose. The Bill which I hold in my hand, and which has passed through the House of Commons to-day unanimously, I understand, and without alteration, is a Bill the necessity for which is caused by circumstances which are known, no doubt, generally to every Member of this House. It is unnecessary and would be inconvenient for the Public Service that I should enter into any detail, or should state with any particularity the precise circumstances in consequence of which Her Majesty's Government have thought it necessary to propose the Bill. I must, of course, make some statements as to the Bill itself; but I wish to assure the House that there are circumstances which, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, make it absolutely necessary for the public safety that this Bill should be passed into law with the utmost possible despatch. We make that statement upon our own responsibility, feeling deeply the gravity of the situation, and that the necessity we have to put before the House is an indispensable, imperative, and unavoidable necessity. It is for that reason alone that I ask the House to take the unusual and extreme step of proceeding to pass a Bill through all its stages which has only been brought up to the House within the last three or four hours, and necessarily, therefore, one which your Lordships have had a very short time to consider. With regard to the Bill itself, the 1st clause, I need not say that it is unnecessary for the case of murder to be dealt with; that is already provided for; but the case that has to be met is the case of an attempt which fails. The 2nd clause provides that any person causing an explosion likely to prove dangerous to life shall be liable to penal servitude for life, two years' imprisonment being the minimum punishment. The next case is that in which the explosion does not actually take place, but there is an intent to cause an explosion. That offence is punishable by 20 years' penal servitude, with a similar minimum punishment. Where any person is found with explosives in his possession under suspicious circumstances, he is similarly liable to 14 years' penal servitude or two years' imprisonment. There is also a clause dealing with accessories, and another giving the Attorney General power, when he has reasonable ground for believing that a crime has been committed, to order that an inquiry take place, although no person has been charged with the offence. It has been found by experience that the result of such inquiries has been to often lead to the discovery of the person who committed the crime. This is a very valuable provision, which, I hope, will form part of the permanent law of the country. The other clauses are in the nature of securities. It is quite clear that the very unusual powers and the severe penalties imposed by the Bill, and the extensive powers conferred on the Government, could not be safely exercised if they were entrusted to subordinate officers throughout the country; but the Government have provided a safeguard that no prosecution can be undertaken under the Act except by the fiat of the Attorney General; and, therefore, no serious consequences can arise under it to any individual, unless there are circumstances of so suspicious a character that the person inculpated ought to go to trial. There is a power given to the master of a vessel who finds explosives on board to throw them overboard without being liable to an action. These are the principal clauses of the Bill, and I shall be happy to give any further explanation in my power, but, in moving the Resolution, I take leave to repeat that the Government consider this to be a most urgent matter, and believe it to be absolutely necessary that this Bill should pass this House without delay.

Moved, "That Standing Order No. XLIX., that no motion for making or dispensing with a Standing Order be made without notice, be now read:" The same was read accordingly:

Then it was *moved*, "That Standing Order No. XXXV., that no two stages of a Bill be taken on one day, be now read:" The same was read accordingly:

Then it was *moved* to resolve, "That it is the opinion of this House that it is essentially necessary for the public safety that the Bill this day brought from the House of Commons, intituled 'An Act to amend the law relating to explosive substances,' should forthwith be proceeded in with all possible despatch, and that notwithstanding Standing Orders Nos. XLIX. and XXXV. the Lord Chancellor ought forthwith to put the question upon every stage of the said Bill in which this House shall think it necessary for the public safety to proceed therein."—(*The Earl of Kimberley.*)

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, there are some provisions in this Bill which, I think, are an improvement in the present law. The 1st and 2nd clauses, securing the punishment of any person causing or attempting to cause an explosion, or keeping explosives with the intention of endangering life, are obviously clauses which are very much wanted in the present law, and which, I think, are highly commendable. If it were merely a question of passing these, I should have no observations to make, even on the unprecedented course taken by the noble Earl. But the Bill is much stronger than that. It is a Bill of a very remarkable character. In the 4th clause punishment is inflicted for making or possessing explosives under suspicious circumstances, any person so convicted being liable to 14 years' penal servitude. That is an unusual provision, although, perhaps, not absolutely unprecedented. But in view of the great danger these explosives cause, and the very serious events which have taken place in various parts of the world, I do not know that reasonable objection could be taken to that clause as it stands, if the words "explosive substances" meant what the phrase is usually understood to mean. But the clause assumes a different character when it is read with the Interpretation Clause, which defines what "explosive substance" is, and which makes it really the most violent in the Bill. Now, the materials for making explosive substances include a number of things which are used in ordinary arts. It has been said, I think, by the distinguished chemist Liebig that you can know the prosperity of a country by the amount of sulphuric acid that it manufactures; and yet that is one of the substances which it will be an offence under this Bill to have. The same is true of nitric acid, alcohol, sawdust, cotton waste, nitrate of silver—largely used by photographers—and of a number of other perfectly innocent substances possessed by a great many persons. I confess that, even if their proceedings be regular, the Government have exercised an unwise discretion in taking this opportunity of adding so wide an enactment to the Statute Book. My objection to this Bill is that it is not a temporary Bill. It is to be a permanent measure; and if you once pass it these liabilities will be placed on the Statute Book and remain there. This is legislation which has obviously been adopted in a panic. It has been constructed with little care, and it is being rushed through both Houses of Parliament. Not only so, but it makes large inroads on the present doctrines of our Criminal Law. In the first place, there is the examination of the prisoners. It is not our practice that prisoners should be examined.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: That applies to witnesses.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: No; it applies to prisoners. That is an entirely new principle introduced into our Criminal Law. Then, again, it is not our practice that a prisoner's wife should be examined; but the principle again is broken down. It is not our principle that a man should be called upon to criminate himself; but it is enacted here that a witness shall not be excused from answering a question on the ground that it may criminate himself. Therefore, you are reversing all the traditional doctrines of the Criminal Law. An emergency is met by a Bill which runs for a certain number of months or years. Then you might carefully consider the circumstances under which you are asked to make such large inroads in the doctrines of your Criminal Law, or you might refer it to a Committee to obtain the views on which the Government obtained the Act; but no emergency can justify a permanent measure of this description. But here, without any statement of their case, the Government are taking advantage of the present panic to make permanent alterations in the Criminal Law of a very objectionable character. They are making it, too, in a manner for which there is absolutely no precedent in this House. The noble Earl said that there was a precedent for suspending the Standing Orders in the case of the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act. But that was a temporary measure, and the suspension was passed *nemine contradicente.* But there is no precedent, I believe, in either House of Parliament for suspending a Standing Order for passing such a Bill in a single night when the Bill was permanent, and objection had been taken to it. I regret very much that the noble Earl has taken this course. I utterly repudiate the idea that it is necessary. It cannot be necessary to pass a permanent measure in this way, though it might be necessary with a temporary measure. I emphatically object to the liberties which have been taken with the Forms of the House. No Notice whatever has been given to the Opposition that a measure of so violent a character was about to be proposed. It would be useless for us, in the present state of the House, to oppose the wishes of the Government. If they had given us a day's Notice, the matter might have been different. Instead of doing that, they have perpetrated a sharp bit of Parliamentary practice; and you must not complain if your turn comes to undergo a similar thing. You have made a breach in the traditional courtesy of the House without any ground whatever. You knew of the necessity two or three days ago, and it was perfectly possible for you to have informed the Members of this House, and so enabled them to exercise their independent judgment on the provisions of the Bill. I freely recognize the necessity of some urgent legislation, and I am fully prepared to entrust the Government with such a temporary measure as they might desire; but I protest against this violation of Forms, which are intended for the security of Parliament; I protest against this violation, in a panic, of the doctrines of our Criminal Law; and I protest against the introduction of this Bill by the practice of a manœuvre which is unworthy of the Government.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, before my noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack answers the noble Marquess with regard to the provisions of the Bill, I must protest, in the strongest terms consistent with Parliamentary courtesy, against the language used by the noble Marquess. I protest that when we come to this House, in the name of the Executive Government, and say that the purposes of public safety require that this Bill should be passed, the Leader of the Opposition should thereupon taunt the Government with a manœuvre and a want of courtesy. I am astounded that the noble Marquess or any Member of the Opposition should descend to such language. The noble Marquess might say that the urgency of the case was not such that it was necessary for us to have come to the House to ask for these powers; but I say we had a right to expect that no personal accusation should be made of a petty manœuvre, when we are performing a solemn public duty. Never, in all my experience in Parliament—and it has been considerable in this House—have I heard language which gave me so much pain —more than that, humiliation—as that used by the noble Marquess. I may leave my noble and learned Friend to answer the noble Marquess's remarks upon the Bill; but I must say that, while I hope I do not use terms of personal offence, I can feel nothing but indignation at the language of the noble Marquess.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he would first deal with the criticism of the noble Marquess in regard to certain clauses. The noble Marquess had said that in the Interpretation Clause a great many substances were included which ought not to be so. But their Lordships would see that the principal clause ran—

> "Under such circumstances as give rise to a reasonable suspicion that he has the same in his possession or under his control for an unlawful purpose."

That, together with the necessary consent of the Attorney General, would be a sufficient protection. The reason why the Bill was drawn in that way was that it would be altogether nugatory if that provision were omitted. If those who had a criminal purpose could not be interfered with while they had in their possession the uncombined elements of explosive substances, which might at any moment be combined with great ease and at once employed to do irreparable mischief, there might as well be no Bill at all. And those who had sulphuric or nitric acid, or any other substance, in their possession for legitimate purposes of which they could give an account, would be fully protected, in the unlikely case of their falling under suspicion. The clause would not operate unless there were circumstances giving rise to reasonable suspicion, or when it could be shown that the articles were possessed for a lawful purpose, or unless the Attorney General authorized a prosecution. Then, with regard to the clauses as to witnesses, they were not objectionable in principle. They authorized the husband or the wife to be called as witnesses if they themselves wished it. If there was a *primâ facie* ground of suspicion, and the explanation was not sufficient, the accused might, if they desired it, give evidence that would excuse them, and show that the articles were intended for a lawful purpose. If it was right to pass that Bill with those stringent clauses for the public safety, it was also right to introduce in favour of any accused person the power of giving evidence for his own exoneration. As to the clause that a witness examined on oath should not be excused from answering on the ground that he might criminate himself by any statement he might make, but that it should not be used against him, there were now many examples of it in our law. He then came to the objections made by the noble Marquess to the manner in which they were proceeding with the Bill. The noble Marquess said they were legislating in a panic. He would not be tempted to recall the echoes of a recent debate; but he must say that if ever there was a reasonable ground for alarm, the events which were known to them all must surely furnish that ground. He totally denied the propriety of the application of the word panic in the only sense in which it could properly be used on that occasion. The sense of a great public danger with which they were brought with some degree of suddenness face to face no doubt was now; but panic was generally understood to mean exaggerated and irrational alarm. He ventured to say that when they discovered a conspiracy for the destruction of public buildings or life, or both, on a large scale, the manufacture on a large scale of materials for that purpose, their transportation from foreign countries, their being brought from one large place to another, and their application actually in one instance with partial success, and in other instances the attempt made manifest, and the fact that these things did not proceed from the exceptional wickedness or folly of some chance individual, but were part of an organized conspiracy, and were so generally felt to be serious, that the whole House of Commons, without a dissentient voice, had thought it their duty, on the urgent representation of the Government, to pass a Bill of that nature through all its stages, he thought he need not say more about the imputation of panic. The Government had reason to know that this was a case so serious that it was not only necessary to legislate in that stringent manner, but not to lose a day in passing their measure. As to the objection that the Bill was made permanent, the dangers which led to the Bill, so far as they depended on the nature of those explosive substances, the facility of their manufacture and transportation, and of using them for purposes the most destructive and ruinous to the public interest, were in the nature of things permanent. It might be that this particular conspiracy might pass away and be put down; it might be that they might not at all times have so much reason to put in force the provisions of that Bill as they had at this moment; but the nature of those explosive substances remained, the power of using them remained; and all those who were disposed to do things that were injurious to this country knew that substances of that kind might be made and used for such purposes. There being, therefore, in that sense a permanent danger, the Government thought it their duty to ask Parliament to apply a permanent remedy. If hereafter a state of things should arise which would disarm those substances of their dangerous character and make them no longer instruments so easy to be used by wicked persons who had for their object the dissolution of all society, then, perhaps, such a Bill might be necessary no longer; but until science should discover the means of depriving them of that nature, a measure of this kind would be requisite. The only reason for dispensing with the Standing Orders was urgency, and that urgency remained whether the Bill was temporary or permanent. The Government thought it ought to be permanent. Though he much regretted the want of unanimity on the Bill, it was not necessary there should be unanimity in order to suspend the Standing Orders. With regard to the absence of Notice, the Government did not themselves know that the Bill would be passed through the other House in all its stages, so that it was impossible that Notice could be given in the ordinary sense of the word. The Government had every reason to believe that noble Lords on the Opposition Bench had as much knowledge on the subject, and as early, as they had. Therefore, he did not think the Government were liable to the charge of want of courtesy, or sharp Parliamentary practice; and he believed they were only doing their duty to the country in demanding urgency for this Bill.

THE EARL OF LEITRIM said, he was of opinion that the Bill, having been introduced in this exceptional manner, should have been of a temporary character only.

On question, *agreed to*, and *resolved* accordingly.

Bill read 1ª; and to be *printed.* (No. 24.)

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Kimberley.*)

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY charged the Government with having, by their mode of introducing the Bill, ousted the House of all judgment on the disputed clause. If they had made it a temporary Bill, they could have considered the various clauses later. He admitted the emergency; but the plea of urgency was only a plea for ousting the House of all power of discussing the Bill. The House had no Notice until 8 o'clock that evening that the Bill would be passed through all its stages, and the Government were masters of the situation. He believed the Government had set a dangerous precedent, which would affect their Parliamentary procedure, for there was no justification for their present course, which had been adopted without the slightest excuse.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, he must deny that the proceedings of the Government had been in any way objectionable. He did not know until that evening that the Bill would pass through the House of Commons in all its stages. As to Notice, his object had been to give the earliest possible Notice in his power. Copies of the Bill had been sent at once to the Leaders of the Opposition, so as not to take the Opposition by surprise. He had not anticipated that a Bill of this urgent nature would be opposed, and he was surprised at the intention expressed by the noble Marquess to oppose the Bill. If the Bill were made temporary, it would have to go back to the other House, and it was impossible to say what they would do with it. He could not see what was the object of the noble Marquess in endeavouring to embarrass the Government.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK said, the noble Marquess was not embarrassing the Government at all, for there was no opposition to the Bill. The Bill contained clauses which were open to discussion. The 6th section was one that in the Irish Act was made only temporary, the period of its operation being three years. If this Bill had been drawn in the same manner as the Irish Bill with respect to these provisions, there would have been no reason to object. After the declaration the Government had made on their responsibility, and with the knowledge possessed by their Lordships as to what was going on in that City, it would be wrong to stop the Bill; but it was fair to protest that this clause had quite a different purview, and had nothing to do with the permanent part of the Bill as it stood, so that it might have been limited in duration as its permanent adoption needed discussion.

On question, *resolved* in the *affirmative;* Bill read 2ª accordingly.

Then it was *moved* that the Bill be now committed to a Committee of the Whole House; on question, *resolved* in the *negative.*

Then it was *moved* that the Bill be now read 3ª; on question, *resolved* in the *affirmative;* Bill read 3ª accordingly.

Then it was *moved* that the Bill do pass; on question, *resolved* in the *affirmative;* Bill *passed* accordingly, and a message sent to the Commons to acquaint them therewith.

House adjourned at half past Eleven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 9th April, 1883.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—Alfred Giles, esquire, *for* Southampton.

SELECT COMMITTEE—Turnpike Acts Continuance Act, 1882, *appointed* and *nominated;* Canals, *nominated.*

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee*—Resolutions 1, 2, 3.

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—London and South Western Railway (Bournemouth Direct Railway, &c.) *.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Glebe Loan (Ireland) Acts Amendment (No. 2) * [138]; Canal Boats Act (1877) Amendment * [139].

Ordered — *First Reading* — *Second Reading* — *Committee* — *Report*—*Third Reading*—Explosive Substances, and *passed.*

Committee—*Report*—Bills of Sale (Ireland) Act (1879) Amendment * [105].

Third Reading — Land Drainage Provisional Order * [114]; Army (Annual) * [123], and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — EXTRA ALLOWANCES TO PRISON WARDERS FOR EXTRA DUTIES.

MR. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If any decision has been arrived at as to extra allowances to prison warders in Ireland, in reference to their extra duties performed under the Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act; and, if so, when any such allowances are likely to be paid?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I presume the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) intends his Question to refer to duties performed in connection with the custody of prisoners under the Protection of Person and Property Act, seeing that the General Prisons Board made certain recommendations to the Government on that subject. Those recommendations were of a very extensive character, and the Board was informed by His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant that they were quite inadmissible in consequence of their unlimited form. His Excellency invited the Board to submit the cases of any individual officers whom it was desired to recommend for extra remuneration on the ground of exceptional responsibility or of expenses out of pocket. This communication was made to the Board on the 5th of February last; but no reply has since been received.

ARTIZANS' AND LABOURERS' DWELLINGS ACTS — THE NEW SCHEMES OF THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether they are proceeding with their four new schemes under the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Acts, 1875-82; and, at what stage they at present stand?

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG, in reply, said, he begged to inform his right hon. Friend that the Metropolitan Board was proceeding with the four schemes referred to, and that the local inquiries made, under the direction of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, had been concluded in each case. If the Secretary of State, on the report of the local Inspector, approved the schemes, Provisional Orders would, no doubt, be issued and confirmed in the usual manner.

POST OFFICE (CONTRACTS)—THE IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. GIBSON asked the Postmaster General, Whether there is anything in the proposed Irish Mail Contract regulating the time to be taken on the land journey and the sea journey respectively, or whether the contract will be satisfied by the whole journey being perfected in ten and a-half hours; and, whether, under the proposed contract, it would be competent for the London and North Western Railway Company to accelerate their land journey and lessen the present speed of the sea journey, provided the whole journey did not occupy more than ten and a-half hours?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, I hope the contract will be laid on the Table in the course of a few days; but, as its terms are not yet finally settled, I think the right hon. and learned Gentlman will agree that it will not be desirable for me to state what may be the precise effect of the document.

Mr. GIBSON: I must really press, with great respect, for an answer. My Question is categorical and quite clear.

Mr. FAWCETT: I have before answered a Question similar to this, and I can assure the right hon. and learned Gentleman that I should be very sorry to withhold any information from the House. The negotiations are now in that state that will soon enable their character to be explained to the House; therefore, I hope he will not press me to be more explicit upon the matter. I may, however, state generally, as I have stated before, that the contract is for ten and a-half hours on the land and sea service combined; but I do not pledge myself that there will not be in the contract a provision stipulating for a certain rate of speed in the sea service taken by itself.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE SHERIFF CLERK OF FORFARSHIRE.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Lord Advocate, What are the terms of the appointment of the new Sheriff Clerk of Forfarshire; whether he can continue to hold with the Sheriff Clerkship various other offices, including the clerkship and treasurership to the Trustees of the Harbour of Montrose; and, whether, for the proper discharge of his duties, it is not judged necessary that he should reside at Dundee?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): Sir, the Sheriff Clerk of Forfarshire is required by the terms of his appointment to discharge the duties of the office personally at Dundee, and he is debarred from holding any other office of emolument, or practising as a solicitor. Previous to Mr. Ross's appointment, he was permitted to complete his current engagement as clerk and treasurer to the Harbour Trustees of Montrose, which terminates at the beginning of August. A similar arrangement was made with regard to the agency of the bank which Mr. Ross held.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: Do I understand that he is to live at Dundee?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): There is no stipulation as to where he shall live; but he shall be always there during his official hours. There is no stipulation as to his residence, and there never has been.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL SCHOOL.

Sir MASSEY LOPES asked the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, If it is correct that the claims of boys of ten and a-half years of age, whose fathers are living, have been excluded from all consideration for admission to Greenwich Hospital School, in anticipation of any proposed changes, and contrary to the existing Orders in Council; and, whether, if any important alterations are contemplated with reference to the administration and reduction of boys in Greenwich Hospital School, he will give the House an opportunity of expressing an opinion upon those changes before they are carried into effect?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: Sir, it is correct that the admission to Greenwich Hospital School of boys of 10½ years of age, whose fathers are living, has been temporarily suspended; but there is no intention of permanently reducing the number maintained at the expense of Greenwich Hospital. A plan is under consideration for educating boys with strong service claims, but not physically eligible for Greenwich School. It is proposed to maintain 800 boys in Greenwich School, and 200 in institutions similar to those in which the daughters of seamen and Marines are at present educated. A Bill is in course of preparation, giving power to the Admiralty to carry this plan into effect; and, on its introduction, an opportunity will be given for discussing any changes in the administration of the school.

Sir MASSEY LOPES asked whether, as the funds of Greenwich Hospital were very considerable, the hon. Gentleman would consider the expediency of maintaining the same number of boys at Greenwich Hospital School as were formerly maintained there, and would also maintain the 200 additional boys elsewhere?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY, in reply, said, the question should be considered if it were found that there were now any boys claiming admission to the school in excess of the number for which provision was proposed to be made.

Mr. PULESTON: Will the hon. Gentleman say when the Bill will be introduced?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: It is in preparation, and will be presented at an early date.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE EXTRACTOR OF THE COURT OF SESSION.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to complaints of unreasonable delays in the office of the Extractor of the Court of Session; whether it is true that in a recent case involving the payment of £20,000 the unsuccessful suitor had to wait five weeks before he could obtain an extract of the judgment of the Court; whether it is true that the principal Extractor engages in private business as a solicitor; what are the salaries and staff of the office; and, whether he contemplates taking any steps to ensure the public against the delays complained of?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): Sir, I am aware that complaints have been made of delay in the Extractor's Office; but I have not been able to trace the case to which my hon. Friend refers. The Extractor is debarred by Act of Parliament from practising before the Court of Session, but not from practising otherwise as a solicitor, and he is a member of a firm of solicitors in Edinburgh. The salaries and staff of the office are:—Principal Extractor, £500; Assistant Extractor, £300; Clerk of Records, £100; and four engrossing clerks paid by their writings. In conjunction with the Treasury, I very recently directed an inquiry to be made into this Office, and I hope there will be no ground of complaint in the future.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—DISTRIBUTION OF OUTDOOR RELIEF AT STOKESTOWN.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the distribution of outdoor relief in 1880 at Stokestown, county Roscommon, was attended with irregularity and abuse; whether the Local Government inspector, Colonel Deane, reported to the Local Government Board, Ireland, that the irregularity and abuses were chiefly due to the incompetency of the clerk of the union; whether serious complaints were made against this officer in reference to the distribution of seeds in the same union and about the same period; and, whether the Local Government Board, Ireland, will consider the advisability of superannuating that officer?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Local Government Board inform me that it is true that the distribution of outdoor relief at Stokestown in 1880 was attended with irregularity and abuse. The late Colonel Deane reported that he feared the clerk of the Union must have checked the books of the relieving officer in a perfunctory manner; but Major Spaight, the Inspector who succeeded Colonel Deane, did not entertain an unfavourable opinion of the clerk, and the Local Government Board consider that the abuses were mainly owing to the action of the Board of Guardians. Complaints were made with regard to the purchase and distribution of seed; but it does not appear that any charge of improper conduct was substantiated against the clerk. The Local Government Board have no power to grant a superannuation allowance to the clerk of the Union, and they do not consider that they have any grounds for taking steps with the view of removing him from the position he holds.

Mr. O'KELLY asked if the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the distribution of the seed referred to was entrusted to the subordinate agents of the local landlord; that no effort was made to control it; and that a great number of persons had been proceeded against who complained that they never received any seed in this manner?

Mr. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, that nothing like this had been reported, though the relief was distributed on a scale that was considered excessive.

STATE OF IRELAND — ALLEGED DISTRESS AT LOUGH GLYNN.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a resolution passed by a number of tenants on the estates of Lords Dillon and De Freyne, on the 25th of February, at Lough Glynn, declaring that great poverty and distress exist among the small farmers, and recommending that the State should come to their aid and enable them to seed and drain their land; and, whether he can hold out any hopes of relief to these poor people?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, my attention has been called to the Resolution, a copy of which was submitted to the Government at the time that it was passed. In consequence of its receipt, an Inspector of the Local Government Board was specially directed to visit the district. He did so, and reported that, having made careful inquiries into all the circumstances of the case, he had no hesitation in saying that, in his opinion, the statements in the resolution were an exaggeration of facts. No special complaints had since been received from that district.

THE ROYAL YACHT CLUB—EXCLUSIVE RIGHT OF FLYING THE WHITE ENSIGN.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether there is any Minute of the Lords of the Admiralty securing to the Royal Yacht Squadron the exclusive right to fly the white ensign; and, whether there is any special cause why the use of this flag should be granted to one particular yacht club, and to no other?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: Perhaps the hon. Member will allow me, Sir, to answer this Question. By an Admiralty Minute of July 22, 1842, the privilege of wearing the white ensign of Her Majesty's Fleet was ordered to be confined to the Royal Yacht Squadron. The Order was given, as it is explained in a Return presented to the House of Commons on the 20th July, 1859, on the ground that the Royal Yacht Squadron is recognized as the leading yacht club of the United Kingdom.

Mr. MACFARLANE: If confusion sometimes arises from the use by the Royal Yacht Squadron of the white ensign of Her Majesty's Fleet, will the hon. Gentleman consider the propriety —seeing that the Royal Yacht Squadron is by no means the largest yacht club in the United Kingdom—of reducing all yachts to the blue ensign, or, still better, to the red ensign of the Mercantile Marine?

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked if the hon. Gentleman (Sir Thomas Brassey) was aware that, in that part of the United Kingdom called Ireland, there was a yacht squadron which by no means considered the Royal Yacht Squadron the chief yacht squadron. Was it proposed to give that the same privilege?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY, in reply, said, he had stated the facts historically, and he was not authorized to announce any change.

POST OFFICE—POSTAL ORDERS TO THE COLONIES.

Mr. MONK asked the Postmaster General, Whether he can hold out any expectations that Postal Orders will be extended to the colonies?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, instructions have already been given for the drafting of a Bill, which I hope shortly to introduce, which will authorize the extension of the system of postal orders to the Colonies.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE—DISINFECTION OF HIDES AND OFFAL OF ANIMALS SLAUGHTERED UNDER THE ACTS.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether any steps have been taken upon a letter, recently addressed to the Lords of the Privy Council by the Devon County Agricultural Association, on the subject of further precautions against the dissemination of foot and mouth disease?

Mr. DODSON: Sir, in the absence of my right hon. Friend (Mr. Mundella) I will answer the Question. It would not be possible to carry out an Order for the disinfection of all hides, as suggested by the North Devon Chamber of Agriculture; but I am informed that the Privy Council have now a plan under consideration for dealing with the hides, offal, and other parts of carcases of animals slaughtered in the country when suffering from foot-and-mouth disease. Provisions have long existed for the disinfection of the hides and offal of diseased foreign animals slaughtered at the Foreign Animals Wharves.

SCOTLAND—THE INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM, EDINBURGH.

Mr. BUCHANAN asked the First Commissioner of Works, Why the £5,000 voted last year as an instalment for the completion of the Industrial Museum in Edinburgh has not been expended, and why the works have not yet been begun?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, plans were prepared last year by the Department over which he presided for the completion of the Edinburgh Museum. Those plans were referred to the Education Department; but he believed differences of opinion had arisen between the Department and the local authorities in Edinburgh; those differences had not yet been settled. In the meantime, the Vote would be included in the Estimates.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT — THE CLERKS AT DUBLIN.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Postmaster General, If he has received a petition from Clerks in the Postal Telegraph Department, Dublin, asking for an annual holiday equal to the annual holiday enjoyed by Postal Telegraph Clerks in London; and, what reply he has given to the petition?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, two years ago an application was received from the telegraph force in Dublin requesting that those of their number who were in receipt of £2 a-week and upwards might be granted one month's leave in the course of the year; and in May last it was announced to the service generally that no extension of the annual leave could be granted. Since then no application on the subject has reached me from Dublin. I may add that in Dublin the period of annual leave is practically the same as in London—namely, for superintending officers, one month; for telegraphists, who have Sunday and night duty, three weeks; and for others, one fortnight.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND) PENSION FUND—THE ANNUAL STATEMENT.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, When the Annual Account of the National School Teachers (Ireland) Pension Fund, now overdue, will be presented?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, the details required by the 5th section of the National School Teachers (Ireland) Act of 1879 are included in the Annual Account of the Pension Fund, certified by the Comptroller and Auditor General, and laid before Parliament. In order to avoid the multiplication of Returns, the Treasury decided that the details in question should not be presented in duplicate. As, however, experience has shown that the Annual Account of the Pension Fund cannot be rendered, audited, and presented within three months of the close of the year, it will be necessary to lay before Parliament a Minute under the Act 32 & 33 *Vict.*, c. 86, discontinuing the Return under the National School Teachers Act "as containing information that is contained in another Account laid before Parliament;" and this I will do forthwith.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS (IRELAND)—THE RETURNS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the following Reports, all overdue, will be presented:—Public Works (Ireland), Annual Report; Local Government Board (Ireland), Annual Report; Bankruptcy and Insolvency, Return from Official Assignees (Ireland) (20 and 21 Vic. c. 60); Return of Persons tried and convicted of Criminal Offences in Ireland (56 Geo. 3, c. 120)?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Irish Government has no responsibility with regard to the presentation of the Report of the Commissioners of Public Works. I may, however, remind the hon. Member (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) that, in reply to a former Question from him, my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) fully explained to the House, on the 12th of last month, the facts connected with it. The Report of the Local Government Board will, I understand, be ready in a few days. No time is prescribed for its presentation; and, as it is made up to the 31st of March, I do not think, having regard to its character and extent, that it can reasonably be said to be overdue on the 8th of April. The Return from the Official Assignees will, I believe, be laid on the Table to-day. The Returns under 56 *Geo.* III., c. 120, were presented on the 22nd of February last.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE ROTA OF JUDGES.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, On what principle of selection Mr. Justice O'Brien has been appointed to preside at the forthcoming trials for murder and conspiracy in Dublin, he having been the judge who presided also at the second Court Commission in Green Street?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the Government has nothing whatever to do with the selection of the Judges who preside at the Commission Court. They sit according to a rotation fixed by themselves. I am informed that Mr. Justice O'Brien presided at the second or last Commission, on behalf and at the request of another Judge, who was prevented by illness from sitting. I am not quite certain whether it is an answer to the hon. Gentleman; but the important point is, that the rotation is fixed by the Judges, and that the Government have no responsibility.

Mr. O'BRIEN: Has the right hon. Gentleman any objection to inform the House, whether the Judge who was ill is Baron Dowse; why Baron Dowse, if recovered, did not take his turn; and, whether Baron Dowse was not sufficiently recovered to preside at the last Wexford Assizes?

Mr. TREVELYAN: That is a matter which the Judges must determine among themselves. Baron Dowse was the Judge whose place was taken by Mr. Justice O'Brien.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—COLONEL HEPENSTALL.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, during the recent contested election for the office of Poor Law Guardian, in the Mullanalaghta Division of the Granard Union, county Longford, Colonel Dopping Hepenstall, a justice of the peace and deputy Lieutenant, made use of his police escort to enable him to intimidate his tenants into voting for the candidate of his choice; whether he went from house to house, gun in hand, accompanied by two policemen, calling on those whom he visited to vote for the candidate he supported; whether, on two occasions, he told the police to drive from the place the electors who were canvassing for the national candidate, and threatened these electors that he would commit them to gaol for three months if they did not go away; and, whether, if this be true, the Chief Secretary will take some steps to prevent police protection from being used for such purposes?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have received a telegram, stating that Colonel Hepenstall, who is under police protection, was out, accompanied, as usual, by an armed escort. He saw a crowd crossing his land, and, on inquiry, he ascertained that they were canvassing for a Poor Law election. He ordered them off, telling them that they were trespassers. The telegram, however, does not state whether the land was in his occupation or not. He himself canvassed for another candidate, and being under constant police protection, he was, as a matter of course, accompanied by police when doing so; but he distinctly denies having intimidated or having used the police, either to support his canvass, or drive off electors or canvassers, or having threatened to send any one to gaol. If the hon. Member is not satisfied with this explanation, I will make any further inquiry he wishes.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS FOR THE SHILLELAGH UNION, CO. WICKLOW, AND BANTRY—ALLEGED INTIMIDATION.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Mr. J. A. Scott, solicitor, Gorey, and Mr. Dodd, solicitor, Wicklow, acting as the legal advisers of candidates at the election of Poor Law Guardians for the Carnew Division of the Shillelagh Union, were refused admission to the counting of votes by the returning officer on the ground that—

> "He had no power under the direction of the Board of Guardians to admit any person except the candidates and their proposers;"

whether the brother of the returning officer in question was a successful candidate in the Carnew Division; whether Mr. Swan, a Conservative Guardian, was permitted to be present at the counting of votes in other divisions besides the division for which he was elected; and, whether the Board of Guardians or the returning officer have any power to order the exclusion of the legal advisers of candidates?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, it is a fact that the returning officer refused to admit the professional gentlemen named to the counting of the votes. The rules which govern the action of a returning officer on this point expressly leave it to his discretion whether or not strangers shall be admitted. In explanation of his decision in this case, the returning officer states that, in his opinion, the attendance of solicitors representing only one side would seriously interfere with the impartial discharge of his duties; and he, therefore, deemed it advisable to exclude them from the scrutiny. It is the case that the brother of the returning officer in question was a successful candidate in the Carnew division. With regard to the presence of Mr. Swan in the board-room, it appears that he went in towards the conclusion of the counting of the votes for the division immediately preceding that for the division for which he was a candidate. As already stated, the returning officer had power to exclude legal advisers; the Board of Guardians have no such power; and if, on this occasion, they endeavoured to influence the returning officer in the matter, they exceeded their jurisdiction, which the Local Government Board will point out to them.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the circumstances of the recent election of Poor Law Guardians for the Bantry Union, and to the widespread system of threats used by certain landlords resident in the Union to their tenants to compel them to vote, or not to vote, in a particular way, or in consequence of having so voted; whether it is the case that Mr. John W. Payne, J.P., agent to the Earl of Bantry, has issued a number of notices to quit and ejectments against voters who refused to vote for the candidates favoured by him, and whether any Return could be obtained of the number of notices to quit and ejectments so issued; whether his attention has been called in particular to the case of Daniel Leary, of Crohingal, Whiddy Island, whom Mr. Payne threatened that he would make pay every penny of rent he owes (including the hanging half gale) the very day after the 25th March, and whom Mr. Payne also threatened that he (Leary) "would rue it" unless he voted in a particular manner;" and, whether, under the circumstances, the Government intend to prosecute Mr. Payne for intimidation under the Crimes Act?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I have received no information as to a widespread system of threats such as is referred to; and I am informed by the special resident magistrate that he has heard no complaint of cases of the kind, and that he is personally satisfied that no such intimidation took place. However, I am making further local inquiry especially as to the particular cases mentioned in the latter part of the Question; but there has not been time for the replies to reach me as yet.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE DISTRESS IN DONEGAL.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the following telegram from Rev. James M'Fadden, P.P., Gweadon, county Donegal, contains an accurate description of the condition to which the people are reduced in that neighbourhood:—

> "Attitude of poor one of frenzy and despair; in the grip of starvation; without seed to crop land; disease amongst children breaking out at different points in the parish, so that very few townlands are untouched; medical inspector did not visit tenth of cases affected; medical officer physically unable to be present at every case; knows about a sixth of the sickness in the district; last week a child died in next townland to doctor, to whom he had not been called at all; the prevalent and fatal disease amongst the children is pronounced by medical officer scarlatina with diphtheria; relief was not 'offered and declined,' as said by Chief Secretary on Monday night; relieving officer called at only one house; all are in receipt of private charity and are dependent on it; I am daily besieged by crowds of people asking for meal and seed; Poor Law officialism here a thorough mockery; Government inspector avoids meeting those who are competent to give him a right knowledge of the state of the people;"

and, whether, in view of such a state of things, he will continue to leave the destitute population of this and other parishes dependent upon fluctuating private charity for the next four months and a-half?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, from the information which has reached the Government, I believe that the telegram quoted contains exaggerated statements in regard to the condition of the people of Gweadon. However, as it impugns the efficiency of the recent inspection of Dr. Woodhouse, the Local Government Board Inspector, and the accuracy of his Reports—the substance of which I communicated to the House on this day week—it has seemed only right to invite his further observations on the subject, and this has been done; but there has not yet been time for his reply to come to hand, except a few lines by telegram indorsing what he said before, and stating he was going again to Gweadon, and would report further. I may observe that the sender of the telegram quoted in the Question appears to be under a misapprehension as to what I said about Poor Law relief being offered and declined. My statement on that subject referred very distinctly to one family only, and, I should have thought, could not possibly be misapprehended.

Mr. O'BRIEN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he has any objection to Dr. Woodhouse, in his further Report, stating that persons would have died from starvation but for the private charity which by his Reports he is destroying and bringing to a standstill?

Mr. O'DONNELL: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, if, in case the Poor Law Inspector's Reports are impugned, he will make any provisions for Reports by an impartial authority?

[No reply.]

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—THE NEW EGYPTIAN LOANS.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the new Egyptian Loans will be raised on the general credit of the Egyptian Government, or whether any portion of the revenues hitherto devoted to the Egyptian Administration is to be specially assigned over for the new debt in the same way as half the gross revenues are already assigned for previous debts; whether the arrangements for borrowing and paying away the money are to be made on the sole authority of the Khedive as an absolute prince, and neither the old Chamber of Notables nor the proposed new Councils are to be allowed any voice in the matter; and, whether the new loans are to be secured by any International obligation, or in any other way, the British Government will come under any sort of obligation to compel payment in case of failure?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, it has been repeatedly stated that the British Government are not responsible for the debts of the Egyptian Government. I mentioned on Thursday last that, under Article 37 of the Law of Liquidation, the Egyptian Government had powers to borrow a certain sum on current account. Whether it will be necessary to go beyond the amount, as limited in the Law of Liquidation, in order to meet the expenditure for the Indemnity and the Army of Occupation, is, as I stated, a question now occupying the attention of the Financial Adviser of the Egyptian Government, who is in Europe, on business connected with the above and other financial questions. Under Article 60, chapter 5, of the Draft Egyptian Charter, the General Assembly must be consulted before any loan exceeding £1,000,000 sterling can be raised.

ASIATIC TURKEY—THE GOVERNORSHIP OF THE LEBANON.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Miradite Prince, Bib Doda, has been definitely appointed Governor General of the Lebanon, in succession to Rustem Pacha; and, if so, whether the succession of this Prince for that post meets with the full approval of Her Majesty's Government?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, Prince Bib Doda has not been definitely appointed Governor of the Lebanon, and Her Majesty's Government have not given their approval to the appointment.

THE DANUBIAN CONFERENCE.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to the statement in the "Morning Post" of April 6th, that the exclusion of the Roumanian representative from the Conference for regulation of the Danubian navigation was mainly due to the action of the British Government; and, whether the statement is correct?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, the statement contained in *The Morning Post* has no foundation whatever, as a reference to the Papers laid before Parliament will show.

TREATY OF BERLIN—ARTICLE 61—REFORMS IN ARMENIA.

Mr. BRYCE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government will present to the House Copies of all communications which have passed during the last two years between Her Majesty and the Ottoman Porte regarding the execution of the reforms in Armenia stipulated for by the 61st Article of the Treaty of Berlin; and, whether Her Majesty's Representative at Constantinople is now instructed to continue to press for the execution of those reforms in pursuance of that Article?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, Lord Dufferin, who will shortly proceed to Constantinople, has received full instructions on this subject. Her Majesty's Government do not think it desirable to present the Correspondence asked for by the hon. Member until a further Report has been received from his Excellency.

SPAIN—EXPULSION OF CERTAIN CUBAN REFUGEES FROM GIBRALTAR.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What is the reason of the delay which has taken place in presenting further Papers as to the Cuban Refugees; and, whether they will be immediately presented?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, there has been no unnecessary delay in the presentation of the Papers to which the right hon. Member refers. They were only received last week, and are now in the printer's hands. I hope they will be distributed to Members at latest on Thursday.

THE METROPOLITAN AND METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAYS—MEANS OF VENTILATION.

Mr. W. H. JAMES asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his Department has had brought under its notice any means of improving the ventilation of the Underground Railway by the use of engines other than those of the ordinary locomotive; and, if he is aware whether any trials of any such locomotives have ever taken place?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, no such means as are alluded to in the Question have been brought under the notice of the Board of Trade for improving the ventilation of the Underground Railway. I ought to add that I have no appliances for testing any invention which may be brought to me, and I have no authority to insure their adoption, even if I should approve of them.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—SEIZURE OF DOCUMENTS—CASE OF MATTHEW HARRIS.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Matthew Harris, T.C. of Ballinasloe, on the occasion of the recent search and seizure of his papers by the police, requested Sub-Inspector Joyce to allow him to see any documents that the police might determine to take away so that he might first index them, with a view to future identification; and, whether the Sub-Inspector, after agreeing to the request of Mr. Harris, took the papers away against his will without allowing him to index them as a measure of precaution; why the Sub-Inspector refused to permit Mr. Harris to take the only measure by which he might protect himself against the introduction of other documents from his papers after they had been taken from his house; whether, under the 14th section of the Crime Prevention Act, declaring all articles seized to be forfeited to Her Majesty, the act of seizure does not involve the consequence of forfeiture, and whether, therefore, the police are not bound, in the case of papers and documents, to abstain from seizure and removal until they have ascertained that the papers and documents are of such a character as to call for forfeiture to Her Majesty; what has been done, or is to be done, with Mr. Harris's papers; and, whether any assurance can be given that the course pursued by Sub-Inspector Joyce in the case of Mr. Harris—namely, the removal of documents in bulk before examination, will not be again adopted? He would also ask the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the following statement by Mr. Harris:—

> "I called on the police to let me see the alleged document—the document referred to by the Chief Secretary as bearing on a murder case—but it was refused. The county inspector was not made acquainted by Sub-Inspector Joyce of the seizure, and as to a document connected with murder there is not a shadow of truth in the Chief Secretary's assertion."

He would now ask the right hon. Gentleman how it was that the Sub-Inspector conducted these proceedings without the knowledge of the County Inspector, his superior officer, who was living in the same town; and, also, if he has now any further information with respect to the one document to which, on Friday last, he attached a criminal character?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, I will first answer the Question of which the hon. Member has given Notice. I am informed that after the search had commenced, and when only a few documents had been found, Mr. Harris asked to be allowed to take a note of such as it was intended to remove. To this the Sub-Inspector agreed; but found afterwards that the mass of documents was so great as to render it impossible to carry out the arrangement, and Mr. Harris then made no objection, either as regards the removal or as to not being able to take a note of the papers. All papers were not removed. An examination and selection, so far as was possible under the circumstances, was made. As to the legal points raised in the third paragraph of the Question, I am advised that, if there be a seizure in the sense meant by the Act, there is also a forfeiture; but that a mere removal to a convenient place for the purpose of examination is not necessarily a "seizure" within the section; and, in this instance, the removal was only for examination with the view of determining whether any seizure should be made. If Mr. Harris considers that the Sub-Inspector exceeded his duty he has his remedy. As I have already stated, such papers as are not forfeited will be returned to Mr. Harris. With regard to the hon. Gentleman's further Question, it contains a good many queries, and I will require Notice to answer them. I may say that no difference can be made between the case of Mr. Matthew Harris and anyone else, and as his papers were seized in connection with so grave a matter as murder, the law cannot recognize any sort of distinction of person; and I am not aware whether Mr. Matthew Harris's case should be taken separately from the great number of persons who had their houses searched, and their documents examined in reference to cases of crime and murder.

MR. SEXTON: Am I to understand that the right hon. Gentleman is unable to give an answer as to how it was that the search in this case was made without the knowledge of the chief officer of the police resident in the same town?

MR. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, that as to the question of fact relating to the action of the police, it was perfectly obvious that he should first ask the police as to the state of the case before he answered the question.

MR. SEXTON: I will ask a further Question on this and other points on Thursday next.

MR. O'KELLY: I called the attention of the House the other day to the removal of these papers; and I asked the right hon. Gentleman what guarantee there was for a man, after the police have carried away his papers, without having any record of them, that other papers—["Order, order!"]—would not be placed amongst them that were not removed. Such things are not new in Ireland.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not asking a Question.

Mr. O'DONNELL: It is not asked that any difference should be made between Mr. Harris and anyone else; but are we to understand that in the case of anyone whose premises may be searched, papers can be removed by the police without any opportunity being given to the person whose premises are searched to make any record of the papers which are taken from his possession?

Mr. TREVELYAN: That was not done in this case, for these papers were taken away by the police with Mr. Harris's consent. It was thought that this would be for his convenience, as otherwise the police would have been a long time in his house searching the premises.

Mr. SEXTON: Mr. Harris utterly denies that statement.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION — RETURN OF VOLUNTARY AGREEMENTS MADE OUT OF AND LODGED IN COURT.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will assent to a Motion for a Return of agreements between landlord and tenant in Ireland, made out of court, and lodged in court, from the beginning of the operations of the Irish Land Commission up to the end of last month, such Return to be in the form given from time to time in the official "Dublin Gazette?"

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, there is no objection, on the part of the Irish Government or of the Land Commission, to the granting of such a Return; but the expense of printing it as a Parliamentary Return would be considerable, and it is possible that objection might be made on this account, as the information is quite easily available already. The Return is published from time to time in *The Dublin Gazette*, and the Land Commissioners inform me that copies for each month can be supplied from their office. If the hon. Member orders a supply he will get it.

Mr. O'Kelly

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—THE RAILWAY PASSENGER DUTY.

Mr. E. STANHOPE asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in remitting, as he proposes, part of the Railway Passenger Duty, security will be taken to insure that season ticket holders shall at once receive the benefit of such remission by the reduction of the five per cent. duty at present levied upon them over and above the cost of their tickets?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): Sir, I am not quite sure that I understand the exact object of the Question, in consequence of the introduction into it of the words "at once;" but, if it is that after the Railway Duty Bill passes, persons taking out season tickets may have the benefit of any reduction of the duty as from the 1st of October, I think that will be a matter for the Railway Companies. The duty is paid by them, not by the travellers, and the fares charged on season tickets are not, I think, fixed by law, but by the Companies themselves. I will, however, consider the point before the Bill is introduced, and perhaps my hon. Friend will privately explain to me exactly what his object is.

MADAGASCAR—SECURITY OF BRITISH RESIDENTS.

Mr. CROPPER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If any further arrangement will be made to aid and protect British residents in Madagascar?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Yes, Sir; it is proposed to appoint immediately a Vice Consul, who will reside at the capital, Antananarivo. Mr. Pakenham, Her Majesty's Consul, is resident at Tamatave.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Mr. DALRYMPLE asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he will postpone the Second Reading of the Universities (Scotland) Bill, which stands for Thursday next, till such a date as will permit the reasonable consideration of the Bill by those most interested in it?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): I shall be quite ready to postpone the second reading of this Bill until such time as will give opportunity for consideration to those most interested, and I shall be glad to confer with hon. Members as to the time desirable.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—THE BELFAST MAGISTRATES AND TRADE DISPUTES.

Mr. BROADHURST asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the case of a trades dispute in Belfast, as reported in the "Morning News" of 3rd instant, where during the proceedings before the magistrates, Mr. Hamilton, R.M. threatened to deal with similar future cases under the Crimes Act; and, whether he will inform Mr. Hamilton and other magistrates that under no circumstances is the Crimes Act to be applied to trade disputes, as promised by the Government during the passing of that Act last Session?

Mr. TREVELYAN, in reply, said, he saw in the papers the statement of Mr. Hamilton with regard to the application of the Crimes Act to trade disputes. The Government, of course, had no control over Mr. Hamilton; but he (Mr. Trevelyan) had communicated with Lord Spencer as to whether it was advisable to issue instructions to the police on the matter, directing them not to bring any such cases forward under the Crimes Act, as they were decidedly of opinion that they should not be so brought forward.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE CUBAN REFUGEES—THE DEBATE.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he had given Notice of his intention to ask the First Lord of the Treasury on what day he could give facilities for discussing the question of the relief of the Cuban Refugees. As, however, the Papers relating to the subject were to be in the hands of hon. Members on Thursday, he would postpone his Question until Monday next.

INDIA — MYSORE GOLD MINES—GRANTS OF LAND TO BRITISH OFFICIALS AND OTHERS.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the statements of the native Prime Minister of the Maharajah of Mysore, in the recently-published papers relating to gold mines in Mysore, that tracts of land in Mysore which had been granted to British officials and others by the British administrators of Mysore without any advantage to the Mysore State, were being disposed of by the concessionaires at an immense profit to gold mining Companies in England; whether, in particular, his attention has been called to the statement of the Dewan that—

> "The Colar concessionaires have in some instances sold the lands which they obtained from Government for nothing for almost fabulous prices, the benefits of which are neither derived by Government nor by the Companies who will eventually work the enterprise;"

and whether the Indian Government took any steps to bring these warnings to the notice of the English public; and, whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into the manner in which British officials promoted the said mining speculations in England?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: Sir, if the hon. Member refers to previous passages in the letter from which he quotes, he will see that the land in question was not disposed of without advantage to the Mysore State. A sum of 55,000 rupees, representing the capitalized value of the unusually high assessment of 5 rupees per acre, was paid to that State for a square mile of land, previously waste and unproductive. The same letter specifies this same rate of 5 rupees per acre as the basis of the terms on which the Mysore Government is prepared in future to lease land for mining purposes—terms which they consider "the best calculated to assure the permanent interests" of the State. Government has no knowledge of the arrangements made between the Gold Mining Companies and the concessionaires. In 1879 the Government of India caused a careful Survey and Report on the auriferous lands in the neighbouring South-East Wynaad, in British territory, to be prepared by Mr. Brough Smyth, an eminent mining engineer. This Report was published in 1880, by order of the Secretary of State, at a low price, and several hundred copies were sold. It contained distinct warning of the risks of gold mining in these districts. The Government of India will be directed to furnish a Report upon the whole question of the concessions granted in Mysore during the minority of the Maharajah, and of the connection of British officials therewith. Under these circumstances, I do not see how any inquiry in this country would be attended with practical results.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked if the hon. Gentleman was aware that the concessions for which the Mysore Government received 55,000 rupees were disposed of by the official promoters of Companies for the sum of £250,000, and that these Companies subsequently disposed of their interests to British investors on the Stock Exchange for £500,000; whether he was aware that the Native Ruler of Mysore warned the Government that it was impossible for investors in London to obtain any profit, in face of the sums for which the original promoters obtained the concessions; and whether, under these circumstances, it was not considered necessary to open inquiries in London as to the relations between the original promoters and the promoters on the Stock Exchange, who obtained £500,000 sterling for the trifling outlay of 55,000 rupees?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: I must remind the hon. Member that assertions are not facts. As far as we know about the case, 55,000 rupees were paid for this one square mile of land; and the other statements which the hon. Member has made are, as far as we know, only reported in the newspapers.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE ACT, 1882—THE INCOME TAX.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Why an Income Tax at the rate of 6½*d.* in the pound was charged by order of the Board of Inland Revenue upon half-yearly dividends paid between the passing of the Customs and Inland Revenue Act of August 10th 1882 and the 5th October following; and, whether such proceeding is not in conflict with the 9th section of the said Act, by which it is directed that where any dividends are due or payable half-yearly in the course of the said year (the 6th April 1882 to 5th April 1883, inclusive), the first half-yearly payment shall be deemed to have been or be chargeable with the duty of 5*d.* in the pound in place of the 6½*d.* actually levied, and if the result of this levy of 1½*d.* Income Tax six months in advance of the date at which it was legally due, brought within the financial year ending 1 April 1883, payments which would otherwise have been realised by the subsequent financial year?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, by the desire of my right hon. Friend, I propose to answer this Question. (1.) Income Tax at the rate of 6½*d.* in the pound was charged upon half-yearly dividends paid between the passing of the Customs and Inland Revenue Act of August 10, 1882, and the 5th of October following, in accordance with the general provisions of the law for charging the tax of the year from the 6th of April, 1882, to the 5th of April, 1883, at the rate of 6½*d.*; (2.) the Proviso to the 9th section, 45 & 46 *Vict.* c. 41, was not intended to override these general provisions, but was introduced to secure the additional rate of tax, in cases where half-yearly or quarterly payments had been made between the 6th of April, 1882, and the passing of the Act with a deduction of 5*d.* only; (3.) the estimate of the probable produce of the extra tax of 1½*d.*—namely, £2,262,000, as stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the House on the 26th of July, 1882, contemplated that the Income Tax on all dividends payable up to the 31st of March, 1883, should be subject to the full rate of 6½*d.* in the pound. The estimated produce of the arrears of the additional 1½*d.* to be received in 1883-4 has not been placed at a higher figure than that contemplated in July, 1882, except so far as it was influenced by the improved yield per penny of the assessments for the year 1882-3 since ascertained.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON gave Notice that, on the Report of the Resolution, he would call attention to what was a violation of the law.

COAL DUTIES (METROPOLIS).

Mr. CHARLES PALMER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will receive a deputation representing the consumers of coal in the Metropolitan district, as well as others interested in the abolition of the Coal Tax, since he has agreed to receive a deputation from the Metropolitan Board of Works in support of the continuance of this system of taxation?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I am not able to say that I will receive any deputation from the consumers; but it will be our duty to consider, to the best of our ability, the interests of the consumers, and any statement that might be put forward on their behalf would receive careful attention.

EGYPT (RE-ORGANIZATION).

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government are satisfied that their intention to secure a liberal measure of self-government for the Egyptians will be sufficiently fulfilled by Consultative Councils and Assembly which even in theory are to have no real power except in case of the institution of new taxes; and, in regard to all old taxes, the budget, and all other matters are to have no more than the privilege of giving advice and no right of decision or control whatever?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, that the answer to the Question might have been suggested to his hon. Friend by what everybody knew. The Government were of opinion that the proposals suggested by Lord Dufferin, and approved of by the Government, were proposals well adapted to meet the requirements of the case. He hoped they might be considered and tried in detail, with all that was to be said for them, before any unfavourable conclusion was formed respecting them.

PARLIAMENT—THE STANDING COMMITTEES.

MR. SHEIL: I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, How honourable Members who are not nominated to serve on the Standing Committees are to obtain an authoritative knowledge of the proceedings and speeches in those Committees; and, whether it is contemplated that there should be an official report of such proceedings and speeches, for reference by honourable Members when Bills have been sent back by the Standing Committees for the consideration of the whole House?

MR. GLADSTONE: I apprehend, Sir, as regards the first part of the Question, there is every reason to believe that the proceedings of the Standing Committees will be made known to the public by the newspapers according to the degree of the desire that may be manifested by the public for information, of which those who supply the information are probably the best judges. But with regard to the Members of this House, I need hardly remind the hon. Member that it is in his power, and that of any other hon. Member, to attend the meetings of the Committees if he thinks fit. With regard to the second part of the Question, the providing of official reports has not been entertained by the Government.

MR. SHEIL: I beg to give Notice that, on Thursday, I shall ask the following Question:—Whether the Prime Minister is aware that the space in the Standing Committees Rooms set apart for Members of the House other than those serving on the Committees is very limited; that newspaper reports of the debates in this House frequently differ, and that it is usual in the case of a difference of opinion to accept *Hansard's* reports, and acknowledge them to be conclusive; whether an official reporter does not attend the proceedings of Select Committees; whether his reports are not sent to every Member of the House; and, whether the same plan cannot be adopted in reference to Grand Committees as that which is now carried out in regard to Select Committees?

MR. RITCHIE asked, whether the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works had been called to the great danger of the Members of the Grand Committees being suffocated for want of ventilation; and, whether he would take any steps for the preservation of their valuable lives?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, that now that his attention had been called to the circumstances of the case, he would see to it.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he was never in a fouler or worse atmosphere than that in which the Grand Committee sat that day, and he would suggest to the Prime Minister that the Grand Committees should sit in the House until their rooms could be properly ventilated.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that that was a matter which he had no power to decide.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE—REFLECTIONS UPON A MEMBER.

MR. WARTON: I beg leave, Sir, to bring a matter before the House which I humbly submit is a question of Privilege. I hold in my hands a copy of a respectable newspaper, *The Western Daily Press*, published at Bristol on Thursday the 5th of April last, in which it states that a Liberal meeting was held at Devizes, and that at that meeting the hon. Member for Scarborough (Mr. Caine) used certain language about me which I will take the liberty of reading to the House. He said—

> "That blockhead—that pestilent blockhead, for he was nothing else—had blocked 29 Bills already this Session."

Well, I am not particularly thin-skinned; I am quite prepared in the warfare of life, if called upon, to give and take in a cheerful and good-humoured manner. I have received many dozens—I may say hundreds—of worthless and insulting letters from the country since I have been in Parliament regarding the way in which I have done my duty. I have received letters threatening personal violence, and even death; but I have always followed what I believe to be the correct and proper course—namely, to take no notice of these things. No amount of insolence out of this House, no threats of violence, or even death, should have the smallest possible effect on a man's determination to do his duty. I do not bring up this matter from any personal feeling. It is my regard for the dignity of this House. The dignity of this House has hitherto been maintained by what I trust is no longer a fiction—that all its Members are honourable. We are in the habit of addressing each other as honourable; and I hope we still believe that every Member is still a gentleman, if not in the strictest sense of the word, then, at least, in this sense, that a gentleman should so far respect himself as to respect others; and this feeling of respect for oneself and for others should instinctively prompt a Gentleman, even when 100 miles away from the Gentleman he is attacking, to remember, if not instinctively to feel, the difference between fair argument and vulgar abuse.

Mr. CAINE: Sir, the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) has not sent me a copy of the paper, and, therefore, I am obliged to trust largely to memory for what I said on the occasion to which he has referred. I did call attention, in my speech, to the fact that the hon. and learned Member had blocked 29 Bills this Session embodying the political opinions of over 80 Members, and that he was the "most pestilent blocker" in the House. Someone in the audience suggested "blockhead" as a better word; and, on the impulse of the moment, I very sorrowfully state that I adopted the expression, and subsequently repeated it. I frankly admit that the word "blockhead" is not such as should be applied to any Member of this House by another, and I have no hesitation in withdrawing it, and expressing my regret to the hon. and learned Member for using it.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — THE TRANSVAAL DEBATE.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, with reference to the Notice of Amendment he had given with regard to the Motion respecting the Transvaal, he proposed to make an alteration in it, and he thought it convenient to call attention to it. The Amendment spoke of "the inability of the Transvaal Government to restrain certain agencies;" and, as he had no intention of ruling whether the Transvaal had been unable or unwilling, he proposed to substitute "the absence of any effectual restraint upon those agencies," so as to exclude the question whether the Transvaal Government had or had not been able to restrain them. Therefore, he proposed to omit the name of the Transvaal Government?

Lord JOHN MANNERS asked, when and how it was proposed that the House should discuss the Amendment?

Mr. GLADSTONE in reply, said, as far as his Amendment was concerned, it was a mere expression of what he took to be the prevailing sense of the House on the debates which had taken place, and he was not aware that, on their part, it would require much further discussion. It was an Amendment to the Motion of the right hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), which stood in order for discussion on Friday, at 2 o'clock.

Lord JOHN MANNERS said, that the Motion and Amendment that were before the House would require to be disposed of, and there were one or two others that would require to be disposed of.

Mr GLADSTONE said, he was quite prepared to acquiesce in their being disposed of, and when the Motion of the right hon. Member for Gloucestershire was reached, he would move his Amendment expressing what he believed to be the prevalent sense of the House in the debate.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, that he should be quite willing to withdraw the Amendment which stood in his name.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE CRIMINAL CODE (INDICTABLE OFFENCES PROCEDURE) BILL.

In reply to Mr. Sexton,

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that the Criminal Code Bill would be taken on Thursday, if the debate on the Budget Resolutions were then concluded. The financial debate, however, would have precedence of the measure in question.

MOTIONS.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Ordered, That the Orders of the Day be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Law relating to Explosive Substances.—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

EXPLOSIVE SUBSTANCES BILL.

LEAVE. FIRST READING.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: In dealing with the grave matter, for which the House has consented to postpone all the other Business of the night, I think I shall meet the wishes of the House if I endeavour to do it with the greatest simplicity and brevity, which, I am sure, is the spirit in which the House will come to a consideration of the question. I do not think it is necessary that I should at any length give the House the reasons why it is necessary to introduce a Bill of this character, but introduce it at once, and without delay. This, after all, I think, everybody will admit, is the time to act rather than to discuss. The nature of the danger which we have to meet is well known to everybody in this House and out of this House. I have had occasion, more times than once in this House, to call its attention to the character and imminence of the danger. I have called the attention of the House to the Assassination Press abroad, and to the menaces of what was intended to be done. At that time, some persons, from ignorance, which might be excusable, thought that was a danger which was capable of being encountered by ridicule. I thought at that time that it was not a danger capable of being encountered in that manner, and I think everybody is convinced of that now. We know what it is that we have to deal with. We have to deal with an organized band, consisting, unhappily, not of the men of the lower criminal classes, but of men in the higher walks of life—men who are banded together against all the interests that keep society alive; men who are like the Assassins of the East, and the *Pétroleurs* of the Commune, like the worst criminals the world has ever produced. Though they are secret societies here, they are public societies elsewhere. They advertise their objects; they announce them; they avow them; they collect money for the purpose of committing wholesale murder and burning down civilized towns. That is the nature of the danger with which we have to deal. We have to deal with men who, like pirates, are the enemies of the human race, and who, in my opinion, ought to be treated like men who have no nationality. So, knowing this danger before us—a danger which, like Nihilism, may be called, in some sense, a new danger—we must meet it by new remedies, not, I hope, in the spirit of panic, but in a cool and resolute spirit, and with a determination to strangle those plans and put down the authors of them. The first line of defence we have against these dangers is to be found in the police; and as I have the honour to be connected with that distinguished force, I hope I may, in a single word, pay my tribute to the splendid services which the police, not only in the Metropolis, but also in the Provinces, and, above all, in Ireland, have rendered to the cause of society. Sir, I sometimes hear, and I always hear it with regret, and almost with indignation, unjust aspersions on the police; but I always regarded, and I still regard, the English and Irish police as the best in the world. That they are the best police for the preservation of order, consistently with a due regard to liberty, I believe no man will deny. Criticism has been passed upon their capacity for detection; but you must remember that here they work under great disadvantages for this purpose. They work subject to criticism—I think sometimes unwise—which disarms them of the means which they ought to possess, and which they ought to employ for the purpose of putting down secret crime. In spite of these disadvantages, however, they have, in the last week, rendered services to society equal to any of those for which successful Generals and victorious Armies have received the thanks of Parliament. I hope I may be forgiven on this occasion for expressing to them my tribute of confidence and admiration—a confidence and admiration which, I believe, is shared by every Member of this Assembly. The next line of defence which we have is to be found in the penalties of the law. With reference to the existing state of the law, it is not necessary to go into any minute examination. I will first only refer to the Explosives Act of the year 1875. That Act was not directed against persons possessing explosives with a criminal object. It was rather directed to defend property and life against the reckless and negligent, or careless use of a very dangerous commodity. I will only say, if it does not come under our immediate business, it will be necessary to reconsider the provisions of that Act. I think they are most inadequate and most defective. Under that Act, it is permitted to every private person to have 15 lbs. of dynamite or 30 lbs. of gunpowder; and, therefore, if you have a lodging-house with 10 persons in it, you may have 150 lbs. of dynamite or 300 lbs. of gunpowder. I think the House will be of opinion that is a condition of things which ought not to exist, and I have given direction to have measures taken to alter that condition of things. There is another great defect. In registered premises a person is able to keep 200 lbs. of gunpowder, 500 lbs. of explosives, and 200 lbs. of fireworks, or in lieu 60 lbs. of mixed explosives—that is, 60 lbs. of dynamite, or something still stronger than dynamite. When I tell the House that the local authorities have no power to refuse any man, however unfit he may be, a register—and at this moment the man at present in custody at Birmingham for making nitro-glycerine, if released, could demand a licence to keep 60 lbs. of dynamite—I think these are conditions which the House would not wish to see continued. The provisions are not criminal provisions. I cannot see why any private person should keep dynamite without a licence. I see no reason why a private person should keep a great store of gunpowder; and I see no reason why the local authority should not judge whether the person is fit to be registered or not. Passing that by as not the main object, and coming to the existing state of the law, in the draft of the Bill which I am introducing the House will find in the margin of the 1st and 2nd clause references to the sections of the Acts which at present exist. I will not go into a minute analysis of the existing Acts; but I may say that they are defective in two particulars. They are defective, first of all, because, dealing with different matters relating to explosions, they have very narrow definitions—for instance, explosions near a building where someone dwells, a dwelling-house. Well, that definition is so narrow that it leaves intervals where crime may be committed with impunity. The principle of legislation ought to be to have larger and general words, which are capable of including all the crimes which may be committed. Now, that is the first defect in the existing law; and the second is, that the penalties are grossly, I might almost say ludicrously, inadequate, in some cases, to the offence. For instance, under the 54th section of the Act of 1861, chapter 97, making or possessing explosives with the intention to commit a felony is a misdemeanour punishable by two years' imprisonment. It is perfectly obvious to anyone that to any person possessing this explosive for criminal purposes this punishment is utterly inadequate. That is all I think it necessary to say on the subject, because I am sure I am giving an accurate account to the House of what the law is, which anybody can verify for themselves. The defects of that law it is the object of this Bill to amend, and I think I shall best do what is useful for the House by simply going through the Bill; and perhaps, as this Bill is only just in the hands of hon. Members, I may be permitted to do so. I will point out first to hon. Members the principle upon which the Bill is framed. Where an explosion takes place which leads to the loss of life, that is not dealt with in the Bill. It is not necessary to do so. By the masculine sense of the Common Law of England, if a man produces an explosion by which life is lost he is guilty of murder, and would be dealt with for murder without this Bill. I take up, therefore, the question of explosions at a point which is actually short of murder. The 2nd clause of the Bill deals with an explosion which has not caused loss of life, but with the case where an explosion has actually taken place. The clause says—

> "Any person who unlawfully and maliciously causes by any explosive substance an explosion of a nature likely to endanger life or to cause serious injury to property"—

that is the distinction, and I think it is large enough to include any explosion, because no explosion of a serious character could fail to be described as one likely to endanger life, or to cause serious injury to property. Then it proceeds—

> "shall, whether any injury to person or property has been actually caused or not, be guilty of felony, and on conviction shall be liable to penal servitude for life, or for any less term (not less than the minimum term allowed by law), or to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a term not exceeding two years."

I do not think anyone will think that is a penalty which is too severe for that offence. The next clause of the Bill deals with the case where there has not been an explosion, but where there has been an intent and an attempt to cause an explosion. That is a degree lower, because the explosion has not actually taken place. I would like to call attention to the first words of the section. It says—

> "Any person who unlawfully and maliciously (*a*) does any act with intent to cause by an explosive substance, or conspires within or (being a subject of Her Majesty) without Her Majesty's dominions"—

I wish to call the attention of the House to this—within the Realm the jurisdiction of the Crown applies both to subjects and aliens. Over aliens abroad we have no power. But over a British subject we have authority and jurisdiction for his acts all over the world; and, therefore, if a British subject goes to France or America, and is a party, either directly or indirectly, by word or deed, or by speech, if he is accessory in any manner to any of these transactions, he is, when he returns to this country, subject to our jurisdiction and to the punishment imposed by our law, just as if what he has done had been done in this country. That is a principle which is distinctly stated in this clause. The clause proceeds—

> "Any person who within, or, being a subject of Her Majesty, without Her Majesty's dominions, unlawfully and maliciously does any act"—

we think that will cover all sorts of acts—

> "with intent to cause by an explosive substance, or conspires to cause by an explosive substance"—

that will cover all conspiracies for the purpose, whether done here or abroad, and whether anything contributing to the conspiracy is done here or abroad—

> "by an explosion in the United Kingdom of a nature likely to endanger life or to cause serious injury to property; or (*b*) makes or has in his possession or under his control any explosive substance with intent by means thereof to endanger life, or cause serious injury to property, or to enable any other person by means thereof to endanger life or cause serious injury to property, shall, whether any explosion does or does not take place, and whether any injury to person or property has been actually caused or not, be guilty of felony, and on conviction shall be liable to penal servitude for a term not exceeding twenty years."

There, it will be observed, you have to prove the intent; and if a person makes this attempt, or manufactures the explosives, or possesses explosives with that intent, and that is proved, no man, I think, can say that 20 years' penal servitude is too severe a punishment for such an offence. I come to the next clause, which can hardly be said to be different in the character of the offence, though it is different in the character and the nature of the evidence to be offered. This clause, the 4th, says—

> "Any person who makes or knowingly has in his possession or under his control any explosive substance, under such circumstances as to give rise to a reasonable suspicion that he is not making it or does not have it in his possession or under his control for a lawful object, shall, unless he can show that he made it or had it in his possession or under his control for a lawful object, be guilty of felony, and, on conviction, shall be liable to penal servitude for a term not exceeding fourteen years, or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years with or without hard labour."

In the first place, the prosecution must raise a reasonable suspicion as to the conduct of the man who makes an explosive or has it in his possession or under his control; and having raised that suspicion, then it is thrown on the prisoner to show that he made it or had it in his possession or under his control for a lawful object. In my opinion, it is perfectly justifiable, when reasonable suspicion has been shown to exist with reference to the conduct of people who cannot, or else will not, give any account of themselves, or why they are in possesssion of a commodity which, even by mere carelessness, may be destructive of thousands of lives and of an unlimited amount of property, that they should be called upon to show their right and the reason why they are possessed of these things. Do not let it be said that this legislation is of an unexampled character, and produced in panic. It is nothing of the kind. It is part of the settled and permanent law of this country. In the Act of 1861, with reference to larceny, if a man is found in the night armed with a dangerous and offensive weapon, and having in his possession, without lawful excuse—proof of which excuse shall lie upon such persons—any picklock, key, crow, jack, or other implement of housebreaking, then he shall be convicted. If a man may be called upon to show the reason why he has a picklock in his possession, I think he may be called upon to show also by what right he possess a hundredweight of nitro-glycerine; and therefore I say this legislation is founded on exactly the same principle as that of our existing and permanent law, and no objection whatever can be taken to this clause upon that ground. I do not know that it was absolutely necessary to do so; but the fact of throwing the onus of proof on the defendant induced us in drawing this Bill to put a slightly lower penalty upon the offence in this clause—a penalty of 14 years' penal servitude. The next clause is one which, perhaps, it was not strictly necessary to enact, because to a great degree it is already the law of the land. But I think it desirable that public attention should be called to the fact that it is not only the man who makes this nitro-glycerine, or the man who places it where an explosion takes place, who is guilty of a crime, but that every man, whether he does it in this country, or, if he is a British subject, whether he does it anywhere else, who supplies money, or solicits money for the purpose, or in any way procures, counsels, aids, or abets, or is accessory to the commission of a crime, under this Act, is liable to suffer exactly the same penalty as if he had been guilty as a principal. About the 6th clause I need say little. The House knows about that clause. It is a clause which was originally in the Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act; it was re-enacted by this House in the Prevention of Crime Act of last year; and it has proved of singular efficacy, because it was by its use that the Phœnix Park murders were traced. It gives the power to a magistrate—even though the culprit has escaped, the individual who places these explosives may himself be destroyed by it, and you would then have apparently no means of discovering the crime—to enter upon an inquiry, such as that which was entered upon in Dublin, and, by means of that inquiry, you may find who the accessories were who set on any man. Therefore, this clause is one of the most essential and important clauses of the Bill. I have omitted to state, in reference to the 4th clause, under which the onus of proof is thrown upon the defendant, that by Sub-section 2 the defendant is made a witness, in order that he may defend himself. That has been done in all cases where the onus of proof is thrown on the prisoner. I now come to Clause 7, where there is another protection to innocent people being vexed under this Bill, and that is that no prosecution shall be instituted, except by the consent of the Attorney General; and therefore, if, through the police or otherwise, an innocent man may be taken up, and gives an account of himself, the depositions go before the Attorney General, and the proceedings come to an end at once. That is a considerable benefit. Sub-section 2 of the 7th clause is for this purpose—that by a technicality of the law, much to be regretted, if a man is indicted on several counts for felony, the prosecutor may be called upon to go upon one count, and the conviction does not go on the count to which the evidence applies. Here that is prevented. A man may be indicted under several counts, and a conviction may take place on the count which the evidence justifies. The 8th clause applies to the very strong and effective Search Clauses of the Explosive Act of 1875, which, I think, are all that could be desired for the purpose. The 2nd sub-section of this clause is one which is necessary to amend the clause of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1873, under which the master of a ship has power to refuse dangerous goods, or throw overboard dangerous goods, but has not the power at present to break open boxes which he may have reason to suppose contain dangerous goods. It is quite obvious that in the Mercantile Marine it is of great importance that if the captain of a ship should have reason to suspect that he has boxes of nitro-glycerine on board, he should have power to open them and get rid of the explosive. That is the object of this sub-section. Then comes the Definition Clause, which is a clause of considerable importance. The word "explosive" substance applies not merely to explosives themselves, but, what is absolutely essential, it applies to all their materials. If you do not do that you do nothing. If you allow a man like Whitehead to have in one room sulpheric acid, in another room nitric acid, and in another room glycerine, and you are to wait until he combines the three, he will defy your law. It is absolutely necessary that all the materials which may be used in the composition of explosives should be brought within the scope of the law. I am perfectly aware that there are many materials of explosives, like saltpetere or sulpheric acid, or saw-dust, which may be perfectly innocent in themselves; but no man will be punished unless he has those materials in his possession in such a way as to raise a suspicion that they are intended to be used for an improper purpose. And it is necessary, also, not only to deal with the materials for making any explosive substance, but also with the apparatus and machinery that are intended to set the explosive materials at work. The Bill, therefore, makes mention of—

> "Any apparatus, machine, implement, or materials used, or intended to be used, or adapted for causing, or aiding in causing, any explosion."

That will deal with detonators, with chlorate of potash, with sulphuric acid, and with all the means employed for exploding the commodity. I think I have called attention to all the material parts of this Bill. I have heard it suggested that the Bill might have been made a temporary Bill. I do not share that opinion. There is nothing in this Bill which ought not to be permanent. Every provision of this Bill is a provision forming a part of the permanent law of the land; and to deal with it otherwise than as the permanent law of the land would be, in my opinion, at this moment to weaken its authority. You would induce people to think it had been passed in a panic with exceptional severity. It is nothing of the kind. It is a Bill which ought, in my opinion, to have been passed long ago. It is a Bill which ought to be permanently maintained; and, therefore, I hope there will be no proposal to deal with it on a footing, I will not say to make it useless, but certainly to weaken its authority. If it should turn out—as, of course, is highly possible—that errors have been committed in the framing of the Bill, why, it is perfectly easy to amend the Bill hereafter, as you amend any defective permanent Bill. It is not, therefore, necessary to make it a temporary Bill in order to correct errors in it, and that is the reason why we did not so propose it, and why we cannot accept any proposal of that character. It would be a very great disaster, and great detriment to what we are doing to-night, if any proposal of the kind I have indicated were made, or, still more, were accepted by the House. Now, I have no desire to impress upon the House more than I am sure they feel it themselves the necessity of this Bill and of passing it at once. I know it is not my business to increase excitement—it is rather to allay than to excite panic; but I should be doing very wrong if I concealed from the House my conviction, and if I did not state upon my responsibity what I know, that the danger is very great and very imminent, and that it ought to be dealt with at once, and with a strong hand. The House will not expect me to say more. They will not wish me to say more than that. If I did, I should be committing the grave error — against which I take this opportunity of protesting—of those interviewers, who, in order to gratify the public curiosity, make public very often things which tend to defeat the ends of justice. I think I have sufficiently stated to the House what it is intended to do. I am sure the House properly estimates the gravity of the circumstances that they have to deal with. We, on our part, have done our best to propose a measure which we think the best fitted to cope with the evils with which we are threatened. It is the duty of the Government to press upon the House, at the earliest moment, to pass this Bill. I shall ask the House for leave to introduce the Bill. I shall then ask leave of the House that the Bill be read a first time; and if the House is, as I hope it is, unanimously of opinion that a Bill of this character is necessary, and necessary at once, they will desire to read the Bill a second time. I do not see how there can be any dispute as to the principle. Well then, if that be so, the Government are so impressed with the urgent necessity of going on with this Bill, that we shall ask the House, after the Bill is read a first time, it being ready in the usual regular form, to read the Bill a second time, and we shall then ask the House to go into Committee on this Bill. I do not ask the House to proceed with legislation precipitately—that would be panic—but let us go on with this Bill as far as we can, till we see that there are circumstances of a grave character which ought not to be disposed of at once. With these observations, which I have endeavoured to compress as much as I could, I ask leave of the House to bring in the Bill and to read it a first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law relating to Explosive Substances."—(*Sir William Harcourt.*)

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I wish, Sir, in the few words I want to put before the House, in the first place to endorse everything that has been said by the right hon. and learned Gentleman as to the efficiency of the police. To them, I think, thanks are due, not merely from this House and the other House of Parliament, but from the whole country for the services they have recently rendered in tracking out these conspiracies to explosion. Very often the police have been unjustly abused; but now that the time has come for testing their efficiency, their efficiency has been attested, and I believe they do deserve the thanks of the country, just as much as our soldiers and sailors who have gone through the hardest battles in all parts of the world. They have great difficulties, as the right hon. and learned Gentleman has said. They have not merely the preservation of order, but they have to preserve order with a due regard to liberty. It is in steering between these two poles that the difficulty and delicacy of their duty very often arise, and I believe they have always done their duty in this way to the best of their powers and with advantage to the country. I will not detain the House more than two minutes with regard to the old law, which was really embodied in the Consolidation Bill of 1875, known as the Explosives Act of that year. I am quite certain that if the penalties had been increased at that time we would not have had to pass the present Bill now. But as that Bill has been alluded to, I wish the right hon. and learned Gentleman had been good enough to state, for the information of the House and the country, that the effect of that Bill has been very largely to preserve life in gunpowder factories and elsewhere, and has in that way done a great amount of good. I wish to say one or two words on the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. I wish, as far as I am individually concerned, and as far as those with whom I usually act are concerned, to state at once that we are quite willing, in the emergency which has been brought before us, to give support to the Bill. In face of the dangers to which life and property are at present subject, feeling quite certain that this is a new thing which must be put a stop to, and that all Parties must join together and say at once both to those Englishmen who are in England, and those Englishmen—if they can call themselves Englishmen—who are abroad, and who stir up crime and assassination from places where they think they cannot be touched, it is quite time that all Parties in the State said to them—"We shall take care that your wicked and iniquitous practices shall not bear fruit." Therefore, I agree in all that has been said by the right hon. and learned Gentleman as to Clauses 2 and 3 of this Bill. I am sure the House must feel that if any person, according to the 2nd clause, causes by any explosive substance an explosion of a nature likely to endanger life or to cause serious injury to property, it is a most serious offence, and one deserving of serious condemnation. And so with the 3rd clause; anyone who attempts to cause by an explosive substance an explosion of a nature likely to endanger life or property, even though he does not succeed, is deserving of severe punishment. I think the principle of those two clauses is perfectly right.

So also with the 5th clause, which provides for the punishment of accessories, and is, I think, simply carrying out more effectually the existing law. The 4th clause is really a very severe clause. I do not mean to say it is not one that should be passed, nor do I offer any opposition to it myself; but I do not think that the effect of it has been clearly explained by the right hon. and learned Gentleman. According to the draft of it—

> "Any person who makes or knowingly has in his possession or under his control any explosive substance, under such circumstances as to give rise to a reasonable suspicion that he is not making it or does not have it in his possession or under his control for a lawful object, will be guilty of felony."

I want to know who is to say what is reasonable suspicion? I presume the suspected person will be brought before the magistrate, and that he will be thrown on his defence when he appears before the magistrate. It is a mere question of wording; but I think the term "reasonable suspicion" ought in some way to be defined. Suppose a man has a quantity of gunpowder in his house, and that he has it with the object of poaching. That, of course, is not a lawful object; but would such a case not come within the words of the clause? I draw the attention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman to that point. I am not, I repeat, prepared to say that a clause of that description ought not to be passed. If the Government come forward, and on their responsibility say that, in their, opinion, this is a clause which ought to be passed under the existing circumstances, I, for one, should not object; but they must take the responsibility of stating what, in their opinion, is necessary. They have information which we have not, and cannot have; and if they state that the clause in its present shape is really essential, I shall support them. I do not think that I need trouble the House further upon that point. On the whole, I think that this Bill will greatly strengthen the law of this country in reference to this matter. The right hon. and learned Gentleman has referred to a rumour that possibly some opposition might be offered to the Bill as it stands, with the object of limiting its duration. For my own part, I must say that, as far as the 4th clause goes, I should be better satisfied if it were made a temporary clause only. ["No!"] I will tell you why I should be better satisfied if that clause were to remain in force for a limited period only. The right hon. and learned Gentleman who has brought forward this Bill tells us that this Bill must be passed at once. I, for one, say that when the Government brings forward such a measure as this upon an emergency, this House ought to rise to the occasion, and pass the Bill through all its stages to-night. Only this is not quite the way in which we should legislate for a permanency. This 4th clause is a most complicated one; and, therefore, I should have been more satisfied had its provisions endured for a limited period — say, for two years only. ["No!"] However, I do not desire to detain the House longer, and I shall conclude by expressing my desire to support the Government in carrying this Bill to-night.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Secretary Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, and Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I now, Sir, ask leave of the House to read this Bill a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir William Harcourt.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I must now move that you, Sir, do now leave the Chair.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Sir William Harcourt.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 to 3, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Punishment for making or possession of explosive under suspicious circumstances).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. STANSFELD said, he had not heard the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary very distinctly, and therefore did not know whether it was proposed to make any alteration with regard to this clause. Failing that, he desired to draw the attention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, and of the House, to what appeared to him, upon a cursory reading of the clause, to be an imperfection in it. The clause provided—

> "That any person who makes or knowingly has in his possession or under his control any explosive substance, under such circumstances as to give rise to a reasonable suspicion that he is not making it or does not have it in his possession or under his control for a lawful object, shall, unless he can show that he made it or had it in his possession or under his control for a lawful object, be guilty of felony, and, on conviction, shall be liable to penal servitude for a term not exceeding fourteen years, &c."

If the clause had been worded—

> "Any person having under his control such explosive substances so as to give rise to the reasonable suspicion that he had it for the illegal purposes contemplated in this Bill,"

he could have understood the application of the clause. What he would put to the Home Secretary and to the Law Officers of the Crown was, whether, if the clause were unaltered, any poor man who lived in the country in which game was preserved, and who was reasonably suspected of an inclination to poach, would not be liable under the clause if an ounce of gunpowder were found in his possession?

Sir JOHN HAY confessed that he was very sorry to trespass upon the Committee when every moment was of importance; but as he had the honour of introducing the Nitro-Glycerine Act of 1869, perhaps hon. Members would listen to a few remarks he would like to make. That Act continued the law until 1875, and, looking to what had since occurred, he did not think its provisions too stringent. He would have preferred to see the 4th clause of the Nitro-Glycerine Act inserted in the present Bill, instead of the section now under discussion, and the 4th clause of that Act omitted mention of gunpowder. There was great force in the objection which had been taken by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) in respect to explosive substances other than those which were now so dangerous. Moreover, he could not understand what advantage there was in retaining in the clause the words—

> "Under such circumstances as to give rise to a reasonable suspicion that he is not making it or does not have it in his possession or under his control for a lawful object."

Those words appeared mere surplusage, for—

> "Under his control any explosive substance shall, unless he can show that he made it or had it in his possession or under his control for a lawful object,"

seemed to be sufficient to meet the case contemplated. If the Committee thought it right, he would move the omission of the words which he had pointed out as merely surplusage.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, the Government could not agree to strike out those words, because they were put in the clause for the protection of innocent people engaged in a legitimate trade. In reference to the more serious observations of his right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), it was necessary he should explain that the object of the 4th clause, as the Committee would see, was simply to throw the onus of proving his innocence upon the possessor of large quantities of explosives. If the Bill only contained the 3rd clause, it would be almost necessary that the person must be shown to have intended to commit a certain crime—namely, to destroy or endanger life and property. However morally certain they might be that that was the case, they would very often have great difficulty in proving the fact. The mere possession by a man of gunpowder, even in a game-preserving country, would afford no proof that it was intended for an unlawful act. It must be remembered that proceedings under this Bill would not be taken before magistrates, but before a Judge and jury. Furthermore, no prosecution under the Act could take place without the leave of the Law Officers of the Crown; and when application for a prosecution was made, it must be made publicly. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stansfeld) had mentioned an extreme case which might be covered by the clause. He (the Attorney General) feared that if, in drawing clauses of this kind they were to take cognizance of all extreme cases, all desirable and necessary legislation would be prevented.

Mr. HOPWOOD rather feared that, under a panic, they were legislating too rapidly; and there were some hon. Members who would like to consider the provisions of the Bill a little longer. He believed they were all anxious to provide a remedy for the present state of things, and that they desired to meet the emergency which had arisen; but he could not help suggesting that the object in view would be attained quite fully by an amendment of the clause. He had the words of an Amendment, which he was prepared to move, and which would make the clause read—

> "Any person who makes, or knowingly has in his possession or under his control, any explosive substance under such circumstances as to give rise to a reasonable suspicion that he is making it, or has it in his possession or under his control for any of the illegal purposes mentioned in this Act, shall, &c."

He knew that his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General had addressed himself to that argument, but not, he thought, satisfactorily. He (Mr. Hopwood) would prefer that the clause should go on to say—"Unless it can be shown to the contrary." That would provide everything that was necessary; and it would provide, also, that the prosecution should not be for a small matter, but should be for something which raised a reasonable suspicion under the Act. No man ought to be hurt under the Bill, unless his possession of dynamite or nitro-glycerine gave rise to a reasonable suspicion that he was about to employ it in endangering life, or in causing serious injury to property. The clause ought not to be passed in the wide form in which it stood at present, or it would establish a bad precedent for future legislation. What made him dwell the more upon this was the fact that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary had rather surprised him by suggesting that in their Criminal Law they were always too desirous of specifying the offence. Why, that was the genius of their legislation—it was the very spirit of their Criminal Law; and he (Mr. Hopwood) certainly hoped that they would never depart from it under mere circumstances of emergency like the present.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL suggested an alteration in line 14, subsection 2—that the word "her" should be inserted, so as to make the words—"Such person and his wife or her husband."

Mr. HOPWOOD said, his Amendment came before that. He would move to leave out, after the word "suspicion," these words—

> "That he is not making it, or does not have it in his possession or under his control for a lawful object,"

and to insert in their place the words—

> "That he is making it, or has it in his possession, or under his control, for any of the illegal purposes mentioned in this Act, unless it can be shown to the contrary."

Mr. RITCHIE understood that the Chairman had put the Question that the clause should stand part of the Bill. If that were so, was it possible for any hon. Member to propose an Amendment to the clause?

The CHAIRMAN said, the hon. Gentleman was right. He (the Chairman) did put the Question that the clause should stand part of the Bill; but he had done so not anticipating any Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out all the words after "suspicion," in line 5, to the word "object," in line 7, and insert the words:—"That he is making it, or has it in his possession or under his control, for any of the illegal purposes mentioned in this Act, shall, unless he can show to the contrary."—(*Mr. Hopwood.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he thought the remarks of his right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) arose from that right hon. Gentleman not having heard his explanation of the clause. The real point was this. The clause had been very carefully considered — indeed, he (Sir William Harcourt) had spent the best part of three days over it. No doubt, the first idea of everyone would be that which was embodied in the proposals of his right hon. Friend and of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Hopwood); but for very good reasons the Government had not felt themselves able to accept it, as they felt that it would entirely defeat the object of the clause in its difference from Clause 3. If the Committee were to accept the words proposed by his hon. and learned Friend they would really be thrown back upon all the difficulties which existed in Clause 3, and from which it was desired to find an escape; because, though the hon. and learned Gentleman wrapped up the matter to his own mind in the words "illegal purposes mentioned in this Act," the question was, what were those illegal purposes? Were they the illegal purposes of the previous clause? Was Clause 4 only to meet the illegal purposes mentioned in Clause 3? Clearly that was so; and, therefore, the Amendment would only re-incorporate Clause 3, and destroy the whole object in view in the attempt to distinguish between Clauses 3 and 4. That was the real state of the case. It was possible that the Government might have come to a wrong conclusion in the matter; but, if so, it was not from any want of the assistance of their able draftsman, or of the assistance of the two Law Officers of the Crown. They had come to the conclusion that the Amendment could not be adopted without destroying the efficacy of the clause; and he was bound to say his own opinion was that the clause, as it stood, was most efficient, because it was a clause which would compel these men to come forward and give an account of themselves. He, therefore, hoped the Committee would not consent to alter it.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he thought the Committee had decided in their own minds that the Bill must pass that House that night, and he would press it upon them not to alter one word of it. All these clauses had been very carefully prepared and considered; and if any Amendment were inserted it would be necessary for the Bill to be reconsidered, and they would then find themselves in a considerable difficulty. He would much rather pass the Bill as it stood on the responsibility of the Government, and he hoped it would pass that night without any question.

Mr. STANSFELD said, he was sure the Committee would allow him to say a word in reply to his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General. They were not legislating in a panic; but, looking at the House, he felt, at least, entitled to say that they were legislating somewhat in a hurry. The right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had advised them to pass the Bill on the responsibility of the Government without considering it; but that appeared to him to be a most unconstitutional piece of advice to give to the House. His right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary had imputed to him that he had moved some Amendment, or proposed an alteration of the clause which would destroy the efficiency of the Bill. Now, he had made no proposal whatever.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I beg pardon; I made a mistake in that.

Mr. STANSFELD said, that all he had done was to point out what appeared to him to be a slip in the drafting of the clause. He had endeavoured to speak with the deference which was becoming in a lay Member of the House, and he had asked for explanations from the Law Officers; but he confessed that he was not at that moment satisfied with the explanation which had been given. He believed that his reading of the clause was the true legal construction of it, even though it was not the construction of the Attorney General. They had been told by the late Home Secretary that the Bill should be passed through Committee without alteration or discussion; and they were told by the present Home Secretary that it was to be a permanent Bill. In order that the country at large should not have the impression that they were legislating in a hurry, some time ought to be given for the consideration of the legal meaning of each of these clauses; or else the Bill ought to be made not permanent, but temporary, so that it might obtain a thorough reconsideration within some reasonable time.

Mr. BULWER merely wished to say one word. If the Bill was to be hurried through Committee that night, the sooner it left that House the better. If there was to be no discussion, he did not wish to provoke one; but, as a lawyer who would be responsible for this legislation, he wished to say that he agreed thoroughly and entirely with what had fallen from the right hon. Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld). There could not be the slightest doubt to anybody who read the clause that a case might possibly occur such as that mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman—the case of a poacher, who, having a pound of gunpowder in his house, and not being able to show that he had it for a lawful purpose, might become liable to be convicted of felony under this Bill, and might possibly, though not probably, be sentenced to 14 years' penal servitude, or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years. If that was not a possible construction of this clause he should be very much surprised, and he declared emphatically that it was a possible construction. The wording could be satisfactorily altered in five minutes. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary did not intend to exclude this possibility—and he had declared that the clause had been carefully and maturely considered—he (Mr. Bulwer) would say no more; but he felt it his duty to enter this protest against the wording of the clause as it stood.

Mr. R. T. REID said, he did not desire to prolong the discussion; but he wished to point out to the Committee that the construction which had been placed upon the clause on the high authority of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Bulwer) was, as he (Mr. Reid) most firmly believed, the correct one. If any person had a pound of gunpowder in his possession, under circumstances which gave rise to a reasonable suspicion that he had it for an unlawful purpose, whatever that purpose might be—even if it only amounted to poaching—that person would expose himself to the penalties of the Bill. [An hon. Member: Why not?] That seemed to him to be going a great deal further than was desirable, or than was intended to meet the evils which now existed; and while he said that, he wished it to be understood that he thoroughly sympathized with the Bill. It had been suggested by the hon. and learned Attorney General that there was a safeguard in the provision that the consent of the Attorney General would be required to a prosecution. In his (Mr. Reid's) humble opinion, though he had no doubt that most Attorneys General would do their duty, it was not right that legislation, which was wrong in itself, should be justified on the ground that the consent of Her Majesty's officers, however high that officer might be, was required before a prosecution could be instituted.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he could carry this argument a good deal further. If a man carried a basket of sawdust, he would be in danger, for sawdust was a material which might be used in combination with nitro-glycerine and formed into a very dangerous explosive; and, therefore, under the Interpretation Clause, a man who had a basket of sawdust might be brought into peril under the Bill. ["No, no!"] But that was so; and, therefore, that was a very similar case to the one put by the two hon. and learned Gentlemen who had last spoken. But the protection under the Bill was this—that it could not be applied to these extreme cases, because the Attorney General would step in to prevent such a thing from happening. It would be the duty of the Attorney General to probe and test these extreme cases. No Bill could ever be drawn which would prevent extreme cases from arising; and it was absolutely impossible to draw a Bill which would stop the offences that were aimed at, if Parliament insisted on having a Bill that, under no conceivable circumstances, would for a single moment cause inconvenience to others than those whose punishment it provided for. That was the case with the Prevention of Crime Bill of last year. Over and over again, during the progress of that Bill through the House, he had said—"If you choose to look at it from that point of view, and to consider every possible particular in which the Bill may be abused, you may throw it out altogether; but if you mean to have a Bill which will effect the purpose that you have in view, you must admit these consequences, and rely on the safeguards which will prevent injustice from being done." There was no other method of dealing with the matter at all, unless the Committee chose to reject the principle of the 4th clause altogether. If they said they would insist on the prosecution proving the offence up to the hilt, or the suspicion of an offence—that something was being done—it would be impossible to legislate in such a matter as this satisfactorily. In the old days of the law, if a man was charged with intending to kill anybody, the prosecution had to prove that he intended to kill some particular and specified person, and that was exactly an example of the objection now taken. The Committee must be content to take the general words with their general effect, and rely on the safeguards offered—that the man who was charged would himself give his own explanation, and that the Attorney General would not allow a prosecution except on good grounds. If the Committee would not consent to that, they might as well dispense with the clause altogether.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Punishment of accessories).

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN suggested a verbal Amendment. The Bill, he said, was directed against the criminal possession, and not against the legitimate possession, of explosives. He suggested that the word "knowingly" should be inserted before the words "procures, counsels, aids, abets, or is accessory to." That would better define the meaning without in any way injuring the clause. He moved the insertion of the word "knowingly."

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 20, after the word "whatsoever," to insert the word "knowingly."—(*Mr. Joseph Cowen.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'knowingly' be there inserted."

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he did not wonder at his hon. Friend making this proposal; but it was really unnecessary, for all the other words implied "knowingly." No man could "procure, counsel, aid, or abet" if he did not know. It would be better to agree to the clause as it stood.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN said, he had no desire to press his Amendment against the opinion of his right hon. and learned Friend.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clauses 6 to 8, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 9 (Definitions, and application to Scotland).

Mr. GIBSON said, the Home Secretary, in introducing the Bill, had pointed out that the law, as it stood at present, was altogether incomplete and inadequate to prevent the sale and distribution of these terrible explosive compounds, and of the materials of which they were made up. The Government did not desire to hamper their present Bill by any attempt to amend that law; but he (Mr. Gibson) understood that the Attorney General would do something at an early date to amend the law in that respect. Everybody would be glad to know when, and by what method, the Government intended to proceed in that direction, and to procure some machinery of a fit and proper character to restrict the sale of these compounds. He thought that all who dealt in such goods should be bound, as in the case of poisons, to keep a record of those to whom the compounds or materials were sold.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT would say, with regard to the possession of explosives by private persons, that that matter rested upon Orders in Council; and he had that morning directed that the Inspectors of Explosives should consider an alteration of the Order in Council, No. 8, so as to prohibit the right of any private person to hold so much as 15 lbs. of dynamite, which seemed to be an unnecessary and improper right to exist, and also with regard to gunpowder. That the Government could deal with by Order in Council. As to registration without objection, or in spite of the objection of the local authorities, that power was given by the Statute of 1875, and would have to be dealt with by Parliament, and he would have it dealt with as soon as might be convenient. It was not, however, a matter of such pressing importance; because he might point out to the right hon. and learned Gentleman that as soon as premises were registered the police had access to them, and the police could always enter upon registered premises.

Clause *agreed to.*

House *resumed.*

Bill *reported*, without Amendment.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I shall ask permission of the House to move that the Bill be now read a third time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Sir William Harcourt.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

WAYS AND MEANS.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE—REDEMPTION OF THE NATIONAL DEBT.

RESOLUTION.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD said, he wished to call attention to the method proposed to be adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the redemption of the Nationl Debt. In the year 1885, when some £6,000,000 sterling of Terminable Annuities would expire, the amount of the Debt would, as closely as he could calculate, amount to £700,000,000. A reasonable rate of reduction would be 1 per cent, or £7,000,000 annually; and that would be about one-third of the interest on the amount of the Debt unredeemed, or the whole expenditure under the head of charge for Debt. By the scheme now proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it was estimated that in the course of 20 years the Debt would be reduced by £172,000,000 sterling, though he personally could not clearly see how those figures were arrived at. Short Annuities he regarded as a more effective mode of redeeming Debt than long Annuities; and his proposal was that a group of Annuities should be formed of £720,000, to run for periods of from one to ten years, and averaging about five years, the capital value of which would be £35,280,000. His scheme would provide £7,000,000 a-year for the redemption of the Debt; would pay off £140,000,000 in 20 years, and in 100 years redeem the National Debt. The proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer would involve, at no distant period, the application of £14,000,000 to the redemption of the Debt, and £15,000,000 to the interest on the remainder, and the country would not endure a state of taxation in which £28,000,000 or £29,000,000 was raised for what was called the charge on the National Debt, and one-half was applicable to redemption, and the residue to the interest and the management charges. He felt bound to state the taxpayer's objections to the proposal of the Government, agreeable as the figures no doubt seemed from the right hon. Gentleman's point of view. In the plan of the right hon. Gentleman there was not only the scheme of treating the National Debt by virtue of Terminable Annuities, but another and a different scheme which had been combined with it. Following the idea of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), the Chancellor of the Exchequer had fixed at a particular amount the annual charge of the National Debt. That charge, he believed, would not be endured for any length of time. It discharged Debt, certainly; but it withheld from the taxpayer his just satisfaction in the mitigation of his burdens. The two courses proposed were almost incompatible, or, at any rate, were undesirable in combination. If the Terminable Annuities fell short of the £28,000,000, they would be absolutely useless; while if they exceeded that sum the £28,000,000 would in turn be useless. Their financial system could not be based on two distinct principles, and the House should take its choice. The inferior system was that of fixing an annual charge for the Debt while the Debt itself was diminishing, and against that proposal he was anxious to enter a strong protest. With respect to the Terminable Annuities, the House was told that the plan had the assent of the Lord Chancellor; but what had Terminable Annuities to do with the funds in Chancery? According to a State Paper, which he had read with much amusement, the Lord Chancellor had concurred in the arrangement by which £60,000,000 was to be handed over for use as the Chancellor of the Exchequer might think fit, and had expressed his satisfaction at the consummation of the transaction. To this plan, as to the proposal to fix the annual charge for the Debt at £28,000,000, he strenuously objected, and he moved—

> "That it is inexpedient that the accounts of the Court of Chancery should be complicated through the employment of its funds in the operations of the Finance Minister upon the Public Debt, or that its fixed investments should be converted into Terminable Annuities wholly alien to the objects, the convenience, or the advantage of the Funds in Chancery."

MR. GREGORY, in seconding the Amendment, said, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, by taking, as he proposed to do, £40,000,000 out of the

Chancery Fund, changed the position of the suitors. The right hon. Gentleman carried the matter to the enormous extent of two-thirds of the funds to which the suitors were entitled, and dealt with the interests of persons who had no opportunity of expressing their objection, nor could be consulted on the matter. He did not think that the right hon. Gentleman was making sufficient provision for the security of the suitors. While sympathizing with the desire to reduce the National Debt by all legitimate means, he held that it was inexpedient to try to do so by the proposed method. On that subject he had a very strong feeling.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is inexpedient that the accounts of the Court of Chancery should be complicated through the employment of its funds in the operations of the Finance Minister upon the Public Debt, or that its fixed investments should be converted into Terminable Annuities, wholly alien to the objects, the convenience, or the advantage of the Funds in Chancery,"—(*Mr. J. G. Hubbard,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Sir GABRIEL GOLDNEY said, he was sorry to differ very materially from his hon. Friend (Mr. Gregory), who had entirely forgotten that the funds belonging to the Chancery suitors were already invested in the funds of the country. If the National Debt was considerably reduced by the operations so ably explained by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Suitors' Fund must become, from time to time, of greater value just in proportion as the Debt diminished. As the wealth of the country increased litigation would increase, that would bring more money into the possession of the Court, and there was no likelihood whatever that the £40,000,000 would be called for. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer dealt not with Consols, but with the Two and a-half Stock, now at 88, there would be a gain to the State of £2,500,000. He expressed his hearty concurrence with the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and hoped the House would not fail to endorse them.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE remarked, that the well-known ability of his right hon. Friend (Mr. Hubbard), and the interest he took in the question, entitled what he said to careful consideration. He did not think it convenient at the moment to enter into the subject; but he hoped his right hon. Friend would not deem it necessary to divide the House. He wished to know in what form and at what time they were likely to have the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposal with regard to the National Debt, so that the House might consider seriously the proposals he had made? He also desired to ask in what respect the scheme differed from the proposals made by the First Lord of the Treasury a year or two ago?

Mr. W. H. LEATHAM said, he would only intervene for a moment between the House and the reply of the right hon. Gentleman. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer on his masterly Budget. In candour he (Mr. Leatham) ought, however, to take some exception to the gigantic proportions of his scheme for the reduction of the National Debt, ultimately, by £172,000,000 by means of Terminable Annuities. He did not object to the scheme on the grounds named by the right hon. Gentleman the Mover of the Amendment —for he thought the suitors in the Court of Chancery must take their chance—but on account of the great size of the measure. Considering the large amount of their present Expenditure, it seemed to him that an annual charge of £3,370,000 was a great addition to it, and a smaller scheme of reduction of the Debt would be more suitable. That he respectfully suggested for the further consideration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and of the House.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, the proposals of the Government with regard to the National Debt would not be included in the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, but would be embodied in a separate Bill, which, at the present moment, was being prepared. It could not be done in a few days, but they had not the least wish for delay; on the contrary, they would proceed as rapidly as possible. Then, as to the difference between his proposal and that of the Prime Minister, he must say that his plan differed in this respect. The proposal of the Prime Minister two years ago was to set up an Annuity for 25 years; the present plan with regard to the Chancery Funds was to set up two Annuities for 20 years; and with regard to the Savings Bank funds, to set up Annuities for five, 10, and 15 years, so that as soon as we ran out a fresh one would be constituted. According to his proposals, the charge would be kept at its present rate. He did not think it would be well to disturb the fixed charge of £28,000,000 a-year, which was established by the late First Lord of the Treasury. He was bound to say that, while differing slightly as to the mechanism establishing that charge, he had always agreed with the principle. He thought that the charge of £28,000,000, which was established by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon, was a fair and reasonable amount, and he did not wish to see it diminished at present. If the new plan was allowed to work, at the end of 20 years the then Chancellor of the Exchequer would be able to deal with £3,374,000 a-year; and if he found that he could give any advantage out of that sum to the taxpayer, it would be in his power to do so. His proposal was a mean between two extreme proposals, and was consistent with the objection which he took a few years ago to that being made a hard-and-fast rule for more than a certain term. With reference to the objections that had been raised to employing the Chancery Funds, every possible security was given under the arrangement. The question was carefully considered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer some time ago, and every imaginable difficulty reviewed; and he did not think it possible to add to the satisfactory character of the security which would be given under the Act. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

WAYS AND MEANS.

COMMITTEE.

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now charged on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-three, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four, on importation into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say):

on		£	s.	d.
Tea	the lb.	0	0	6."

MR. W. H. SMITH: I had hoped, Sir, that some hon. Member would have risen before it became necessary for me to say a few words in reference to the interesting and exceedingly able statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Thursday last. I do not think I shall be misrepresenting the character of that statement, if I also say that it was a controversial statement. It must be admitted that this is the case, even allowing that the right hon. Gentleman might not have intended it to be controversial. It would be impossible for me to attempt to follow the right hon. Gentleman through all the details referred to in his long and interesting speech. I am the less disposed to do so, because I have no doubt that I shall be followed on this occasion by several right hon. and hon. Members, who will deal more ably than I am prepared to do with some very important questions which the right hon. Gentleman has raised, and because, for my own part, I prefer to grapple with a subject with which I am familiar, rather than with complicated and intricate matters with which I am only partially acquainted. I would merely venture to make one observation with regard to the unexpected increase in the Revenue, which the right hon. Gentleman has himself said he had not anticipated, and which took place shortly before the close of the financial year. He told us that it exceeded the expectations he gave us reason to expect would be realized by the Revenue of the year, some three weeks or a month ago, by a very large sum indeed; and I cannot refrain from asking the right hon. Gentleman whether there has been, in any degree, the slightest anticipation of Revenue? I am sure that the right hon. Gentleman will understand that I do not desire to impute irregularities in the conduct of public affairs to him; but there is no doubt that there is a ready zeal on the part of public officers to serve their superiors, which might influence the amount of the Revenue for the time being; and I could not help remarking that, in one part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, he referred to the improved arrangements in existence, principally in the Stamp Office, in the Legacy Department, and in the Inland Revenue Board, which have resulted in the realization of the Revenue somewhat more rapidly than had been anticipated; and that realization of a portion of the increase was attributed, I think, by the right hon. Gentleman himself to the greater activity and the greater zeal of the officers. The right hon. Gentleman has also referred to the fact that the Income Tax had realized a larger sum than was anticipated from it. A question was asked to-night by my noble Friend the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), which pointed in some degree to one of the causes which may have contributed to the increase of yield from that tax. I think no one acquainted with the course of trade in this country last year, or who is connected with agriculture, will be prepared to deny that, instead of an increase in the yield of Income Tax, we might reasonably have expected that there would have been a large diminution. I am speaking now—although in a thin House—to some hon. Members who are considered high authorities upon questions relating to trade, and I think they will agree with me that profits have been lower in the past year on the ordinary trade of the country than almost in any previous year; and, certainly, the farming interest has been far from prosperous. It is, therefore, not unreasonable that I should express some surprise at the excess, amounting to a sum of £238,000, which the right hon. Gentleman mentioned as having been realized from the Income Tax. There is another point on which I am anxious to ask a question, and that is, whether the balances which exist in the Public Departments remain substantially at the figure at which they stood last year, and at which they have stood for a great many years? There, again, I think the right hon. Gentleman will see that that zeal and faithfulness—for I will say nothing more than that—in the discharge of the duties which are attached to the great Public Departments, might result in the shrinking of balances which, as the right hon. Gentleman knows, if included in the taxation of the present year, must be taken in diminution of the taxation of next year. I believe that the balances stood at something like £1,700,000 in 1880; close upon the same figure in 1881; and at £1,670,000 on the 31st of March, 1882. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to the decrease of the spirit duties, extending over a long period of time; and he said there was substantially no adequate compensation for that decrease to be found in the additional yield on other taxes. I admit that there is no compensation, or no adequate compensation, to be found in the yield on other taxes, so far as I can see, with one single exception. The right hon. Gentleman showed that there has been an increase of £500,000 in the yield of the Tea Duty during the last three years. There is reason to believe that in addition to the increase of the Tea Duty other sources may also have contributed, in some degree, to replace the large falling-off in the Spirit Duties, although I do not say that it at all approaches the falling-off of £5,000,000, which may be taken as the standard of the consumption 10 years ago, and which ought to be the consumption now realized, if we take into account the increase of the population. But if £500,000 has been realized as an increase on the article of tea alone, I think it is probable that some other taxable articles, and even the Income Tax itself, may have been benefited by the better, the more frugal, and the more sober habits of the people. The right hon. Gentleman, in the course of his speech, spoke of the expenditure on the several Services; and there, Sir, I would remark that the Chancellor of the Exchequer this year has departed from the practice, which I believe has been up to this year always adhered to by previous Chancellors of the Exchequer—namely, the practice of comparing the Estimates of the present with those of the past year. [The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: I did that.] My right hon. Friend did not compare the Estimates. He entered into a comparison, no doubt, with the Exchequer issues, and with the gross Estimates; but he did not compare like with like, which has often been insisted upon by the Prime Minister as the standard and the view which every financial officer ought carefully to keep in mind. Now, I find that the right hon. Gentleman said that the Supply Services cost so much. The charge for the Army was £15,502,000; for the Navy the charge was £10,409,000. The charge for the War in Egypt stood at £3,896,000; the charge for the Civil Service at £17,350,000; for the Customs and Inland Revenue, £2,870,000; for the Post Office, £3,828,000; for the Telegraph Service, £1,510,000; and for the Packet Service, £720,000. Now, I wish to draw attention to this fact—that these figures, which the right hon. Gentleman referred to, were not the figures stated by the Prime Minister, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer at this time last year. There have been Supplementary Estimates for the year 1882-3 since March last year. There will be, to some extent, Supplementary Estimates for the year 1883-4. I hope they may not be large. Therefore, it is necessary that we should compare the Estimates of March and April this year with the Estimates submitted to Parliament in March and April, 1882. In the absence of any comparison on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I will venture to compare these Estimates myself, because I think that the impression which has been produced is not a perfectly accurate one. The impression created is, that the amount of the increase of the Expenditure is not so great as it really is; and the impression also created is, that our financial position, as far as Expenditure is concerned, is really much more satisfactory than undoubtedly I consider it to be. The gross Estimate for the Army for last year, 1882-3, was £17,726,828; and the gross Estimate for the Army this year is £18,291,766. The gross Estimate for the Navy last year was £10,724,789; the gross Estimate this year is £11,077,163. That is to say, that the actual charge, exclusive of the extra receipts which in one way or other are to be taken in diminution of the gross charge included in it, was, for the Estimates of last year, £15,458,000 for the Army, as against £15,606,000 this year, showing an increase, in round numbers, of £150,000. For the Navy, the Estimate was £10,483,000 last year, whereas the Estimate this year is £10,757,000, showing an increase of £274,000. But when we come to the Civil Service Estimates, the addition is even still more serious, because we come then to deal with that which I am afraid, when it is once increased, can never be reduced, or rather, if it can be reduced, there is very great difficulty in bringing about a reduction. The difficulty of reducing the Civil Service Expenditure is very well known to the right hon. Gentleman himself; and I am sure he will agree with me when I say the difficulty is infinitely greater in dealing with these Services than with the increase of expenditure either of the Army or of the Navy. It is great enough there; but if you have created or increased establishments and entered upon a particular course of policy, you will find it very difficult, if you wish to change that policy, to discharge the men that you have engaged. The result is that in such cases you would incur a loss so serious and so considerable that, in point of fact, no Government attempts to face the difficulty. Now, what is the first Estimate of the Civil Services? Last year the first Estimate was £16,502,789; whereas this year it is £17,253,004, showing an increase in the Civil Services of £750,000. Well, Sir, the Revenue Services also show an increase; but, no doubt, I shall be met by the statement that the Revenue Services—the Post Office and the Telegraph returns—show an ample profit upon the increased expenditure. I hope that will be the case; but we have the admission of the Prime Minister himself that, during the last two years, there has been a decrease in the relative proportions of profit upon the Post Office and Telegraph Expenditure, and that decrease is a very alarming one in the case of a Government carrying on trade, because it is nothing but trade. In 1882-3, the Estimates were £8,790,000; whereas, in 1883-4, they were £9,155,000, and this is altogether exclusive of the proposed expenditure upon the Parcels Post. It is a simple expenditure for the ordinary service of the Revenue Departments; and, notwithstanding the profit from the Post Office and the Telegraphs during the past year, I think these figures are larger and more considerable, and that they show a more rapid advance than was ever shown at any period in the history of the Post Office or of any administration. Now, Sir, what do the gross figures show? They show this—that the money to be paid for the Civil and Military Services in 1883-4, no matter how it is obtained, amounts to £55,777,000 in the gross; whereas last year it only amounted to

£53,744,000, showing an increase of upwards of £2,000,000. I again take the gross, because I wish to take into account the whole cost of the Service from whatever source the contribution may be obtained, whether we get it from Egypt, or whether we get it from India—for it must be remembered that a larger amount is to come in this year from India towards the cost of the Army—or whether we get it from selling old ships. What I contend is that the cost of these Services amounts to the figure I have stated, and that figure is £2,000,000 more than it was this time last year. The right hon. Gentleman has displayed great ingenuity in dealing with the figures, and I have no desire to cast the slightest suspicion upon any statement he has made. I only wish to show that there is another view of these Estimates, and that which I consider to be the most straightforward view. It does not matter, in my opinion, how the charge is met, or from what source it is obtained; the only question is, what does a thing cost? If a Revenue is obtained, that Revenue is the property of the public as completely as the taxes taken out of the pockets of the public. But what is the cost of the Services? I can show that the cost has increased during the year for precisely the same things; and although there may have been more men in the Army, or more tons of shipping built, the cost of government is £2,000,000 more than it was at this time last year. I have, to-night, to say a word or two with reference to the charges which the right hon. Gentleman brought against the late Administration in respect to their expenditure. When the present Government came into Office the Estimates on account of the cost of building additional iron-clads and replating others rose to £25,000,000 in 1882-3, and this year they stand at £26,250,000. Here, again, I complain that the right hon. Gentleman has not compared like with like. In speaking of £26,500,000, he has forgotten, or it has slipped his memory, that the figures in the Return for 1881-2 do not compare with the net figures in the Return for 1880-1. To compare them rightly, there are extra receipts which ought to be added to the charge this year. These extra receipts were taken by the Treasury up to 1881. [The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): They are added.] If that is so, I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon, and I will withdraw the remark, and proceed with my observations in regard to other parts of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. He said that the present Government, when they took Office in 1880, complained of the arrears in regard to the building of armoured ships; that a rule had been laid down to build 12,000 tons per annum; and that, although that had occasionally been done by the Government of Lord Beaconsfield, in 1877-8 the Estimates only provided for 9,226; in 1878-9 for 9,849; and in 1879-80 for 6,555 tons. It is satisfactory to be able to refer to a Return presented by my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty (No. 273, of last year) of the actual shipbuilding accomplished by the Governments to which reference has been made; and let me ask how the "rule" to which the right hon. Gentleman refers compares with work done in 1871-2? In that year, during the preceding Administration of the present Prime Minister, 6,261 tons of iron-clad shipping were built in the Dockyards, and there were actually built in the Dockyards and by contract 13,920 tons. In 1872-3 the rule was observed to the extent of 6,353 tons; and in 1873-4 it was observed to the extent of 5,003 tons; so that, in the two years preceding the accession to Office of the late Government, in which years the present Government were in power, they failed to build the amount which the right hon. Gentleman now says it was the rule to build in one year. That is a valuable example of how to carry out a precept. Nothing can be more satisfactory than to lay down a rule, and nothing can be more economical than to take credit for your excellent principles, and then entirely to avoid all adherence to them. These figures are probably the lowest that have been known for the last 18 years. No such small figures appear in these Returns as the figures of 1872-3 and 1873-4, the years preceding the Administration of Lord Beaconsfield and the Naval administration of my late right hon. Friend, Mr. Ward Hunt. After that the figures began to rise; they went up to 8,457, and the number in the succeeding years were respectively 14,276 and 11,450, from which they fell to 7,113 in 1877-8, 8,429 in 1878-9, 7,427 in 1879-80, and rose again to 9,235 in 1881.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): 1881 was when the present Government was in Office.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Yes; but I am only anxious to show that the present Government have failed to carry out the rule which they now insist upon. These figures for 1877-8 to 1880 do not include four powerful iron-clads which the late Board of Admiralty purchased, and which, at the date of purchase, were estimated at 14,400 tons, but which now figure in *The Navy List* for 28,220 tons; so that the actual addition to the Navy of iron-clad ships in the three years largely exceeded the so-called rule, whilst our Predecessors in 1873 and 1874 fell lamentably short of the rule which the right hon. Gentleman lays down. I did not feel myself rightly bound by any rule of the kind. What I felt I was bound to do was to endeavour to keep the Navy in the most efficient condition, so as to be ready for any emergency that might arise; and I also felt that, from time to time, it was my duty to the country and to my Colleagues, who placed confidence in me, to make such provision as I thought necessary. What I charge against the present Government, of which the right hon. Gentleman is a Member, is, that they allowed the repairs to fall into such a condition that we had very few ships to avail ourselves of. The error was not so much an error of shipbuilding, but one of repairs, and a serious arrear of repairs. The right hon. Gentleman has heard that before, and I cannot help feeling some surprise that he should again desire to raise a controversy upon a question which we had hoped had been settled some time ago, and which we had also hoped, as far as the interests of the Service were concerned, would not be frequently revived. If there is one misfortune greater than another to the Navy of this country, it is the introduction of purely Party considerations into questions which ought to be kept, as far as possible, from the domain of Party. The condition of the Army and Navy is a question of the highest importance to the country at large. It is a question which ought to be considered, as far as it is possible to do so, apart from Party considerations; and, from the very moment that I became, in any degree, responsible for the conduct of affairs, either as First Lord of the Admiralty, or since in Opposition, I have endeavoured, as far as I possibly could, to abstain from giving anyone the slightest cause to say that I was endeavouring to make political capital out of the condition of the Navy, or the acts of my Predecessors, or doing anything to hamper the Executive Government in the discharge of the duties they owe to the country in maintaining a perfectly efficient Navy. But I have a Return here showing a condition of things which would be positively alarming, if it had not been checked. In 1874, on the 1st of April, the ships thoroughly fit for service were 16 iron-clads, amounting to 101,044 tons, 74,908 horse power, with a total weight of metal thrown by armament of 37,060 tons; and of unarmoured vessels there were 80,073 tons, and 72,472 horse power. On the 31st of March, 1880, there were reported fit for service 272,007 tons of armoured vessels of 195,792 horse power, with a weight of metal thrown of 111,329 tons, and of unarmoured vessels there were 122,427 tons, with 133,186 horse power. Now, I ask which of the two policies was the best in the interests of the country? Was it best that the Navy should be kept efficient for a war which might occur at any moment, or was it best that ships, which needed repair, and were inefficient and incapable of rendering service without repair, should be allowed to remain with their boilers and engines in such a condition that they would not be able to go to sea? In my judgment the late Government did their duty, and only did their duty, in keeping the ships efficient and in building to the extent which they deemed necessary. There is, I think, a danger that the policy which the right hon. Gentleman himself practised in 1869, 1870, and 1871 may be followed by the present Board of Admiralty. If I have made comments on the subject, I am sure they have not been unfriendly comments, or dictated by any Party object; and I notice that the observations which I made last year have been followed this year by such a considerable increase in the provisions for repairs, that I have reason to hope that the expectation which the House has a right to form as to the condition of the Navy will be realized, and that the ships of the Fleet will be put into a proper state of repair. But I say distinctly that the condition of these Estimates—the fact that it is necessary to add 1,700 men to the Dockyards, and £107,000 to the amount of the Vote, in order to provide for the repairs, show that my contention was right before, and that the necessity for these repairs was very serious. I pointed out and I gave the names of the ships and the weight of the metal, and I pointed out the fact that the Fleet was less efficient in point of numbers than it was in 1880, and that we were unable to send as many ships and as many guns to sea last year as we were in 1880. I further pointed out that that was owing to the fact that ships were allowed to remain in harbour unrepaired, which, if intended to be repaired, ought at once to be taken in hand. My desire is to give to the present Government all the assistance I can in doing their duty. I do not wish to place the slightest obstacle in their way, nor to throw odium upon them in the performance of their duty. I think they were wrong in neglecting to do the work which ought to have been done two years ago; but they now show clearly that they intend to do that work. There was a very great arrear with regard to guns, and everybody knows there is much truth in the assertion of the right hon. Gentleman himself, that the Fleet has been less efficient in this respect than the ships of war of some other countries. [The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): No!] My ears certainly misled me if I did not hear the right hon. Gentleman say that for 20 years the guns of Her Majesty's Fleet had been inferior. I do not think they have been; but I must ask my right hon. Friend to say what was done during the first two years of his administration at the War Department. The right hon. Gentleman found, when he went there, that there had been great pressure put upon the War Department to supply the Navy with good guns, and that that pressure had hitherto failed to produce satisfactory results, because, although the work was a serious one and it had been seriously undertaken, there had not been sufficient time to complete it. My right hon. and gallant Friend on my right (Colonel Stanley) first seriously undertook the work, and we were in hopes that we should soon have had efficient guns for Her Majesty's Fleet. Then the right hon. Gentleman opposite came in, and a Committee was appointed; but I think I am right in saying that there has not yet been a 43-ton gun mounted in Her Majesty's Fleet, and that no 43-ton gun has yet been delivered to the Fleet; further, that none of the large guns included in the Estimates of 1881-2 have yet been delivered, and that the only delivery yet effected has been the delivery of 6-inch guns. I hope that the right hon. Gentleman will give me a Return showing the provision made in the Estimates for 1880-1, 1881-2, and 1882-3 for new guns to Her Majesty's Fleet, showing the guns which were delivered during each of those three years; and, if he thinks it right to be positively just and fair towards the manufacturing Departments, my right hon. Friend may show the guns in course of construction, and the amount of money expended on them in the course of the financial year. I think I have a right to ask for that Return, in order to make it perfectly clear how great the pressure has been upon the War Department in the last three years, how much of the work has been done, and how much of the money which has been provided has been spent. I think it will turn out that the amount actually expended up to the 31st of March of this year is considerably less than has been provided for, so that the Navy has the credit of being a much heavier charge and burden upon the War Department and the Exchequer than it really has been. I know the right hon. Gentleman is right in saying that our guns have been, and still are, inferior to guns that may be found in the ships of other countries; and it is not right, if we have costly ships and still more valuable lives to deal with, that we should have less efficient weapons than the weapons to be found in any other Service. I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will see that he has invited an Army and Navy debate. He has invited a discussion on the whole condition of the Army, Navy, and Civil Services; and he must not complain if I occupy a few minutes in endeavouring to touch the very fringe of the subject, which, no doubt, is one which must be discussed more fully and satisfactorily when we come to the Army and Navy Estimates. I wish to say a word or two upon another question. The right hon. Gentleman made a most ingenious, a most clever, and a most able comparison as to the effect of what is called the pressure upon the taxpayer. The Return to which he drew our attention is a very interesting and a very skilful Return; but I have always thought that there is nothing so fallacious as figures, and a clever and able statistician, or a man accustomed to shuffle figures about like my right hon. Friend, can make almost any display he thinks fit with figures, when he gets them into his hand. The right hon. Gentleman comes to the conclusion that we are rather better off, and are paying a great deal less for everything than we were 10 years ago; and that, although there is a gross increase in the Expenditure, somehow or other, it comes to be less than nothing to the taxpayer. The right hon. Gentleman said the first thing we must do is to ascertain what the pressure on the taxpayers is. Now, this Return shows that the pressure is reduced to the figure which he gives. I will not go into the particular figures which he gives, because it would only add to the complication of the matter. The main object of the right hon. Gentleman's speech was to show that the increased pressure upon the taxpayer, if you only eliminate the great causes of increase—such, for example, as the increase in the Education Vote, and the increase in the contribution in aid of local rates—then the net result shows some diminution in the pressure on the taxpayer as compared with what it was 10 years ago. In any case, I prefer to take the Estimates as they stand. I think it is more satisfactory to take the figures which are presented to the Committee, and which we understand. The figures are for the Civil Service Estimates for the year, to which I now propose to address myself. The right hon. Gentleman says, deducting the contributions in aid of local taxation, which have increased by £3,110,000; and, deducting £2,000,000 for education, you will see the result is highly satisfactory. Well, I will deduct, if you please, the appropriations in aid, and I will deduct the Education Vote altogether from the present Estimates, and compare them with the Estimates of 1873 in each case. I find that, deducting the appropriations in aid of local rates, £5,882,000, as shown in the Estimates for 1883-4, and deducting the Education Vote, which amounts to £4,500,000, the sum for the other Civil Services amounts to £6,871,000 now. In 1873 I find that the Civil Service Estimates stood at £11,067,000; but, deducting these appropriations in aid of rates and the Education Vote, I find that the remaining Civil Service Estimates stood at £5,695,000. The appropriations in aid of rates were estimated then at £2,872,000, as against £3,010,000 now; and the Education Votes were £2,500,000. Then, what do I find? I find that the net sum for the other Civil Service Estimates has increased in 10 years from £5,695,000 to £6,871,000—that is to say, that the increase which was looked upon as so entirely satisfactory, and which was said to be really and positively nothing at all to a great country like this, in the opinion of the Government, has been £1,200,000. But it must be borne in mind that that increase is an increase of over 20 per cent; and it is these percentages which alarm me, and the relative proportions which require to be brought home to the understanding of the Government, of the House of Commons, and of the people of this country. There is a positive and a continuous growth in the Expenditure; and it is only deceiving and misleading ourselves, so as to defeat the object we have in view, if we do not put the facts plainly, and in a straightforward manner, before the House of Commons. If we do not do this, and if, by any shuffling of figures, by any mode of dealing with property, or dealing with the income arising from other sources than taxation, we hide from ourselves the real facts of the case, we are only defeating the real object we have in view. The Revenue Departments show a considerable increase; but I prefer to insist upon that which is perfectly clear and patent to all. This amount is exclusive of the grant in aid altogether, and exclusive of the Education Votes. I exclude from them, as my right hon. Friend did, the Votes for English Education, the Science and Art Department, and the Scotch and Irish Votes for Education. I must, in passing, make one remark as to the fallacy of dealing with extra receipts—this income and profit in mitigation of only one portion of our expenditure. I think the compilers—although I am not able to say so positively—of this Estimate of the pressure of taxation have left out of consideration one fact—namely, that the very sums contributed in aid of local taxation are thus reduced, by the charges which are made and the revenue which is derived in various ways, from the police, from prisons, and from other sources, reducing the amount by the not inconsiderable sum of something between £200,000 and £300,000—the precise sum, I think, is £228,400. So that we have this singular condition of things—that the full credit is taken for the increase of the charges, which ought to be diminished, according to the rule now laid down, by the receipts which come into the miscellaneous revenue, and that miscellaneous revenue is applied in the diminution of other charges to which they have no relation whatever. Now, when you depart from the well-understood rule of taking revenue as revenue and expenditure as expenditure, you get into a vast complication of difficult calculations, some of which are almost certain to turn out to be wrong. It is impossible for the very best and most accomplished person to avoid overlooking something, and then is it fair to say—"Your calculations are all based on unsound principles?" As far as I can see, the contributions in aid of local taxation are not diminished by the sums which appear among the miscellaneous receipts; and there are other receipts which, no doubt, go into the Exchequer in mitigation of this particular charge. I am afraid I have taken up a great deal of the time of the House; but I have desired to compare like with like, and I find that, comparing like with like, the Army Estimates have risen since 1873-4 from £14,416,000 to £16,694,000; the Navy Estimates from £9,875,981 to £11,077,000; the Civil Service Estimates from £11,067,757 to £17,253,000; the Revenue Expenditure from £7,351,941 to £9,155,000; and the total Estimates from £42,712,000 to £54,179,000. But, comparing them with the Estimates of 1880-1, I find the Civil Service Estimates were £15,436,000; the Revenue Estimates, £8,156,000; the Army Estimates, £16,641,000; and the Navy Estimates, £10,492,000, so that in three years the increase has been from £50,725,000 to £54,179,000. These were the Estimates that were handed over to the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and the Estimates presented to Parliament this year; and for the same Services which were calculated in the year 1880 it cost £50,725,000. The cost this year is estimated at £55,777,004. There can be no doubt, I think—the right hon. Gentleman himself will admit that—wherever the money comes from, there has been an increase of taxation, as well as an increase in the yield, in certain profitable sources of Revenue belonging to the country—namely, the Post Office, but not the Telegraphs; and certain other miscellaneous receipts have come in in various ways. For instance, this year, we have had the advantage of receiving a large contribution from Egypt, in aid of the costs of the Army. How is it this large increase of charge in the cost of Government arises? That is a point which it is well to consider. Is it due to one Government or to another? Is it due to the force of public opinion, or to the pressure exercised by Members of this House? Is it due to the necessities of the case? I cannot help feeling that we must face the question and examine it carefully. I am afraid it is due, in some measure, and perhaps very considerably, to the fact that a large number of persons in the Civil Service are constituents of hon. Members in this House. It may not be a popular, and I am certain it is not a pleasing view to take, that we are now paying more money for the same work than was paid some three or four years ago, and still more than was paid some eight years ago, and that every man, speaking broadly, in the Public Service costs more money. I do not say he does not do a good day's work in return; I am far from suggesting that there are any servants in the Public Offices who are not entitled to their full pay; but what I do say is, that every man employed in the Public Services costs more than he did three or four or eight or ten years ago. I think it is for the interest of the country, for the interest of the Government, and the duty of this House, to see that every officer in the Public Service, no matter whether high or low, rich or poor, is properly and sufficiently paid for the work he discharges. But it is an alarming fact that £12,000,000 a-year are paid to persons who have most of them votes and power to influence Members of this House in their own interests, and to forward their own peculiar views and purposes. I want to know whether the Government are satisfied with this condition of affairs? Whether they are willing to allow this continued pressure to be exercised upon them, or whether the policy indicated by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) is to be followed by the Government, and that more and more duties are to be undertaken by way of inspection, by way of control, and by way of internal administration, instead of leaving the people of the country, as far as possible, to their own self-reliance, and to the protection of the law, subject to penalties upon those who do not observe the law? I have regarded for some time past with apprehension the tendency of people to fall back upon the Government, in order to ascertain whether the food they buy is good, and whether the people they employ sufficiently discharge their duties. In fact, this reliance upon the State tends to demoralize our people from the cradle to the grave, and leaves them in such a condition that they have no occasion to exercise any of the responsibilities which are attached to ordinary men and women. All they seemed to think is that they should be well cared for and well protected, and carried through life with ease and comfort. But if that course is to be followed, not only must we have a great increase in the charges for the Public Services, but there must also be great demoralization. We have been vigorous and powerful in this country, because we have been self-reliant, and we have been willing to endure some amount of personal inconvenience, and to run some personal risk, in order to obtain that liberty and independence of action which has given to England a pre-eminence in arts, in manufactures, and I believe also in arms. It is for the Government to say—it is not for the House of Commons so much as for the Government to say—what their policy is. I know it may be said, from time to time, that the Government must follow the House of Commons. I say that the Government exists to suggest a policy to the House of Commons. It is the Government which presents the Estimates. No individual Member of the House can add a single farthing to those Estimates; and that represents, to my mind, a principle of the very highest importance in insisting on the responsibility of the Government. It does appear to me—and I say it with humility—but it does appear to me that if the Government are not of opinion that the course which is being pursued, the disposition to yield to this pressure, is a wise one, they ought to say so, and to say it boldly and manfully; and I do not doubt myself that, in response to such an appeal and such a statement, the House would feel, the country would feel, and, I believe, the Party who sit behind the right hon. Gentleman would feel, that the occasion was one which required and demanded their support, and that it would be readily and cordially accorded to them. Sir, there are one or two questions to which I would ask the attention of the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman has told us what he proposes to do in the way of remission of taxation, and I now refer to the smallest of all the alterations which he proposes—namely, that with regard to silver plate. I will say nothing of the communications I have had with some of my constituents upon this subject; but it appears to me that no more unfortunate proposal than this could have been made. I understand the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman to be that silver plate shall be, in some way or other, shown in bond; but, having regard to the peculiar circumstances of the case, I would suggest that any plan for the bonding of silver plate for the purpose of sale will be practically unworkable. I think anyone who has a practical knowledge of the course of business will feel that silver plate is not a thing which is bought by the merchant for sale from a warehouse, like so much tobacco or spirits. It is bought by those who wish to use it, and the purchasers of it are not likely to go to such a place as a bonded warehouse to make choice of it, nor could the makers of silver goods afford to send persons to the warehouse to attend to customers. I think that the right hon. Gentleman will see that the proposal is, for these reasons, impracticable. But the right hon. Gentleman's proposal is accompanied with a kind of promise that next year the duty on silver plate will be repealed. There seems to be, however, no doubt that this will have the effect of throwing out of employment every silver worker who is working on design in order to attract drawing £5,000,000 a-year less into the Treasury from duty on spirits than, allowing for natural increase of population since 1875, would have been expected. That process might go on, and, by 1885, the Chancellor of the Exchequer might be very thankful to have some of these Terminable Annuities to make up for what he was losing from other sources. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman might himself be still Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1885, when he would have the benefit of the natural expiry of these Annuities; and the term ought not to be forestalled, as it would be much simpler to deal with them then, as to do it now would require a conversion scheme into a lower amount expiring now, which was a needless complication. As regarded the scheme itself, he thought taking £40,000,000 from the Chancery Suitors' Fund a safe enough operation, as he saw that, in 1879, the Fund reached £61,886,000, and he presumed it was a good deal more now. He found, also, that the largest sum ever taken out in one year was £6,598,000; while the smallest ever received in one year was £5,579,000. Thus, the outside possibility of shortcoming seemed £1,000,000 a-year, for which the margin left appeared very abundant; the probability being that, instead of any shortcoming at all, there would be a continued annual surplus. Then they came to the other item—the £30,000,000 from the Savings Banks Funds. These Funds were a more ticklish thing to deal with. Their permanence depended on the continued prosperity of the country, as well as on perfect confidence in the safety of the Funds. It might be difficult to satisfy ignorant people that the Fund was as safe as before it was manipulated. They would only see that something was being done, and might fail to see that the national guarantee remained just as before. He quite understood the detail of the scheme as regarded the £40,000,000; an Annuity of £2,674,000 would replace it with interest in the 20 years. But he did not quite understand the £30,000,000 which was to be converted into one Annuity of £1,200,000 for five years, renewable for 15 years; a second of similar amount for 10 years, renewable for 15 years; and a third of similar amount for 15 years, renewable for other 15 years. It appeared to him that such a scheme would only be complete at the end of 30 years, instead of the 20 years spoken of by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) here explained that the scheme was not to be complete at either of these periods, as he intended his plan to create a system by which every five years there would be an Annuity of £1,200,000 falling in, to be used for a still further extinction of Debt, by the renewal of the Annuity.

MR. ANDERSON said, he had been at a loss to understand that part of the scheme; but, as now explained, it evidently did provide for the probable reduction of a large amount of Debt. He ventured, however, to question altogether the policy of the scheme of renewing the Terminable Annuities. Paying debts was an admirable principle; but it was possible sometimes to use a surplus to much greater advantage for the country than by paying the country's debts with it, particularly at a time when the Three per Cents were above par—say, 102, as at present. The Terminable Annuity Scheme in question would inevitably force up the price of Consols, already far above the most sanguine dreams of the original lenders. The Budget had been styled "a rich man's Budget." In no particular was this more the case than in this very matter. Many were asking for a reduction of the taxes on articles of general consumption—such as tea—from which £4,000,000 were drawn—dried fruit—from which £500,000 was drawn—and coffee and chicory, which yielded one-third of a million. All these were things on which the country was looking for some reduction. But how was any reduction to be got except through these Terminable Annuities, expiring in 1885? Excessive taxation had been maintained in order to get that expiry; and now the people were to be robbed of the relief for which they had paid so long and so patiently. The right hon. Gentleman told them that in the last three years the annual average of Debt paid off was £6,829,000; or nearly £4,000,000 a-year more than in the previous six years. In the current year it would be £8,000,000. He had also told them that during the last quarter of a century they had reduced the National Debt by a sum of £107,100,000. That was as much, he thought, as the present generation could be expected to do. Our forefathers did not do their duty in the matter, and had handed down a large Debt. We were not adding to it, but were paying our way, and doing something towards paying it off. They were told that the American people were doing a great deal better than we. But American Debt was all incurred by the present generation. The present generation was endeavouring to pay it off. We were doing still better than that, for we were paying off debts we did not incur. At the same time, did anyone believe that the Americans were doing this from any keen sensitiveness about paying their debts? Not at all. It was because certain interested parties had pledged the Government to the doctrine of Protection, and the payment of the National Debt was the excuse for it. These parties were looking forward with dread to the time when the Debt would be all paid, and when the Government would be obliged to reduce the Import Duties on account of having nothing to do with the money when they got it. But did anyone doubt that if America had paid Debt a little slower in order to reduce Import Duties a little faster, it would have been far more to the benefit of her people? We need not be so anxious to copy America? A better plan for the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be to find out a plan of reducing the interest rate to the people. Already about £35,000,000 had been got from the Post Office Savings Banks. He was getting the money at 2½ per cent, and that money he was going to use for the purpose of raising the price of the Three per cent Consols, which the people had, consequently, to redeem at a higher price. Instead, he should issue 2½ or 2¾ per cent Stock to save the interest to the people. The principle of bringing forward the Terminable Annuities, instead of allowing them to fall in in 1885, was to give future Chancellors of the Exchequer a lesson in a new thing—the mutability of Terminable Annuities. By this means they might be able to obtain a surplus for some purpose possibly less legitimate than the paying of Debt. In that case the reduction of Debt might yet turn out to be visionary.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, he believed that, although the Resolution under discussion related solely to the Tea Duty, it had always been open to Members of that House, upon similar Motions, to discuss the whole question of the forthcoming financial year. And the first point to which he asked the attention of the Committee was one which, although it ostensibly had reference to the Income Tax charged last year, in reality related to the Income of the present year. He ventured to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Income Tax had not been illegally levied; and, in the event of that being so, whether a certain amount of the produce of that tax, which otherwise would have fallen within the present year, was not appropriated to the financial year ending on the 31st of March, 1883? He did not think it would be disputed that an infraction of the law had been committed, and that, although the amount realized by that infraction was small, the principle involved was a very large one; because no private individual would venture to question any taxation authorized by General Circular of the Board of Inland Revenue. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was always responsible for the proper exercise of the legal powers contained in the Customs and Inland Revenue Act; and as the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was Chancellor of the Exchequer when the last Act was passed, he asked him to pay especial attention to the statement of facts which he was about to make. If an infraction of the law had been committed, he was sure that no one would be more ready than the right hon. Gentleman to take steps which would prevent an unscrupulous Chancellor of the Exchequer hereafter obtaining more Income than he was entitled to for any particular year. The Committee would be aware that the Income Tax last year was raised from 5*d.* to 6½*d.* in the pound, and this amount was to be levied in unequal portions on the Income of the year; and the clause of the Act under which it was to be raised concluded with words to this effect—that when any dividends or interest were payable half-yearly or quarterly in the course of the said year, the first half-yearly, or the first two quarterly payments, should be deemed to be only chargeable with the duty of 5*d.* in the pound, and the other half-yearly or quarterly payments should be deemed to be chargeable with the duty of 8*d.* in the pound. Now, the Income Tax year ended on the 5th of April, and did not tally with the financial year, which began on the 1st of April; and, therefore, no financial year was ever credited with the exact amount of Income Tax received within the year. For instance, the present year would obtain a certain proportion of the Income Tax imposed last year —that was to say, the portion of the tax which applied to the time between the 31st of March and the 5th of April. As the law stood, all dividends payable between the 1st and 6th of October were only liable to the tax of 5*d.*; and the second portion of the tax to which they were liable at 8*d.* in the pound was payable after the 1st of April, 1883; and a certain part of it did not, therefore, come within the financial year which closed on the 31st of March, 1883. Now, the Board of Inland Revenue had issued a General Circular, by which they charged 6½*d.* in the pound on the first dividends of the year payable in October—that was to say, they anticipated by six months 1½*d.* of the tax which did not become due until after the 1st of April; and, consequently, a portion of the tax was credited to the year 1882-3, which it did no belong to, and the year 1883-4 was deprived of that sum. No one who read the Act of Parliament could doubt that there had been an infraction of the law. As he had already stated, the amount was not large; but it was possible that, if it had not been credited to the last financial year, the surplus from that year might have been converted into a deficiency. No one would conclude that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had authorized this infraction of the law; but he wished that some Member of the Government would rise in his place and admit that it had taken place; because, so far as principle was concerned, it was a gross infraction. It was for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to see that the Revenue Acts were carried out in accordance with the letter of the law; and if the House were to allow an infraction of the law, however slight, to take place, it would form a precedent which, if there were an unscrupulous Chancellor of the Exchequer in Office, might, at a future time, be made use of. He did not think that any satisfactory explanation of what had taken place was possible; but he hoped there would be from some Member of the Government an acknowledgment that the law had been broken, so that this infraction of the law might not be laid down hereafter as a precedent. With the indulgence of the Committee he would now make one or two observations upon the Budget Statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and, in the first place, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would receive his congratulations on the great ability and vigour with which he had laid his various points before the Committee, because this seemed to him a very satisfactory contradiction of the statement that he had somewhat suffered from the labours of the War Office. But a portion of his statement was of a very controversial nature. And what had been the result? He thought the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), who preceded him in addressing the Committee, had been able to controvert some of the figures of the right hon. Gentleman, and he (Lord George Hamilton) thought he should also be able to do so; and then, if a portion of the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was found to be overdrawn, and some of the figures shown to be inaccurate, he believed he would be correct in saying that the whole of the right hon. Gentleman's statement was seriously invalidated. Now, the complaint he made was that the right hon. Gentleman, in order to draw a comparison between the present and late Government unfavourable to the latter, was compelled to manipulate the system of Terminable Annuities now in force, in doing which he unconsciously laid down a principle most dangerous to economy, and likely to encourage extravagance in the future. What was the object of the system of Terminable Annuities? He had heard the Prime Minister, who was, more than anyone else, responsible for that system, in his financial speeches often state that, year after year, by Act of Parliament, a certain sum of money was to be put aside for the reduction of Debt; that the reduction of Debt under that system was automatic; that year by year it increased; and that no Chancellor of the Exchequer could, if he wished, in any way interfere with it. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer had credited himself throughout with the increase in the payment of Debt that resulted from the Annuities, with which he had no more to do than the Man in the Moon. The right hon. Gentleman went a step further—he took the reduction of Debt by Terminable Annuities, and, deducting it from the actual charges for the Army, Navy, and Civil Service, he concluded by saying that those Services cost less than they did eight years ago, and that, therefore, the country was now more cheaply administered. The Committee would understand that if the principle laid down by the Chancellor of the Exchequer were allowed to pass unchallenged, this system of extinction of Debt by Terminable Annuities might lead to great extravagance hereafter; because it would be always possible for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say—"No matter how great is the increase of the Estimates, so long as, by means of the system of Terminable Annuities, the payment of Debt may be deducted from them." The right hon. Gentleman stated that between the financial year 1873-4 and the financial year 1882-3 the Expenditure had apparently increased by the sum of £8,550,000, and that this increase of charge was paid out of the taxes. But he said there were some deductions to be made from that amount; there was, first, a deduction of £2,000,000 for the increased expenditure under the Education Vote, which was an annual charge; secondly, there was £3,010,000 to be deducted for Grants in Aid of Local Taxation, which was an annual charge also; and, thirdly, there was to be deducted £220,000 for the cost of collecting £7,000,000 additional Revenue. The right hon. Gentleman also took into account the sum of £3,670,000, which he said represented the increased payment of principal of the Debt. He (Lord George Hamilton) had read the Return which the right hon. Gentleman quoted as showing the increased charge for the period between the years 1873-4 and 1881-2; and it appeared from that Return that the charge for the payment of Debt, including interest, was £26,549,000 for the year 1873-4, and £28,187,000 for the year 1881-2, the difference being £1,638,000, and not £3,670,000, as the right hon. Gentleman stated. He (Lord George Hamilton) would now call the attention of the Committee to the conclusion drawn from his figures by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "If these are added together it will be found that they represent an increased charge of £8,900,000; whereas the increased charge on the taxpayer is £8,550,000; so that it follows that for Military, Naval, and Civil Expenditure, in spite of a considerable increase of expense in Ireland, the charge of last year is not greater than, but £350,000 less than, for 1873-4."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I said—

> "So that for the Interest on Debt, and for the Army, Navy, and Civil Service Estimates, &c."

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, it was unfortunate that an omission had been made in the report. But he had no objection to the addition of the words, so far as his argument was concerned. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to be allowed to take the diminution under the system of Terminable Annuities, and credit himself with that diminution for the purpose of deducting it from the Estimates connected with the Army, Navy, and Civil Service, it was a system that would be of no use whatever in reducing Expenditure; because it would then be competent to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say—"Our Expenditure is increasing very fast; but under the system of Terminable Annuities which we are carrying out it does not matter, as our reduction of Debt is greater." He did not regret that his observations had drawn attention to the omission in *The Times'* report of the right hon. Gentleman's speech; but even if the words in question were added, it was no reason whatever that the diminution under the system of Terminable Annuities should be deducted from the Expenditure on the Army, Navy, and Civil Service. He felt bound to press this point upon the Committee at length, because of the use which the right hon. Gentleman had made of the figures in his comparison between the Expenditure of the late and present Governments; and if he now went into controversial calculations he trusted he should be excused, the right hon. Gentleman having somewhat boldly thrown down the gauntlet. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that the amount of Debt paid off last year was £7,100,000, and the statement was received with applause by hon. Members opposite; but, looking closely into the subject, he found that the actual reduction amounted to the insignificant sum of £21,000, for both

Funded and Unfunded Debt. He had to make another statement which he thought would be a very useful reply to a large portion of the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had told them a great deal about what the present Government had done during the last three years, as compared with all that the late Government had done in the three years preceding their abandonment of Office. But the right hon. Gentleman never told them what was the difference in the amount of the Income which the present Government had to deal with, as compared with that at the disposal of the late Government. *The Statistical Abstract* showed that the Income, in the aggregate, of the last three years of the late Government was £244,000,000; while the Income of the first three years of the present Government was £259,000,000, the difference at the disposal of the present Government being an excess of £15,000,000. But that was not all; there were the Extra Receipts, which were treated as Income by the late Government, and these were now being treated in a different way—that was to say, for the last two years they had been deducted from the gross Expenditure on the Army and Navy; and as they represented a sum of £1,600,000, it followed that the actual excess of Income, just referred to, amounted to £16,600,000. Now, he did not find fault with that. On the contrary, he thought the Prime Minister had shown a praiseworthy energy when he came into Office by proposing additional taxation. It was well known that all Governments could put on taxes at first better than they could when they had been some time in Office; and he repeated that the Prime Minister had made good use of the authority and prestige which attached to a new Administration in this respect. But with regard to the composition of the £16,600,000 which he had shown the Government to have had by way of Income in excess of the Income of the late Government during the last three years they were in Office, he had analyzed it, and found it to be made up of the following items — namely, £9,500,000 imposed as taxes in the early days of the Government; £5,500,000 was the growth of pre-existing Revenue and of certain services which the State had undertaken; and the remainder represented the Extra Receipts which were now applied to the reduction of the gross Expenditure on the Army and Navy. He was dealing with the actual Income; and having shown that the Government had received more by £16,600,000 than the late Government, he asked, what had been done with the money? He was sure the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) would excuse him for pointing out an error which, on a former occasion, he had put before the public by taking the Annuity in existence when the present Government came into Office as an additional charge of £1,350,000 per annum. That was not so, because his right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), when in Office, had created a Sinking Fund for the extinction of Debt; and £500,000 of the Sinking Fund so created was annually appropriated to this Annuity; the charge was, therefore, only £850,000. After allowing for the payments on account of India, and other items paid by the Government, there remained £14,000,000 of the £16,600,000 additional Income still unaccounted for. It was popularly believed that it had gone in the payment of the debts of the late Government. But that was an absolute delusion. The present Government had not added one farthing of the cost of the arrangements made by the late Government to meet the deficiency in existence before they came into Office. But the Expenditure of the present Government had increased enormously; and the Army, Navy, and Civil Service Estimates for the present year showed an increase of £4,000,000 over the Estimates left by his right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote) three years ago. It was in this way that the money had gone. Now, with regard to the payment to India in connection with the Afghan War, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said this was a legacy from the late Government. He had never heard a more extraordinary statement. The truth was that it was nothing else than a hustings' legacy to the Liberal Party. He happened to be in the India Office at the time—only a few months before the Afghan War broke out—and he could assure the Committee that the impression that the late Afghan War was an European war was altogether a delusion. It was a very convenient one, however, because it enabled the then Opposition to say that, for the purpose of carrying on the war, the taxation of this country should be increased to pay for a war, not Indian, but European in its origin. When the Prime Minister had to develop his hustings' theory, he did it in a way contrary to every principle of finance which he had ever laid down, either in the House of Commons or elsewhere. Of the sum of £5,000,000 given to India, only £3,500,000 had been paid, a portion of this being raised by Annuities; and the last portion of the balance of £1,500,000 would not be paid until the financial year ending on the 31st of March, 1886; whereas, if a General Election were to take place, and the majority of the House of Commons were afterwards not to take the hustings' view of the Liberal Party, India would not get all of that amount, although it had been credited to her. Therefore, he said that the principle on which the Government based their hustings' theory was contrary to all that the Prime Minister had ever laid down, either in or out of Office; and to say, in the face of these facts, that the cost of the Afghan War was a legacy from the late Administration, appeared to him rather audacious on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He believed he had laid before the Committee the real facts as to the Expenditure during the last six years. It was true that there was a large deficiency on the three years ending on the 31st of March, 1880; but that had been converted into an Annuity that was in force before the present Government came into Office, and was not in any way connected with the increase in the Expenditure which had since occurred That was entirely due to the Army, Navy, and Civil Service costing more than it had done before; hence the Motion which the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) had brought forward on Friday last; and, if the hon. Member would allow him to do so, he would take this opportunity of congratulating him upon the singularly able and clear speech with which he introduced that Motion. But perhaps the most audacious portion of the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was that in which he treated the sanction given by the late Government to the scheme for the organization of the Army and Auxiliary Forces as entailing on the present Government an enormous Expenditure. He would refer to what occurred in 1870, because he regarded it as a warning to all Governments not to attempt reform unless they knew what the consequences would be. In that year the Bill of Lord Cardwell was introduced; but, his hand having been forced by some Gentlemen below the Gangway, he was compelled to bring in a Bill for the Abolition of Purchase in 1871. The Conservatives did not care much about the system of Purchase, and would have been glad to get rid of it; but they pointed out to the House that if there was to be a hasty abolition of Purchase, without the adoption of some scheme by which promotion could be secured, the country would have to incur a very great burden of cost. Their advice was utterly disregarded, Purchase was abolished, and a system of short service was established. The Bill under which Purchase was abolished went up, in the ordinary course, to the House of Lords. As events had shown, the House of Lords took a very statesmanlike view of the question; they passed a Resolution declaring that they were unwilling to assent to the second reading of the Bill until the House had laid before it, either by Her Majesty's Government or through the medium of an inquiry, a complete and comprehensive scheme for the appointment and promotion of officers. What, however, did the Government do? They made an obsolete use of the Prerogative of the Crown, by which use they hastily abolished Purchase in the Army. It would be very interesting to know what that hasty abolition of Purchase had cost the country. As a matter of fact, they had to pay something between £7,000,000 and £9,000,000 in cash to officers for the abolition of a system which insured promotion. Lord Cardwell gave a solemn pledge that if stagnation resulted a system of retirement would be brought in. Lord Cranbrook, as War Minister, had to introduce such a system; and he (Lord George Hamilton) believed that the consequence was that the Army Estimates had been increased from £500,000 to £1,000,000 annually. The short-service system might have been necessary—he would express no opinion upon the value or otherwise of the change effected by Lord Cardwell, for he was now dealing with figures. The pay of the private had to be increased *2d.* a-day to insure an increased number of men. Lord Cardwell's primary object in introducing the Bill was to weld the Army, Militia, and Auxiliary Forces into a harmonious whole. A most able Committee at the War Office inquired how this could best be done. They found that to do it effectively would cost a very large sum of money; and then down came a Liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer—a Colleague of Lord Cardwell—and actually said this increased cost was a legacy they had received from the Conservative Government.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he did not say anything of the kind.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, the right hon. Gentleman spoke of it as something left by the late Government which would entail a large Expenditure. He hoped that, as the right hon. Gentleman took so very wide and broad a view of what he called legacy, he would enforce it in collecting the Probate Duties. A variety of proposals had to be made for effecting economy in the administration of the Army, Navy, and Civil Services. He fully believed they got more for their money from the administration of the Navy than they did from the administration of the Army, and the reason was not far to seek. Under the Naval system there were always three of the ablest Naval officers straight from the Service at the head of the Admiralty; and, moreover, there was a happy combination of the Naval and Civilian elements, which was productive of efficiency and economy. As to the War Office, although there was at the head an illustrious Duke, who had probably more knowledge of the Army than any other man alive, and although he was assisted by very able men, he (Lord George Hamilton) believed most of the time was spent in fighting who should get the War Office; and that until a system was hit upon whereby the Military and Civilian elements could be amalgamated, the country would not receive as good results from the Army Expenditure as from the Navy. The Prime Minister had suggested that a special Committee, or a number of Committees, be appointed for the purpose of investigating the sources of Expenditure. He (Lord George Hamilton) could not believe that any real benefit would result from the adoption of the suggestion. The House had had experience of Select Committees, and there was one fact which it would be well for a Radical House of Commons to swallow. It might be an advantage, from many points of view, to enlarge the franchise, and to bring into the House of Commons Gentlemen who would directly represent those who would be enfranchised; but Select Committees were not now as efficient as formerly. Self-preservation was the first instinct; and Members of Parliament, representing large constituencies, knew full well that they must advertise themselves, or else they would lose their seats. It was not possible now-a-days for a Member of Parliament to sit in the House and not ask a large number of Questions. It would be interesting to look back 20 or 30 years, and compare the proceedings of Select Committees of that time with those of the present Committees. Committees were appointed 30 years ago to inquire into most complicated questions—such even as the renewal of the Charter to the Indian Government. If anyone looked at the Report of that Committee, over which Sir James Mackintosh presided in 1833, or another which sat in 1853, and compare it with the Reports of the Committees which sat in 1871, 1872, 1873, and 1874, they would see a great difference. Formerly, the Chairman was allowed to conduct important examinations; but it was not so now. He had had a good deal of experience on Committees appointed to inquire into the affairs of India. What was the result of the Committee appointed, with probably the ablest Chairman who could possibly be got—Mr. Ayrton? That Committee sat for three years: it commenced with 21 Members, and a quorum of seven; but ultimately the number of Members was increased to 30, and the quorum reduced to five. [Mr. R. N. FOWLER: No, no!] His hon. Friend contradicted him; but he was, nevertheless, speaking an absolute fact. There was always the danger, in appointing a Committee, that at the next General Election the Chairman and other Members would lose their seats. The idea he had always had—though he confessed it was an idea which did not find favour on either of the Front Benches—was that a Committee for the purpose of investigating into Expenditure was not of much use; but that a Committee might be appointed to supervise the Expenditure, which might be of advantage. It had also occurred to him that if the Estimates were referred to some strong Committee, not very numerous, but having the Minister in charge of the Estimates as Chairman, and if power was given of calling witnesses, a most effective instrument would be possessed for checking unnecessary Expenditure. He knew the theory prevailed that such a course would weaken the supervision of the Treasury. To speak frankly and openly, he must say he had not much faith in the supervision of the Treasury. The duties of the Treasury were too multifarious. More elasticity was required in the Department. At present the rule was to reject every new proposal, and to sanction all existing establishments. Everybody who had a suggestion to make was regarded, more or less, as an enemy of the public purse. Although he (Lord George Hamilton) admitted there was much to be said in favour of maintaining intact the authority of the Treasury, yet he was of opinion that some system, such as he had suggested, would be very effective in keeping down Expenditure. He acknowledged that the House would never give up its control of the Expenditure to a Select Committee. Some arrangement could always be made by which, after the investigation by the Select Committee, the House should still be able to exercise its powers and its authority as to whether or not it would pass the Estimates which had been under the supervision of the Committee. He had always been in favour of economy, and of avoiding unnecessary Expenditure; but one thing must be perfectly clear to everybody—namely, that if the State was to undertake annually fresh services on behalf of the public, the country must be called upon to meet an increased charge. Every year the State was taking upon itself fresh services; and now Parliament was considering a proposal by which bankruptcy arrangements were to become part of the duties of a Government Office. There seemed to be an idea in the minds of Liberal Members that it was only the Army and Navy which put pressure on the Government in regard to the increase of salaries. The Government, however, had a far heavier call upon them from the civilians they employed than from the Army and Navy. He thanked the Committee for the patience with which they had listened to his observations. Notwithstanding the criticisms which he had devoted to the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he congratulated the right hon. Gentleman upon the clearness with which he laid before the Committee his figures; and he trusted that next year it would be the country, and not a Party, which would have the undivided benefit of the right hon. Gentleman's exertions.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK said, he had listened with much interest to the speech of the noble Lord, because, during the last few months, he had constantly accused Her Majesty's Government of reckless extravagance. He did not think the noble Lord had succeeded in making good his case. As the noble Lord admitted frankly, in comparing the Expenditure of different Governments there were certain matters for which allowance must be made. For instance, the Expenditure on Terminable Annuities ought not to be noticed in any such comparison. The noble Lord admitted that allowance must be made for grants in aid for Education, for the Post Office and Telegraph Expenditure, for the Customs and Inland Revenue Expenditure, and so forth. If they compared the Expenditure in the last year of the late Conservative Government with that of the present year, there was, no doubt, an increase of something not much less than £4,000,000 sterling. But they must allow £1,000,000 for grants in aid, £900,000 for the extra amount voted to Debt, £800,000 for Post Office and Telegraphs, £100,000 for Customs and Inland Revenue, and £500,000 for Elementary Education—a total of £3,300,000. That left only an increase of about £750,000, notwithstanding the Egyptian War. It must also be borne in mind that, last year, the Government had to pay £2,000,000, the legacy left them by their Predecessors, besides the expenses of the Egyptian War, amounting to £4,000,000. The character of the Expenditure of the two years ought also to be taken into consideration. This year, according to the Estimates, £2,000,000 less was being spent on military matters; £900,000 more in grants in aid, which, after all, was not in itself an expenditure—at least, it was an expenditure from one pocket instead of from the other; £700,000 more in Education, which they almost all approved of; £1,000,000 on account of the Post Office, which would come back again in the shape of additional receipts; and a much larger sum would be devoted to the repayment of Debt. It was a matter of satisfaction that there was a surplus on the right side at the end of the year. It was very true the surplus was but a small one—£100,000. Last year, however, there was a surplus of £900,000, and the year before one of £350,000. In the last three years of the late Conservative Government there were deficiencies of £2,240,000, £2,230,000, and £2,600,000—in fact, in the six years of the late Conservative Administration the average deficit was over £1,000,000 a-year. Before that time there were five years of Liberal Government, with surpluses amounting to £17,000,000; and, before that, there were two years of Conservative Government, with deficiencies of £4,000,000. Before that, again, there were several years of Liberal Government, with annual surpluses of £2,000,000 and £3,000,000. In fact, it happened with mechanical regularity—Liberal Government and surplus; Conservative Government and deficiency. In fact, whenever there was a Liberal Government there was a surplus, and when there was a Conservative Government there was a deficiency. His right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) asked the other day who had benefited by the change of Government? He (Sir John Lubbock) would like to put the question somewhat differently—he would like to ask who was there who had not benefited by the change of Government? When the Expenditure had been once increased it was very difficult to reduce it. The Government had done a great deal in the reduction of Expenditure, and the country were indebted to them for all they had accomplished. If, however, he ventured to make a few remarks expressive of his regret that they had not been able to accomplish more, he did so in no spirit of unfavourable criticism, but rather in the hope of encouraging and helping them, as far as he could, in the future. They must all feel that though a great deal had been done the Expenditure of the country was far too high. In regard to the Army, there was an apparent reduction of £1,480,000—namely, from £17,086,000 to £15,606,000; but if they compared the Estimates with those of last year they would find there was an increase of £150,000. He was persuaded that that would be a matter of sore disappointment to the country. Moreover, if they looked at the character of the military economies and increases, he was afraid there was very little which would give them any more satisfaction. If he understood the accounts accurately, there was an increase of £400,000 in the permanent Expenditure which was partly balanced by the receipts from stores. He should like very much to ask Her Majesty's Government whether it would not be possible to diminish somewhat the Military Expenditure in our Colonies? In North America and the West Indies the Expenditure was £500,000 a-year; and he could not help thinking that some reduction might be made in that direction. Again, in Hong Kong, they spent £95,000, of which the Colony only paid us £20,000. As to the Expenditure on the Navy, he was afraid there was very little prospect of any reduction as long as they expected so much from the Navy. Considering, as he did, that the Navy was our first line of defence, he should be sorry to see a large reduction in the Expenditure upon that Service, as long as International Law remained in its present condition. He thought, however, that this question urgently demanded the attention of the Government. It must be remembered that the Navy had two main duties to perform—one was to guard their Coast, and the other was to protect their Mercantile Marine. It was a very extraordinary thing that while they had by far the largest Mercantile Marine in the world — more, at the present moment, than all the other nations of the world put together—that they were the one nation which still insisted upon the right of capture and seizure at sea. He believed they might do more to make their ships secure by agreeing to an alteration of the law in this respect than they could by any improvements in the Navy. If a war took place the prosperity of the

Mercantile Marine became, to a great extent, a question of insurance; and if merchants who shipped their goods by vessels belonging to one nation had to pay even 2*s.* 6*d.* more for insurance than other merchants, it followed that the vessels belonging to such a country were placed at a very great disadvantage. This was not a proper occasion to discuss the question fully; but it was one worthy of the attention of the Government. He believed that an alteration of the law in regard to the right of capture at sea was desired by all other nations but our own; that it would tend towards peace; and that no one would gain so much by the change as they themselves. They would make their ships at sea more secure than at present; and he thought that, in that case, some reduction could be made in the Naval Expenditure. Both the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) had, much to his (Sir John Lubbock's) satisfaction, pressed the Government to avoid undertaking commercial business. Again, he thought there was great danger in the system of paternal legislation which had been adopted; that universal inspection must more and more increase their Expenditure, and required to be very carefully watched. The very fact that much must necessarily be done in that direction ought to make Parliament most careful not to go further than was absolutely necessary, for legislation of that kind was very apt to defeat its own object. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade pointed out, a few days ago, to a deputation of shipowners who waited upon him that since the passing of the Act relating to and regulating merchant shipping the loss of life at sea had actually increased. As far as the Telegraphs were concerned, his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), a few days ago, paid a well-merited tribute to the Government officials connected with that Department; but, in his view, no excellence on the part of the officials could replace the stimulus supplied by open competition and personal interest. In the address which he recently delivered to the Society of Telegraph Engineers, Dr. Siemens showed that in America, the one great and important country in which telegraphic communication was not in the hands of the State, but remained under the control of private Companies, telegraphy was making the most rapid strides. Therefore, he held that those who desired economy in government must set their faces dead against the multiplication of official inspections and the extension of commercial undertakings by the Government, a course of action against which there were many other and good reasons. A few nights ago the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) brought the question of pensions before the House; and he quite agreed with the hon. Member that there was considerable room for economy in this respect. It was, of course, necessary to distinguish between different classes of pensions. It would, for instance, in his opinion, not only be unjust, but, in the long run, would prove bad economy, to disturb such pensions as had been settled by Act of Parliament and placed on the Consolidated Fund. The only relief they could look for was when pensions dropped in, and by the exercise of greater care in granting new ones. Again, it was important to distinguish between pensions granted for long service and pensions which simply arose from the abolition of offices. With regard to the former class, he agreed with his right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) that if the right to pensions was abolished the scale of salaries must be increased; and he feared they would end before long in giving pensions too. But it was well worthy the attention of the Government to consider whether steps could not be taken to diminish the second class of pensions to which he had referred. His suggestion would be that the terms of entry to the Civil Service should be so modified as that gentlemen would not be entitled to retire with pensions in the prime of life; and he thought this modification could be effected without running the risk of getting a less efficient class of applicants for appointments. Another suggestion he would venture to make was that the Government should take enlarged powers to transfer officials from one Department to another in case their offices were abolished. With regard to the question of Terminable Annuities, he could not think that the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) was correct in supposing that the suitors in the Court of Chancery would be prejudicially affected by the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; because, under the arrangement proposed, every suitor would be as certain of getting Government securities as he was at the present moment. He was of opinion, also, that the argument of the hon. Member for Glasgow was a little inconsistent; because, in the first place, he objected to the scheme that it would prejudicially affect the security of the depositors in the Post Office Savings Bank, and then went on to state that it would raise the value of Government securities—a fact to which he should have thought the depositors in the Savings Bank would have been among the last to object. As far as he was personally concerned, he would, of course, rather not see the interest reduced from 3 to 2½ per cent; but, at the same time, he was bound to admit that, in his view, the country would benefit by the proposed arrangement. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London (Mr. Hubbard) was another among the objectors to the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and his objections were based mainly on his objections to the proposal made some few years ago by the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote)—a proposal which certainly struck him (Sir John Lubbock) at the time it was made as being valuable, and bringing the matter very clearly before the public mind. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his Budget Speech, explained to the Committee very clearly the manner in which he proposed to deal with the Annuities terminating in the year 1885, and stated his view that if everything went on as he wished his proposal would have the effect of cancelling, in the course of the next 20 years, £170,000,000 of Debt. Hon. Members—or, at any rate, some of them—appeared to regard this as a too sanguine anticipation. But, even supposing the anticipation was realized, the country would still be left with a Debt exceeding £500,000,000 sterling; while by that time their keen competitors in America would probably be free from their National Debt altogether. This was a matter calling for most serious consideration in a mercantile and manufacturing country. A country which depended upon agriculture was in a very different position, in that agricultural occupations could be carried on in almost any country in which industry and intelligence were to be found. Manufacturers, on the contrary, went to the countries in which they could get the best return upon their capital. It was, therefore, most desirable to lose no opportunity, in these comparatively good times, of reducing their national indebtedness. He hoped, therefore, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not be discouraged by the criticisms which had been, or might yet be, passed upon his proposals. Rich and prosperous as this country was at the present time, they were heavily handicapped in the markets and the trade competition of the world by the Debt hanging round their neck, and partially crippling their commerce and manufactures. The country stood in a position of great danger in this respect; and he, therefore, hoped that the Government would, avoiding foreign complications, and leaving the taxation for some years at least, in the main, undisturbed, do their utmost to reduce the National Debt.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he did not wish to detain the Committee longer than a few minutes; but he thought it necessary to reply to some passages in the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton). He could not admit that the noble Lord was accurate in stating that the Act of Parliament had been broken in levying the Income Tax last year, as he had alleged, in excess of the rate warranted by the Act. What was done corresponded with the intention of Parliament in passing the Act, with previous precedents, and also with the declaration of the Prime Minister made at the time. The whole question was as to whether the money should have come into the first or the second half of the financial year. There was no doubt whatever that the intention of Parliament was that the Income Tax for last year should be levied at the rate of 6½*d.* in the pound; but as part of the tax had been levied and raised at a 5*d.* rate before the Act was passed, it was provided that where it had been so levied and raised the remainder of the tax should be levied at a different rate—namely, 8*d.* in the pound. This question turned on the construction of a very technical Proviso in the Act of Parliament; but what was done was entirely, as he had said, in accordance with precedent and with the intention of Parliament. And, apart from this, the effect upon the Budget was of a very slight character indeed. With regard to what the noble Lord had said in reference to the scheme of Terminable Annuities, he thought that if the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer lifted from the popular mind any existing illusion in regard to the unalterable character of those Annuities, no damage could be done by dispelling that illusion. These Annuities were a most valuable means for reducing the Debt of the country; and he had no reason to fear the operation of the machinery, though the noble Lord seemed to think it was calculated to cloud the popular apprehension with regard to the broad bases of the scheme. He thought, however, the course taken by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in anticipating the Annuities coming to an end in the year 1885, and converting them in the way proposed, was matter rather for satisfaction than for regret. The noble Lord, following the line which had been taken by the hon. Member for Glasgow, found fault with the scheme, because he said they were paying off Stock at par, or even above par, while they were on the high road to reducing the rate of interest. He hoped this was so; but it must be observed that if they were on the high road to reducing the interest on a part of the Debt, it was because they were paying off Stock in the way they were. By repeated purchases they enhanced the price of Stock in the market until it had come to be above par. Moreover, what had been done had been done without loss to the nation. If they converted permanent Stock into Terminable Annuities, and paid it off at par, they were paying it to themselves. With regard both to Chancery Funds and the Post Office Savings Bank, they were securing, by a process which involved no loss to the suitors or the depositors in the Savings Bank, an enhancement in the price of Stocks in the market, which would go far to reduce the rate of interest on the Public Debt. The Government had, at all events, not been guilty of that most expensive, inexpedient, and demoralizing system of paying with one hand and borrowing at a dear rate with the other. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Stafford Northcote) had had the working of his scheme impeded by recurrent deficits; and he had been forced to incur Debt at the very time he was paying off Debt. The present Government had, at any rate, made the Income of each year pay for the charges which came in course of payment. As far as the increase in the Civil Service Estimates was concerned, he wished to point out that it was largely due to a pressure which was brought upon the Government, and which they found it almost impossible to resist, by Civil servants through Members of that House. Another cause of this increase was to be found in the pressure which representatives of new social classes which were springing up brought to bear, for the purpose of increasing the activity of the Government in certain directions for the protection of a particular class or classes of persons who ought to be able to protect themselves. In his view, the remedy for the state of things complained of was to be found in the display of greater energy, courage, and independent feeling on the part of Members of that House.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I think the speeches of my right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), and my noble Friend the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), have been of a character likely to do much good, and to open the eyes of many hon. Members, and of the public outside this House, to the fallacies which have been very industriously propagated on the other side of the House. After the speeches of my right hon. and noble Friends, I do not think it necessary to follow, in detail, the ground over which they have travelled. I rise, therefore, simply for the purpose of making a very few general observations on the speech which the Committee heard from the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he made his Financial Statement on Thursday last. I regret to say that further reflection only confirms me in the reflection which I formed at the time, that the statement was one of an unusual character, and one hardly consistent with the position of a Chancellor of the Exchequer in bringing forward and laying before Parliament the Budget for the year. I cannot but think that there was much to justify the remark very commonly made by hon. Members, that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was made to be an electioneering speech, such as would be addressed to a popular audience, rather than one to be made on an occasion so solemn and important as when a statement was laid before the House of the financial transactions and prospects of the year. Those who are now engaged, and those who have previously been engaged, in the financial business of the country know the responsibility which attaches to those who are charged with the conduct of the financial business of the country; and they know also how many of the taunts, which may pass current on popular platforms, are not only undeserved, but fail altogether in their aim. It struck me that the right hon. Gentleman, having to get up his case on very short Notice, and having had very few weeks of Office, and being anxious to make a Budget Speech that should be more or less interesting to his audience, rather found his interest in an illegitimate manner by sneers and attacks upon his Predecessors. If there has been rather more tendency in this discussion to take up a Party attitude than might otherwise have been expected, the right hon. Gentleman has himself to thank for it. There is one remark I feel called upon to make. The right hon. Gentleman told us, at the beginning of his address, that he had had very few weeks of Office as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and therefore we could not expect him to be in a position to bring forward a large financial scheme. So far as the right hon. Gentleman himself is concerned, there is, no doubt, great force in that plea; but, so far as the Government is concerned, I do not see any force in it at all. The Government have been in Office three years, and during that time the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister has held the Office of Chancellor of the Exchequer also. We are all perfectly aware that the enormous amount of business and anxiety falling on the Prime Minister must be such as to render it impossible that he can give that full and careful attention to financial business which can be given when the Chancellor of the Exchequer has no other duties; but, then I say if that be so, I think it has not been a wise, or a good, or an advantageous, arrangement, which has in that way put the Office of Chancellor of the Exchequer so far in the background as has practically been during the last two or three years. I cannot help saying that, on some grounds, the holding of the Office of Chancellor of the Exchequer by the First Lord of the Treasury gives greater authority to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in controlling and curbing the expenditure of the spending Departments, or might do so—that is, if he has time to give to it, he has, of course, greater authority than anybody else; but if he has not time, then the work of controlling the expenditure of the great spending Departments practically falls to the Secretary to the Treasury, who, however excellent an Officer he may be, has not the authority of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and the consequence is apt to be that matters which properly fall to the Chancellor of the Exchequer are comparatively neglected. I have felt bound to make these remarks; but I hope I have not made them in an offensive way. I think it right that we should take notice of the nature of the present arrangement; and hope that as we now have a distinct Officer holding the Office of Chancellor of the Exchequer we shall have the benefit of the undivided attention which he will be able to bestow upon the duties of that Office. Now, there is another remark I have to make which applies to a great part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech. He made some defence of his Government, and of Governments generally, as against an attack which he anticipated on the following day from Gentlemen below the Gangway; and in the course of his remarks he more than once referred, in a pointed manner, to what he said were the causes of the Expenditure of the present Government. These causes of Expenditure he described as legacies bequeathed by their Predecessors, or as the war debts of their Predecessors. It is, of course, utterly impossible in this country that you can draw an absolute line at the beginning and end of each Administration, and say—"Here everything ends and here everything begins." There must be continuity, whether you desire it or not, between the actions or omissions of one Government and the action or abstinence from action of another. But I venture to say that with regard to the charges he made upon his Predecessors as to what he called their War Expenditure, and in treating them in the way he did, the right hon. Gentleman was guilty of very great injustice. Let me take one or two of the items. He spoke of our War Charges; and when he came to particularize them what was the first? The Vote of Credit for £6,000,000, for which we asked Parliament in 1877. In the first place, I deny that, strictly speaking, that can be called War Expenditure at all. It was not expenditure in war, but in measures to prevent war, and it was successful in preventing war. Therefore, I deny that it can properly be called War Expenditure; but I do not desire to raise anything that may be called a quibble upon that. What was it that we required that money for? It was required at a moment when it was necessary that some steps should be taken to uphold the power of this country, and meet possible warlike calls in the East of Europe. At that moment, with the prospect of having to act with great rapidity, we found ourselves in this position—owing to the action of our Predecessors, and the state in which the armaments of the country had been left, we were not in a position, if a sudden demand was made, to use the Forces of this country, and lead them to the seat of war. It was absolutely necessary, if we were to make any use of the Forces at our disposal, that we should have the power of moving them rapidly to any place where they might be required; and it was to obtain that power that the Vote of Credit was asked for, and was granted. The Prime Minister, in speaking the other night on the question of Expenditure, referred to the experience of the recent Egyptian War, and he took special credit for the promptitude with which the Forces of the country were sent to Egypt. He spoke with absolute truth and great force on the immense importance of promptitude on such occasions as that. Forces which, if sent out at once, can accomplish their object, if delayed for a few weeks, even though tripled or quadrupled, may fail. That was exactly what we felt. We thought it was necessary that there should be at the disposal of the Military and Naval Services of this country the means of rapid and prompt action. The effect of this Vote was that the country, and Europe, were saved from very serious evils that might have befallen them, and the country was able to take a position which has led to results which have generally been acknowledged to be beneficial. But the matter does not rest there. Not only was it in consequence, I will not say of the *laches*, but of the very economical administration of our Predecessors, that this step was rendered necessary; but our economical Successors had, to a great extent, the benefit of that expenditure. That benefit was not confined to the purpose to which it was immediately applied; but the ships and stores purchased sensibly assisted and strengthened the action of the Government when, the other day, in the Egyptian Campaign, they had occasion to make a sudden demand on our ships and stores. Therefore, it is altogether unjust and misleading to let it be supposed that that was an expenditure of which they were entirely clear. In the original steps which led to the necessity for that expenditure they were greatly concerned; and in the benefit that was reaped from that expenditure they had their full share. That was the first of what the right hon. Gentleman called the war debts of the late Government. There were others which he mentioned; for instance, the war in Afghanistan. I will not raise any discussion on that war. There is a good deal to be said, and I believe a very good case has been, and could be, made out for the action taken on that occasion by the Indian Government; and that, if you go into the origin of matters, a great deal may be said as to past actions which led to that war. I do not, however, desire to raise any question upon that; it is not a point upon which we are particularly anxious to insist. Neither will I say anything about the Zulu War, which the right hon. Gentleman also mentioned. That was a war which, I think, may be characterized in the language which the Prime Minister used in Mid Lothian with regard to the Ashantee War—it was a war which we certainly did not desire, but which we had, as it were, forced upon us. Nevertheless, it was forced upon us in our time; and, no doubt, we cannot deny that we may be fairly charged with the expenses of that war; but when we go beyond that, and when the right hon. Gentleman charges upon us the expenses of the Transvaal War, I can use no other language than that it is an outrage upon us. Is it not sufficient that we should have seen our country humiliated, as it has been, and seen all the bloodshed there has been, and should now be seeing our allies deserted, and our name degraded; but we are told that all this is to be charged against us? I deny altogether the possibility of such a charge being made. I say the present Government is clearly responsible for that war, and for what has arisen out of it, as they can be for the improvements which are being made in Piccadilly. They will say, I daresay, that all this has arisen from the occupation and annexation of the Transvaal. You may say every step in our South African history has been the result of former steps; and you may go back, as the right hon. Gentleman told us the other night, to the time when he was obliged to say to his Successor at the Colonial Office that the problem in South Africa was an insoluble problem; but if we are to believe that the annexation of the Transvaal rendered that war necessary, let us candidly look at the facts. The present Government came into Office when there was no war, they having pronounced against annexation. It was perfectly competent for them, with honour to the country and to themselves, if that was their feeling, then and there to have receded from the position that had been taken up, and they could have accompanied their withdrawal with any safeguards and provisions they thought necessary. But they did not do that. They used language which gave every impression that it was their intention to maintain that position by force of arms. They did not take the opportunity. They had another *locus penitentiæ.* They might have said this was another part of the proposition for the Confederation of the South African Colonies, and they would not disturb it in the hope that the Confederation might be carried out. But the Confederation scheme broke down, and again it was in their power, still with honour and dignity, to retire from the position in the Transvaal. Of neither of these opportunities did they take advantage; and now we are told that we are responsible, and are to be charged in hard cash with the expenses. I have thought it right to take notice of these matters, because it is too much that we should be day after day, in every quarter of the country, charged with such things as these, which do not belong to us. With regard to the question of expenses generally, undoubtedly every Government ought to be anxious, as far as possible, and consistently with efficiency, to keep the Expenditure of the country within limits. I hope the present Government will be able to do something in the way of keeping down and checking the Expenditure, which requires to be watched in every direction, and kept continually in mind, and within bounds. I do not know that I was altogether satisfied with the line the Government took the other day when this matter was pressed upon them. Apparently the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his Budget Speech, was answering, by anticipation, the attack which was to be made upon the Government on the following day; and it may be that, having a little underrated the hon. Members for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) and Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), he thought he might lure them from the direct scent by giving them his opponents to attack. But those hon. Gentlemen came forward the next day with great directness and vigour. They were not turned from their path; they said many things not pleasant to Gentlemen on this side of the House; but they did not spare Gentlemen on their own side. When the Government found they were as good marksmen as if they were so many Transvaal Boers, they began to think it was time to look about for a surrender; and what have they done? I will not say they offered a Convention, but they offered the hon. Gentlemen a Committee — or, rather, they offered, if the House pleased, that there should be a Committee or Committees. That was a most liberal offer, and it does great credit to the good nature of the Government; but, at the same time, it seemed to show a want of leading on their part in this matter. It is very like what they have done in regard to some other matters—like their referring the question of the Channel Tunnel, and other matters, to Committees. It did not seem to me that the views of the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues were calculated to bear out the severity of his speech. Now, I will pass from that point to another upon which we are brought to book. It is not merely the Expenditure we are told we have incurred, but also the mode in which we endeavoured to meet that Expenditure that we are taken to task for. I cannot altogether make the confession which I suppose I am expected to make. I am not at all disposed to accept all the rebukes which have been administered to us for the mode in which we provided for that Expenditure. I quite agree that it is desirable, where it can be done consistently with other considerations, in every year to pay off by taxation the full amount of all the charges of that year, and also to make some provision for the reduction of the Debt. But, while I admit that that is, as a rule, desirable, I consider it subject to qualifications and limitations, and to other things which are even more desirable. I cannot accept, and I altogether repudiate, the doctrine which finds favour with the Prime Minister and his Colleagues, and which is very popular when enunciated in this House—namely, that taxation ought to be of a punitive character, or a penal character. What seems to be in their minds is, that if a Government finds itself obliged to enter upon warlike operations, it ought, as a matter of wholesome discipline, to bring those operations to the mind of the people by charging them with the expenses, however heavy they may be, within the same year. There is, no doubt, something very magnanimous in that way of looking at the case; but I myself rather hold this view Assuming that the military operations are necessary and good and right, then I say you ought not to be looking principally to making the mode of meeting the expenses as punitive and disagreeable as possible; but you ought to make it as little disadvantageous to the country as possible. I do not mean that it is to be as easy a matter as possible. I do not mean that you are to meet everything by throwing it upon the Debt, and shuffling out of it in such a way. We did no such thing, and I would not advocate it. When we asked for the £6,000,000 we at once raised taxation. We raised the Income Tax; we raised the Tobacco Duties; but we did not think it right to throw the whole of the burden upon a single year, and so we provided that what was an Expenditure for the benefit of the country should be defrayed in a very reasonable and small number of years—not throwing it upon a future generation, or to any great distance of time, but throwing it over two or three years, with a view to preventing the necessity of putting a burden of stringent taxation on the country at a time when it would have been extremely disadvantageous and injurious to the country to bear it. That may or may not be the right policy, but it is a policy which was openly adopted and argued, and, which I have maintained for many years past, and which I am prepared on all occasions to stand up for as right. I will put it in this way. If you are obliged, whenever a sudden call is made upon you, to raise the whole of the money required at once, you practically have, in the present state of your financial system, no other resource than the Income Tax. In such a case you may have to raise the Income Tax, not by 2*d.*, but by 4*d.* or 6*d.*, in order to pay off everything at once; but in the following year you would have to take it off again. Now, as practical men, do we not see an enormous inconvenience to the country in thus putting the Income Tax up and down; and do we not see how great an advantage it is, especially at times like those of which I was speaking, when there was great pressure, to endeavour to keep your Income Tax level as steadily as possible? Remember, we put on the Income Tax in such a way that within the few years that were to elapse before the expiration of the Terminable Annuities in 1885, the whole of the expenses would be discharged, and the country would be relieved of them. We are, no doubt, upon that view open to be told that we are taking a wrong financial view. I believe it is the right financial view; but, at all events, it is one which is not open to the sort of charge which the Secretary to the Treasury just now intimated against us—that we were allowing everything to slide, and were not proceeding with any vigour in the matter, but were endeavouring to hope for a surplus in one year to make up the deficiency of another. We had very bad fortune, in some of the complications that came upon us, for which we were not altogether responsible, and also in the great failure that took place in our Revenue, which had been estimated most carefully. I appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has access to the means of knowing upon what our Estimates were formed — Estimates formed most carefully, but which, owing to the state of the country, fell £750,000 in a single year. The right hon. Gentleman has had better fortune, and I am quite ready to offer him my good wishes on the results of last year's calculations. He has received something like £1,500,000 or £1,750,000 more than he originally — or his Predecessor — estimated the Revenue at. That is good fortune. I do not suppose he or the Government would claim any merit for that; but it is an instance of good fortune as remarkable as was our bad fortune. After all, these are matters in which we must always be prepared for ups and downs. It is always the case that, make the best Estimate you can, it is impossible to foresee what the result will be. I have made these observations on the charges made by the right hon. Gentleman, for it seemed to me that he was rather intent on drawing the attention of the House away from the actual financial shortcomings of the present Government by throwing them on their Predecessors. I should have been prepared to make some observations on the Expenditure as it stands in their hands, as compared with the Expenditure in former times; but my right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith) has gone so fully into that matter that I do not think it necessary to do so myself. There is one other matter, or one or two other matters in the Budget on which I should wish to say a very few words. My right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster said what occurred to him, and what, I know, is felt in the City with regard to the mode of dealing with the Silver Plate Duty. I will not go into that now; but I cannot help expressing the opinion that more differences will be found in this matter than we have been told of, and I shall not be surprised if the Government find they are obliged to give up their plan. They have made one attempt to deal with the Silver Duty, which was not a success; and I should not be surprised if they had to give up this proposal. I much regretted to hear what was said about the Wine Duties. It seemed to me it was repeating the error which was committed by the Prime Minister when he actually made it one reason for asking for additional taxation that he was engaged in the negotiation of a Treaty with France with a view to the reduction of our Wine Duties, and when he said he hoped to get a reduction of those duties. That all came to nothing; and now we have got again some general language, rather vague, and, at the same time, exciting, with regard to a plan the Government adopt, and which, at the same time, may be produced at the proper time, to set right the scheme of the Wine Duties in a manner that will be satisfactory to Spain and Portugal. I think that language of that sort, when you are not prepared immediately to give effect to your plan, is of an injurious character. It excites trade, and may possibly complicate our relations with other Powers. I regret very much that such language should have been used if no effect is to be given to it. As to another proposal —the reduction in the charge for telegrams—I said on the first night that which I feel bound to say now—that I think, as we were to have that reduction, it was rather hard that we were led, a few days ago, into a vote which we gave entirely on the assurance that we could not afford to make this reduction. Not with any particular pleasure, but from a feeling of duty, I and my Friends near me accompanied the Government into the Lobby in order to maintain the position which they had called on us to take, which was to assist them in protecting the Revenue. If we are to be thrown over in this way it is not an encouragement to those who desire to support economy. It is not an encouragement to give an unpopular vote for the sake of supporting a Ministry if they throw you over the next day. Then, as to the Railways, I confess I think the Committee would be glad to have some fuller information as to the conditions upon which this boon is to be given to the Companies. I own it seems to me—as it always seemed to me in the old times, when the Railway Companies came to me asking for this relief—that we have a right to demand that some advantages should be given to the State and to the public in return for a concession which, no doubt, raises considerably the value of Railway Stock. I cannot help saying, in passing, that I think this is a matter on which we ought to have a further and fuller explanation. There is another point on which there should be fuller information this evening—namely, as to the proposals for the reduction of the National Debt. I agree with him to a certain extent; but I think that even with regard to that proposal he might have been a little more graceful in the way in which he referred to what had been previously done in the matter. The right hon. Gentleman, however, makes the proposal a very captivating and high-sounding one — to get rid of £170,000,000 of Debt within a limited number of years. That, I know, favourably impressed a great many Gentlemen, who, perhaps, have forgotten that in the year 1875 I made a proposal which eventuated, so far as the paper calculations went, in something like the same result in even higher figures. I induced the House of Commons to take a step which was of a practical character. The right hon. Gentleman does not ask one single 6*d.* to be expended for the purpose of accomplishing this great feat; but I found myself in a different position. When the late Government undertook to deal with the question, they found that the charge for the interest on the Debt, including the costs of the Terminable Annuities, was £27,200,000, and their first proposal was to raise that amount by additions of taxation, or by abstaining from remissions of taxation, which is the same thing, to £28,000,000, adding an expenditure of £800,000 a year to the charge for the Debt. And then, also, I proposed by Act of Parliament to fix that amount as the amount which should be continuously paid to cover the interest of the Sinking Fund. That was done on the principle that if you have a fixed sum paid every year to cover something more than the interest on the Debt, the something more which is applicable will go to the reduction of principal; and year by year, as the principal is redeemed and the same money is thus applied, a larger proportion of it will go to the redemption of principal, and a smaller proportion to the payment of interest. According to that principle, if you maintain the payment of £28,000,000 a-year, you will find that after a time you extinguish a large portion of that Debt. The right hon. Gentleman says he maintains that principle, whatever doubts the Government had upon it when it was first introduced. I think he, and certainly some some others who sit on the same Bench with him, at that time objected to the proposals, on the ground that it would bind some future Chancellor of the Exchequer when the time came for calling in the great Annuities, and that it was unfair and unbusinesslike for one Party to bind its successor in that way. All our proposal came to was that we bound Parliament, while that Act was in force, to maintain a certain payment in one way or another for the redemption of the Debt. But the right hon. Gentleman binds his Successor or himself much more closely by the Annuities he proposes to set up. I understand that in 1885 there will fall in Terminable Annuities to the amount of £5,130,000, and that upon the cancelling of £70,000,000 of Debt the interest of that £70,000,000, to the amount of about £2,100,000, will be saved. So that there will be, on the one side of the account a saving of Expenditure of £7,230,000; and against that the right hon. Gentleman creates three sets of Annuities, one of £2,674,000, another of £3,600,000, and a third of £700,000, which will bring it to £6,974,000 on the one side of the account as against £7,230,000 on the other side. Is that so?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Yes.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Well, that is a proposal which is entirely within the lines of the legislation of the year 1875, and a very proper proceeding it is, subject to qualifications, perhaps, as to the amount of the Annuities to be created, to be accepted in principle when the time comes. But I want to know why should it have come this year, and do you thereby gain any advantage over the more simple process of waiting till 1885, when the Annuities fall in, before you deal with the amount? I must say it does not seem very clear to me what is the object to be gained, unless it is to obtain the credit of making an arrangement which really costs the right hon. Gentleman nothing. I will not go into the darker and more mysterious prospect as to the Death Duties, and the Succession Duty on Corporations, and other matters, that are held out to us by the right hon. Gentleman as things which are to be done in another year. Sufficient for the year is the Budget thereof. I can only say that we shall look forward with anxiety to what is in store for us in the future. Undoubtedly, having regard to the serious falling off in the consumption of spirits and fermented liquors, which the right hon. Gentleman referred to, it is a moment of some little anxiety as to our financial future; but I adhere to the view which I took some years ago, and which has been quoted by my right hon. Friend, that if there really is such a change in the habits of the people as to largely reduce the consumption of alcohol, there is no fear that either the Revenue, if managed with skill and dexterity, or the country, will suffer from it in the end. The country ought to feel, and will feel, benefit from the great saving that will be brought about. I hope that nothing I have said has given offence to any of those who have heard me. They must remember who threw the first stone. I cannot think it was my duty to pass over without comment such remarks as those of the right hon. Gentleman.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): The right hon. Gentleman, and one or two of those who preceded him, have spoken very severely of me, because they said that, in the Statement I made on Thursday last, I introduced matter into my remarks which was unusual—which was not consistent with my position, and which savoured of electioneering; and my right hon. Friend who spoke last went so far as to say that I directed sneers against my opponents. Now, I beg distinctly to state that on that occasion not a single word fell from me which could, by any possibility, be construed into a sneer against anyone. What I did was this. I have referred carefully to the Statement which I made, and I will tell the Committee precisely what I did which seemed to be of so unusual a character in the opinion of some hon. Members. In describing the financial position during the last few years, I alluded to three things—first, to the "legacies," as I called them, of Expenditure which we inherited three years ago, and I described, but certainly not with a sneer, those legacies accurately. I stated carefully, and with the figures before me, what the amount of the Debt paid off was during our three years, the six preceeding years, and during the last 26 years. I gave figures which certainly contained no sneers in them, for they were simply dry matters of fact. I also made a comparison between the Army and Navy Estimates of 1879-80 and of this year, and I endeavoured to give accurately what the differences between those Estimates were, and where were the increases and the economies. This was the only statement which, during the whole of my remarks, I made as to the procedings of the late Administration. It is quite true that I made a comparison between the Expenditure of last year—1882-3—and of the preceding year, so as to show in what respect the Expenditure of last year had been more than the Expenditure of the preceeding years, and how it came to pass, after allowing for this additional Expenditure, the charge on the taxpayer was less last year than the year before. But the year I selected was not one during the Administration of the late Government, and I, therefore, did not refer, either directly or indirectly, to them. I also gave the total Expenditure for the Army and Navy at certain periods since 1857. I think, therefore, that it cannot be said that I instituted any unusual or, indeed, any comparisons at all between the acts of the present Administration and the acts of the past Administration. The three comparisons I made I was bound to make, and they were with regard to the amount of Debt paid off, and the comparative Expenditure on the Army and Navy last year and the four years before. I felt it to be my duty to the whole House, not to any particular Party in the House, that the figures should be stated; and here are the reasons. For some months past, as you know, hundreds of thousands of leaflets have been distributed up and down the country by the National Union of Conservatives, containing supposed figures to prove the great financial crimes of the present Administration. There is not a borough, not a county, in which those figures have not been distributed by thousands, giving in the utmost detail separate items to prove the great financial crimes of the present Administration. I will not trouble the Committee with the manner in which these circulars were distributed. And not only was this the case; but the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton), who spoke so well to-night—and we are always glad to hear him, for he speaks with perfect good humour, and his observations are always pointed and interesting to all who hear them—has occupied himself during the past few weeks in circulating these figures here and there, and in bringing them forward as a great accusation against Her Majesty's Government. Well, under those circumstances, it was almost my duty, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, not in a long argument, but by a simple recitation of figures, to state what were the real circumstances of the Expenditure of the past few years, and what have been the financial arrangements of the Government during that period as compared with the Expenditure and financial arrangements of previous times. Feeling it to be my duty, I accomplished the task as shortly and as simply as I could; and I am bound to say, from some internal evidence I have had, that I was not only expected to take that line by those who agree with the noble Lord's view, but also by others who, within the last few days, have considered it to be their duty to address their constituents on the subject of the current Government finance. I find, for instance, that the very day before I spoke here on Thursday last, someone was kind enough to send me a newspaper, in which I I noticed that my hon. and learned Friend the junior Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart - Wortley) — I am not quite sure whether he is in the House now, he was a few minutes ago—when addressing his constituents was asked whether he could give information as to several interesting questions of finance. Specially, they said, they wanted to know what the bill left by the late Government was which was to be defrayed by the Liberal Budget of this year. His answer was the very natural one, that he was afraid that the Liberal Budget for this year was a thing concealed for the moment in the mind of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that until the Chancellor of the Exchequer made his speech—which he hoped he would do on the following night—he (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) would not be able to answer. It was quite plain that my hon. and learned Friend the junior Member for Sheffield expected on that particular point that a legacy had come from the late Government, and that I should explain what it was—what it consisted of, and how we had paid it, and how we proposed to pay it. And now, because I have done so, and have complied with the anticipation of my hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield, I am told I have done something unusual — something worse than unusual. Really, Sir, I have done nothing but tell the plain truth. It was my duty to put before the House certain facts. Of course, on all questions of this sort we expect to hear arguments and counter-arguments, and no one is surprised to hear from the other side of the House statements put forward to weaken the force of our contention; but that I said anything unusual and unexpected, I think the evidence I have now given to the Committee plainly and conclusively disproves. The right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken also said that I had taken this course because I had not had sufficient time in the Office I now hold to be able to make any important statements to the House. What I said was this—that I should endeavour to place before the House such statements as I could; and I never conceived that in dealing, for instance, with so interesting a question as the Debt—which it has been my fortune to study both in and out of Office for many years past—I should not be at liberty to make such a proposal as I thought, after full consideration, was a wise one. But what I really said was this—that I did not think the Chancellor of the Exchequer, after being only a few weeks in Office, was in a position to make large Revenue proposals—to propose large changes in dealing with great branches of Revenue. That was what I ventured in my opening words to deprecate, and I told the House some facts as to the Revenue which I was afraid would not be very interesting. But I never imagined that it would be my duty, or that it was incumbent on me, to refrain from dealing with other questions—of making the most ample proposals I thought necessary to the House in regard to other matters. The right hon. Gentleman has accused me of having, in stating these simple matters of fact, committed gross injustice to my Predecessors in charging upon them War Expenditure which, he said, was not War Expenditure at all, because the £6,000,000 which was raised in connection with the contemplated operations in the East of Europe—the Russian scare, or whatever it may be called — was provided to avoid war. Now, the Expenditure which was left to us was only in a small degree arising out of the Vote of Credit. The Expenditure left to us was mainly Expenditure arising out of subsequent operations in South Africa. The whole amount incurred was £12,000,000, but £4,000,000 was defrayed out of that, leaving £8,100,000. But allowing a deduction by the right hon. Gentleman, the amount left to us was £7,850,000, and it was made up of the war items of 1878, 1879, and 1880. It was, therefore, in the shape in which it came to us, Expenditure for warlike purposes. But the right hon. Gentleman has given a most extraordinary account of the nature of this Expenditure, and of the reasons why he could not defray it. He said it was necessary to incur this outlay because of the insufficient Expenditure incurred by his Predecessors—so insufficient that they were unable to move our Forces without making a special appeal to the House for money to enable them to do so. That was certainly a charge by the right hon. Gentleman against his Predecessors of inadequate protection of the nation, if ever such a charge was brought in this world. But the late Government had been four years in Office then. They had said a great deal about the condition of the Navy, and they had said much as to what they would do when they came into Office. Mr. Ward Hunt, for instance, said a great deal about the state of the Navy, and his determination to take it in hand. We voted them every shilling they asked for; but after they had had four years of Office, and four years to get the Forces we left them into proper condition, the right hon. Gentleman says that the state of things in 1878 was the consequence of what we had left them in 1874; and, not satisfied with that, he also declares that we had in 1882 the benefit of the money spent in 1878, without which we should not have been able to undertake the Egyptian Campaign. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman recollects the answer given to the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) some short time ago, when he inquired whether the Government had had the advantage of the stores left by the late Government, and the reply was, "Not a pound." The whole amount had been consumed a long time before; and now the right hon. Gentleman brings the charge of our having benefited by them against us again. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that the Zulu War was a fair charge, and the Afghan War also. Nobody supposed, however, that the war which was estimated at £7,000,000 would cost £20,000,000. The right hon. Gentleman said also that to charge the Transvaal War on the late Government was an outrage; and how did he prove it? He argued that we might have got over the difficulty of that war if we had agreed to some changes in the Transvaal when the confederation of the Colonies was found finally to fail. Without further inquiry as to that failure, and before consulting those in this country whom it was necessary to consult, we were to suddenly abandon the Transvaal, and in that way avoid the consequences of the war. What would the right hon. Gentleman and his Party have said if we had taken that course? It is possible we may have been too patient in waiting to know more about the state of affairs in the Transvaal, and had we acted in a great hurry it is just possible that war might have been avoided; but treating the matter historically, whether our conduct in regard to the Transvaal was or was not wise, I say distinctly that the war was the consequence of the policy of the late Government, and, as such, I am perfectly justified in saying that the expense of that war was a heritage from the late Government. Then the right hon. Gentleman, passing to an entirely different subject, alluded to the debate on Friday, and said that apparently what I had said on Thursday was directed to my hon. Friends the Members for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) and Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), and that at the end we had to surrender. Nothing of the kind. I said, in reply to a question, that the decision to adopt the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Burnley, was arrived at before I spoke. I had been, from the first, anxious that there should be a debate, and I think great public advantage was gained by that debate, and I did something to assist that debate, because those who are impartial will remember that I made a great many references to Expenditure during the last 12 years, which had no connection with the Expenditure of the late Government; and it was my hope that the information I brought before the House then would be useful to the hon. Member for Burnley upon his Motion. But the right hon. Gentleman passed back again to the former question, and discussed at some length the policy which the late Government had adopted in 1879-80 in not meeting the charges for the year with the taxation of the year. He said taxation should not be punitive, and that we should not punish the taxpayers; and for that reason he had adopted the policy of deferring charges over a period of years. I remember a deputation to the right hon. Gentleman, and I remember that he gave a description of his financial policy, saying that it was wise to spread Expenditure over a number of years. What did we do? My right hon. Friend, and several hon. Gentlemen who are sitting opposite, said the policy of spreading Expenditure was a dangerous one, because you might have a good year, and then a bad year following, and so the process of spreading would go on. That is exactly what the late Government did. We had the Vote of Credit, and instead of its being paid for the Expenditure was spread; and what followed? We had wars, and the result was that we are now paying, and shall continue to pay until 1885, for four wars which could have been paid off at the time instead of being spread over a long period. I believe that instead of spreading Expenditure over a number of years our duty is to pay it as nearly as possible at the time. It is possible that the whole Expenditure of a year may slightly exceed the Revenue; but our duty is to make that up in the following year. That may be an unpopular proceeding at the time, but it may bring home to the taxpayers what war is; and if it has that effect it does much more good than the popular method of telling them—"Oh! we will spread it, and your burden will be only light, because it will go on for a time." So much for the remarks which the right hon. Gentleman directed against me. I will now give one or two answers to questions which have been addressed to me, and to remark upon certain portions of the Budget. The right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) asked me a question which, coming from a Gentleman who has been at the Treasury, is full of weight. He asked me whether the balances in the Public Departments were greater or less this year than last? I cannot say positively, but no instructions for balances were given; and all I can say is that the balances in London were £50,000 more than they were last year. The right hon. Gentleman also called special attention to the Revenue from tea, and asked me whether I could say that the present steady increase of that Revenue in the last few years, compared with the fall in the Revenue from wine and spirits, was significant? I am afraid it is not so significant as I should wish. He complained rather that I did not make a triple comparison with respect to the Receipts and Estimates of previous years. I find that I did state to the House three sets of figures as nearly as I could.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: My objection was that the figures given to the House were the gross Estimates of the past year, instead of the Estimates of March in one year compared with the Estimates of March in another year.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): If it is important to the Committee I will give those figures; but, after the full information given by the Secretary to the Treasury, I do not think I should be expected to go again into details as to the Expenditure of the last two or three years; and I must say that I could not tell the Committee that a comparison of the gross Expenditure would be any real comparison at all. I have been comparing the net Expenditure, which I think is the only reasonable comparison to make. Then the right hon. Gentleman complains that the Expenditure on ships has been so low that in one year we only built 7,000 tons, and yet we had a number of iron-clads under the Vote of Credit in the previous year. That, he says, is why we kept the shipbuilding so low; but that is exactly why our Estimates must rise again. As to the construction of guns, no one could be more anxious than I am to go precisely on the lines laid down by the right hon. Gentleman. While I was at the War Office I carried out the wishes of Parliament and the country with regard to the Army, and the result has been an increase of £350,000 a-year on guns. I now come to some questions addressed to me with respect to particular remissions of taxation. With regard to silver and silver plate, it is proposed that it shall be placed in a sort of show-room, where it can be sold before it pays duty. I have noted, and wish to take such advantage as I can from the suggestions made to me on that matter. I will see if it is possible to do something in that direction, and shall be quite open to suggestions from hon. Gentlemen. I must distinctly decline to accept the right hon.

Gentleman's warning as to what I said about wine. The words I used were words used with great care, and after consulting the records we possess as to the state of our relations with wine-growing countries. I hope those words will prove true. I referred to the Wine Duties in a way which I know has already been received with approval by those who are interested in the wine negotiations. As to the question of the price of telegrams, in spite of the severe censure I have received for dividing against my hon. Friend and then accepting his Motion, I can only return good for evil, and thank the right hon. Gentleman for supporting me on that occasion. I myself believe that when you have an opinion on a question it is better, instead of being silent and compromising the matter, to fight it out, and if you are beaten to take your beating and make the best of it. Therefore, I did not think it wise that the reduction of the price of telegrams should be forced upon us. What we have done is to set aside the amount which we believe will be incurred if the reduction is made at once, and study the best way of carrying out the reduction. The only other remark I have to make is on what fell from the right hon. Gentleman opposite with regard to our Sinking Fund and National Debt. He said we were not very graceful in the manner in which we developed this plan—because, I suppose, I did not give him sufficient credit for the £28,000,000 he had discharged. My objection to his plan was that it left out of sight the necessity for having Terminable Annuities; and that if, instead of laying down £28,000,000 or £29,000,000, he had arranged Annuities up to that figure, he would have been more likely to stand the fire of the position later on. But that plan having been adopted, I waived my objection. We have accepted it honourably, and intend to carry it out fully. When he asks why we did not wait another two years, all I can say is that when there is a good opportunity of carrying out a plan of that kind it is better to strike the iron while it is hot, than to wait till the last moment, when some accident may happen and prevent our carrying out in 1885 what there was every probability of our being able to carry out in 1883. I conclude by thanking the Committee for the favourable way in which they have received the Budget, which, in its main outlines, has been accepted by the Committee and by the country.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

(1.) *Resolved*, That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now charged on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-three, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four, on importation into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say): on

		£	*s.*	*d.*
Tea	the lb.	0	0	6.

(2.) *Resolved*, That there shall be granted and paid to Her Majesty upon a licence or certificate to kill Game to be taken out under the provisions of the Act of the twenty-third and twenty-fourth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter ninety, for a continuous period of fourteen days to be specified in such licence or certificate, the Duty of . . . . . . One Pound.

(3.) *Resolved*, That it is expedient to amend the Laws relating to Customs and Inland Revenue.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

MOTIONS.

GLEBE LOAN (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. TREVELYAN, Bill to amend the Glebe Loan (Ireland) Acts, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. TREVELYAN and Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 138.]

TURNPIKE ACTS CONTINUANCE ACT, 1882.

Select Committee *appointed*, to inquire into the Fifth and Sixth Schedules of "The Annual Turnpike Acts Continuance Act, 1882:"—Lord EDWARD CAVENDISH, Mr. WENTWORTH BEAUMONT, Mr. BEACH, Mr. SALT, Mr. ACLAND, Viscount FOLKESTONE, and Mr. HIBBERT:—Three to be the quorum.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to inquire and report to the House under what conditions, with reference to the rate of interest, expenses of management, maintenance of road, payment of debt, and term of years, or other special arrangements, the Acts of the Trusts mentioned should be continued.

Ordered, That all Petitions relating to the continuance or discontinuance of Turnpike Trusts be referred to the Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

CANAL BOATS ACT (1877) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Burt, Bill to amend "The Canal Boats Act, 1877," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Burt, Mr. Samuel Morley, Mr. John Corbett, Mr. Pell, and Mr. Broadhurst.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 139.]

CANALS.

Select Committee on Canals *nominated*:—Mr. Peel, Mr. John Corbett, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Bolton, Mr. Carington, Mr. Rowley Hill, Mr. John Holms, Mr. Isaac Wilson, Mr. Harcourt, Mr. Staveley Hill, Sir Edmund Lechmere, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Shiel, Mr. Hicks, and Mr. Salt:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records; Five to be the quorum.

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 10*th April*, 1883.

Their Lordships met at Twelve of the clock.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Army (Annual) * (25); Land Drainage Provisional Order * (26); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) * (27); Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (Extension of Time) * (28).

Second Reading — Representative Peers (Scotland) (5); Representative Peers (Scotland) Election Procedure (6), *negatived*.

Royal Assent—Consolidated Fund (No. 2) [46 *Vict.* c. 5]; National Gallery (Loan) [46 *Vict.* c. 4]; Explosive Substances [46 *Vict.* c. 3].

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That Her Majesty had been pleased to issue a Commission to several Lords therein named, for declaring Her Royal Assent to several Acts agreed upon by both Houses of Parliament.

House adjourned during pleasure.

House resumed.

The Royal Assent was given, by Commission, to three Bills.

House adjourned during pleasure.

House resumed at a quarter past Four of the clock.

REPRESENTATIVE PEERS (SCOTLAND) BILLS.

PETITION PRESENTED.

The Earl of GALLOWAY, in presenting a Petition from the Members of the Learned Professions in Scotland and others, praying that in any legislation bearing upon the Peerage of Scotland the jurisdiction of the Court of Session may be provided for, said: My Lords, in allusion to the two Bills of very grave importance which stand on your Lordships Orders to-day for second reading—namely, the Representative Peers (Scotland) Bill and the Representative Peers (Scotland) Election Procedure Bill, I hope I may be allowed to read a Petition which I have been requested to present. It is signed by two-thirds of the Sheriffs of Scotland. Perhaps I may be allowed to remind English Peers that the Sheriffs of Scotland are learned men, their qualifications being very different from those of Sheriffs in other parts of the United Kingdom; and I may say that the absence of the signatures of the other Sheriffs is due to various causes, some of them being absent from this country, and this Bill having been brought on for second reading rather hurriedly, there has been no opportunity of getting the Petition forwarded in time for their signatures. The Petition also contains the signatures of the Lord Provosts of Edinburgh and Glasgow as representing the people of Scotland; but the object of its promoters was not to get numbers of signatures, but specially to secure names representative of all the men learned in law and history. The noble Earl presented the Petition accordingly:—

"That, previous to the Treaty of Union, questions involving the right to a Peerage of Scotland were decided by the Court of Session—the Supreme Court of Scotland; that questions of precedence between Peers were expressly reserved to that Court in the decree of ranking, and that by the 19th Article of the Treaty of Union the 'authority and privileges' of the Court of Session were upheld unimpaired;

"That, nevertheless, subsequently to the Union the practice has been introduced of Scottage Peerage claims being referred, in the first instance to, and virtually decided by, the resolutions of the Committee for Privileges of your Lordships' House;

"That such Committee, composed of members of your right hon. House, not necessarily conversant with the law of Scotland, has not been found in all respects a satisfactory substitute for the Supreme Court of Scotland in dealing with the rights of Peers of that kingdom, and that its proceedings have not always secured that general acquiesence of opinion which the rulings of your Lordships' House should command;

"That it appears from one of the bills before your Lordships it is proposed to empower your right hon. House to make alterations in the Union Roll, and that as a matter affecting both public and private interests, as well as one in which Scottish national sentiment is concerned, it deserves your Lordships' earnest solicitude not to prejudice the rights of precedency of any of the ancient and historic dignities of Scotland as established by that roll.

And praying—

"That in any legislation bearing upon the Peerage of Scotland your Lordships will provide for the jurisdiction of the Court of Session, subject to appeal to your right hon. House, as a judicial tribunal, and that in the case of petitions relating thereto Her Most Gracious Majesty be advised to direct reference in the first instance to the said Court of Session, and your petitioners will ever," &c.

Petition that in any legislation bearing upon the Peerage of Scotland the jurisdiction of the Court of Session may be provided for; of Members of the Learned Professions in Scotland and others.—(*The Earl of Galloway.*)

Petition read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

REPRESENTATIVE PEERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 5.)

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

THE EARL OF KINTORE said, he would rather personally have taken a silent part in the discussion of this measure; but he felt that there were higher considerations than mere personal feelings, and he therefore asked leave to address a few words to their Lordships' House, both on the ground that, as a Peer of Scotland, he was concerned in the maintenance of the rights and privileges of that body secured to them by the Treaty of Union, and also on the narrower ground that, as he had had the advantage of being a Member of the Committee of this House which reported on the subject last year, he had had some opportunity of studying the question. He wished to say at once that he fully recognized the desire of the noble and learned Earl upon the Woolsack to do all he could to bring the question to a satisfactory settlement. It was just because he thought this Bill, as it now stood, contained one or two proposals that would inflict an injustice on the Peers of Scotland, and, in some degree, militate against the object of the noble and learned Lord, that he ventured to draw their Lordships' attention to it. With regard to the first part of the Bill he had very little to say, unless it were at a future stage, when he might possibly propose an Amendment on Clause 1, in regard to the duties of the Lord Clerk Register. However that might be, the first four sections of the Bill happily established the principle that the Electoral Roll should be a Roll of Peers, and not of peerages. But when they came to Clause 5, they there found a proposal to which he, for one, wholly and entirely objected. That clause provided that any person claiming to have succeeded to the honour enjoyed by a deceased Peer, might present a Petition to the House of Lords, praying that his name be entered on the Election Roll. The clause provided—

"That the House of Lords shall thereupon cause inquiries to be made into the same by the Lord Chancellor, in the manner usual in like cases of succession to any peerage in Ireland, and the House, if satisfied with the report received from the Lord Chancellor, may direct the Lord Clerk Register to insert the name of the petitioner on the Election Roll accordingly, or, otherwise, may refuse to give such direction until he has established his claim before the Committee of Privileges."

He wished to speak of the Lord Chancellor with the greatest deference. The noble and learned Earl filled his high Office in a manner which earned the admiration of this House and of the country. But the noble and learned Earl did not owe the high position which he held to any special knowledge of Scottish law. He was essentially an English lawyer, and therefore he thought it a most undesirable proposal that the fortunes of Scottish Peers, many of them holders of very ancient Peerages, should be assigned to the decision of the noble and learned Earl. Possibly he would be told that the Lord Chancellor made inquiries in the case of Irish Peerages, and that in regard to these he was in the habit of referring to the Ulster Roll. But in the Committee which sat last year, they had had the advantage of hearing evidence with regard to the Ulster Roll. It appeared that the standard reference in all questions of Irish Peerage was the Ulster Roll. It also appeared that the power to add to that Roll and of deleting from it was absolute. With regard to the proposed terms of reference to the Lord Chancellor, he considered that they were too wide, and, though he did not for a moment mean to say that his noble and learned Friend would erase any name from the Roll without good and sufficient grounds, he said that the powers were far too large to be willingly accepted by the Scottish Peers as a model definition of the jurisdiction of the Lord Chancellor. Sir Bernard Burke had informed the Committee last year that it was the custom in times past to submit the Roll annually to the Irish House of Lords, and that to-day it was the custom to submit it annually to the Lord Lieutenant. He was asked if that was for its correction and approval, and he replied that he did not think so. He thought it was simply for the information of claimants. He (the Earl of Kintore) was aware that there were some representative Peers sitting in this House who were not at one with him on this subject; but he was perfectly and absolutely certain that the proposal to assign these cases to the decision of the Lord Chancellor, as set forth in the Bill, was one which met with strong resistance on the part of a large preponderance of the Scottish Peers. He did not wish to be understood for a moment as objecting to the powers of this House to decide questions of Scottish Peerage. He believed it was undisputed that in former times that power was exercised. However that might be, it had for many years been the practice for this House to decide upon them, and he, for one, was content that it should there remain. At the same time, he wished to point out strongly the advantage that would accrue to this House in arriving at a decision were they to obtain the opinion of the Court of Session. The Committee of Privileges was an absolutely impartial body, but he believed that, with possibly a single exception, all the noble Lords sitting on that Committee were other than Scottish Lords. While that state of things existed, he feared there was great danger that the decisions of their Lordships' House, founded upon the Report of that Committee, would continue to meet with grave dissatisfaction in Scotland. He did not ask that the Court of Session should be intrusted with the final determination of questions affecting the rights of the Scottish Peerage. All he wished was that the opinion of that Court should be obtained on any questions referring to the Electoral Roll. He claimed that a considerable financial saving might be effected by adopting this proposal. At present, charter chests had to be ransacked in Edinburgh, and agents brought to London for an indefinite period and at considerable expense, whereas if they could produce the documents at the bar of the High Court in Edinburgh, and prove it by witnesses, that evidence might be accepted by their Lordships' House, and a great deal of expense thereby saved. Something might also be said about the dignity of their Lordships' House. Although he was more than anxious that the rights and privileges of the Scottish Peerage should be maintained, he was equally jealous with regard to the Prerogatives and Privileges of this House. He believed the other House of Parliament would be in their strict right were they to refer Petitions against the return of any Member of their House to be tried by themselves; but, as a matter of fact, they invariably referred such Petitions to be heard before the Judges of the land. Why they could not do the same thing in somewhat similar circumstances passed his understanding. With regard to Section 8, he saw it was proposed in that clause that the House should have power to rectify the Union Roll. He should like to know plainly what that meant. He remembered that a few years ago a proposal by the noble Duke before him to rectify the Roll was successfully resisted by the noble Marquess opposite, and he was not aware of anything that had since occurred to alter the reasons that had then been advanced. In conclusion, he begged to thank their Lordships for the attention with which they had listened to his observations on this, the first, occasion of his addressing their Lordships' House.

Lord ELPHINSTONE said, he did not agree with the noble Earl who had just spoken in thinking that the Court of Session should exercise control in those cases.

THE EARL OF KINTORE explained that he had not said that the Court of Session should exercise control, but only that the House would find great advantage in obtaining their opinion.

LORD ELPHINSTONE said, that the Court of Session had no jurisdiction in these cases, and did not claim any such jurisdiction. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack had referred, in introducing the Bill, to several cases that had come before this House in the last century, and the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees (the Earl of Redesdale) had also referred to several cases. He believed no fewer than 40 Peerage cases connected with Scotland had been decided in their Lordships' House, and he was not quite sure whether there were not more. But he intended to refer to two cases which had not been brought before this House. In 1873 a claim was made by Mr. Goodeve Erskine to the estates held by a noble Lord who sat in this House. The question was raised in the Court of Session, and it was there decided that he could not sustain his claim to the estates unless he proved his claim to the title of Earl of Mar. Lord Shand, one of the Lords in the Outer House of the Court of Session, pointed out that the question of title could not be determined by that Court, and fell to be determined by the House of Lords. The case was referred to the Inner House, when Lord Ardmillan observed—

> "The right to the title of Earl of Mar is directly and immediately involved in this case, nor has this Court the power of disposing of that question of Peers' succession; it must be decided by the House of Peers."

That was the opinion of two Lords of Session within the last 10 years. Those who advocated the Court of Session as a Court of Appeal, seemed to forget that, by the Act of Union, Peers of Scotland became Peers of Great Britain, with equal rights and privileges in all respects with Peers belonging to other parts of the Kingdom except that of voting. Were they prepared to ask the Peers of England to submit their Peerage cases to the decision of the Court of Session? If they were not, then he could not understand the equality of rights and privileges. The same rule must apply to the one as to the other. Suppose one Lord in the Court of Session had jurisdiction over Peerages, and a contested case came before him. That contested claim was decided, say, in favour of A; B naturally appealed to the House of Lords, and the House of Lords said that B was the Peer and A the Commoner. Here they should have had a different verdict from the highest Court in England, and the highest in Scotland. He contended that if they gave this jurisdiction to the Court of Session, it would necessarily lead to great expense. He therefore hoped their Lordships would not consent to that proposal.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY said, he had nothing to withdraw from the expression of opinion he had given when the Bill was introduced by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, because he considered the Bill a real honest attempt to settle a vexed question. There were only two points of the Bill which he thought it would be necessary to alter, and he hoped that if the second reading were passed, the noble and learned Lord would take these two points into his careful consideration. He congratulated the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Kintore) on the manner in which he had addressed their Lordships for the first time, and hoped this would not be the last time that he would make a contribution to the debates in their Lordships' House. With regard to the great point, whether the Court of Session should make primary inquiry into Scottish Peerage cases, the Committee which had inquired into the matter had reported distinctly in favour of the Court of Session being the preliminary body to which inquiry should be remitted. The Act of Union did nothing to impair the jurisdiction of the Court of Session. He did not wish to do away with the ultimate jurisdiction of this House, for it was the Supreme Assembly to which, ultimately, all such cases must come. What he would suggest was, that when a Petition was presented in a Scottish Peerage case, it should be remitted by the House to the Court of Session for inquiry. He believed it would be done cheaper and better in this way, because the Judges would be acquainted with all the points in the case, and the Court of Session should report to the House. If there was no objection taken to the Report, then the Lord Chancellor would ratify it, and it could be moved in the House and resolved that the decision should be carried into effect. If this was not done, then there could be an appeal to the House. He believed this was an arrangement which would be most compatible with the feelings of the majority of the Scottish Peers, and also compatible with the feelings of the majority of the people of Scotland. The other proposal of the noble Earl was that they should have the same system introduced in Scotland as they had in Ireland. He was very much startled to hear such a proposal made by the noble Lord on the Report of the Committee of 1874, which was presided over by the noble Earl (the Earl of Rosebery). On reading the Report of the Committee, he found that Clause 6 only went in a limited extent in that direction. All the clause said was that the Committee had recommended that, for the future, the Roll of Peers for Scotland should be drawn up by the Lord Clerk Register of Scotland, under the direction of the House of Lords, and that no alteration was to be made in it without authority of the House of Lords. In the Report of the Committee of 1874 he saw nothing recommending an inquiry by the Lord Chancellor. With all due deference to the Peers of Ireland, he thought it would be rather an objection to introduce any Irish rule whatever into the Scottish Peerage, and he hoped the noble and learned Earl would withdraw the proposal. He certainly did not oppose the second reading of the Bill; but he hoped the views of his brother Scottish Peers would be carefully considered in Committee.

Lord INCHIQUIN, as a Member of the Committee which sat last year, said, that the procedure adopted in regard to Irish Peerages was most simple, and as advisable as any that could be adopted. When they made their recommendations, they did so with the view of putting an end to the indecent exhibitions which took place at the election of Scotch Peers. One of the points put before them by the noble Earl who first spoke was that of expense. He believed there would be no saving of expense by the cases being taken in the first instance before the Court of Session. Nine times out of ten there would be a second inquiry, leading to additional expense. With regard to the allegation that they were departing from the old Scotch system, they must remember that when the respective Unions took place, Scotch Peers became British Peers, and Irish Peers became Peers of the United Kingdom, so that now the Peerage was practically one. Why, then, was it desired to refer questions relating to a part of that Peerage to a Court sitting only in one part of the Kingdom? He thought that a strong argument for retaining the original jurisdiction of the House of Lords.

Lord WATSON said, he was a Member of the Committee last year, and he desired to offer one or two words in explanation of the considerations which induced him to agree with the views of the majority of the Committee. By the Act of Union, Peers of Scotland became entitled to the privileges of British Peers; but he disputed the position of the noble Lord, or what appeared to be his position, that they ceased to be Peers of Scotland. He believed that the people of Scotland took a very great interest in this Bill. It had been very largely discussed, and, he was sorry to say, with a degree of heat and acrimony in some cases which was altogether unnecessary. Reference had been made in many quarters to the rights of the Court of Session to deal with Peerage cases before the Act of Union. He doubted whether the evidence, if carefully sifted, would bear out all that was said on the point. He should rather be inclined to come to the conclusion, upon such evidence as he had been able to discover of a satisfactory character, that the Sovereign, the fountain of honour in Scotland, reserved to himself the right of determining by whose advice he should be governed in the matter of recognizing a new Peer or recognizing the right of succession; and, accordingly, although they found that in the majority of cases it was intimated that the Peer claiming honours had better go to the Court of Session, and establish his right by succession or otherwise, yet there were occasions upon which His Majesty took the advice of his Privy Council, and there were other occasions on which he discarded the advice of both these bodies, and acted solely on his own opinion. All these questions as to the proper tribunal for disposing of Peerage claims before the Union seemed to him to be out of place now, and it was idle to discuss them. They were, no doubt, of great antiquarian interest, and threw a great deal of light on the history of the time and the Constitution of the period; but that did not afford the smallest aid in the present question, because the Act of Union put an end to the jurisdiction of the Court of Session. After that Act had been construed in one way by the Sovereign, and by the Peers themselves, and by the Court which was now said to have merely a rival claim, was it to be said that all this was to be set aside, and that they were to go back upon the old procedure before the Act of Union, instead of following the procedure which had since been uniformly adopted? He rather thought if they were to adopt the rights of the Scottish Sovereigns with respect to Peerages, that the King or Queen of Britain would be quite entitled to take the advice of this House, or any other competent body selected to advise on the matter. He thought that if they were to test this question purely on the ground of the Constitution of Scotland, that was the result they would necessarily arrive at. But the real question, and the only question raised in the present Bill, was this. It was the only question, as he understood it, to which the majority of the Committee desired to call attention. He spoke to some extent under correction, because his judicial duties elsewhere to a considerable extent interfered with his attendance in the Committee, and he had not the privilege of hearing a great deal of that evidence, which tended to show that this House had recognized the authority of the Court of Session since 1707. But his noble and learned Friend opposite (Lord Moncreiff), who represented the law of Scotland on that Committee, never, so far as he understood, entertained any doubt that this House had not exercised any authority except what was conferred upon it by the Act of Union, or proposed to take away that authority from this House and transfer it to the Court of Session. He did not attribute to the majority of the Committee any such intention, and if he had thought that the Resolution of the Committee was such, he should have accompanied his adherence to it with a very earnest protest against the grounds on which they had arrived at it. The Committee of Privileges was, as he understood on very high authority, not a judicial body. He did not think it was very material, in considering a Bill like this, whether it was a judicial body, because the work it had to perform was purely judicial; and he was right in assuming that most persons were of opinion that the Committee of Privileges was quite competent to perform that judicial work efficiently and to the satisfaction not only of the Peers themselves, but of the country at large. But the question for consideration was, How should the Committee most efficiently discharge its functions? He consented to the recommendation which had received embodiment in the Bill on the understanding that they should have it in their power to derive what assistance might appear to them to be of advantage from the Court below, either in the way of relieving the House of Lords of what some conceived to be the drudgery of taking evidence and collecting documents, and still further the assistance of the Judges of the Court of Session where it might appear to the Committee that their assistance would be valuable. Although he had every confidence in and every respect for the distinguished men who had hitherto sat on the Committee, and for those who sat in that House now, he was bound to say that when they came to consider the judicial question, it was of importance, it was at times an enormous advantage, to have a complicated case thoroughly sifted before they came to deal with it finally and determinately by having the opinion of competent men, pointing out the divergent lines of thought and conclusion that might arise from a full consideration of the evidence in the case. It was entirely in that spirit that he concurred in the decision of the Committee, and he should be sorry to see the House dispense with its authority, or delegate its authority. He did not consider that either of these proceedings would be advantageous to the claimants of Peerages, or consistent with the dignity of the House. But he could see nothing derogatory to the House in delegating its duties in regard to taking evidence, or recovering documents which even the ordinary Superior Courts were in the habit of committing, in important cases, to one of its own members. There were many cases in which matters were so referred by a Superior Court to a clerk or a Commissioner. Why should the House of Lords perform those duties itself which a Court of Appeal or a Superior Court would delegate to an Inferior Court, or an officer of Court? He did not say that the House of Lords should lose the control in cases; but it might with advantage be relieved from some portion of the drudgery which otherwise it would have to perform. Something had been said with reference to the mention of Ireland in the Bill. It was not a usual mode of legislation, and he would remind the Lord Chancellor that in Scotland they were singularly sensitive with regard to their national privileges, and he was afraid he would find that in Scotland it would not be deemed consistent with the national dignity to refer for authority in a Scottish Bill to Ireland. It was very plain, if the phrase admitted of a short and easy explanation, that there was no reason why that explanation should not be given in terms without reference to Ireland. There was one other point which he desired the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack to consider before the Bill came on at another stage, and that was the proposition to give statutory power to open up matters of precedence established by the Union Roll. There might be mistakes on that Roll; but it closely followed the Decreet of Ranking of 1606, and practically had governed precedence in Scotland for nearly 300 years, and it was open to any Peer to assert his proper place according to that Roll. He should say in general terms that there was no measure before the House now in which it was suggested that the Court of Session should have exclusive jurisdiction, or that any reference should be made to the Court of Session, unless it should be found necessary. But he would earnestly press on the noble and learned Lord to consider whether the powers of reference given to the Committee of Privileges should be somewhat wider than they were at present as contained in the Bill. The extent of the reference itself was entirely within the power of the Committee of Privileges, and why should they tie up their hands to taking evidence, or to the recovering of certain documents, thus inflicting on the House the necessity of sitting day after day hearing evidence and performing work of a nature which was not generally either very pleasant or very edifying? He trusted that the Bill, with such Amendments as might be made upon it in Committee, would not only prove a satisfactory solution of the question—he would not say of "indecencies"—he would say rather the unfortunate incidents attending the election of Peers in Scotland—but would, at the same time, settle all those questions which had been raised as to the rights of the Sovereign in times gone by, and the legal effect of the Act of Union.

THE EARL OF BELMORE said, with reference to the remarks of the noble Lord as to this being an adoption of Irish law, that the law referred to was a modern enactment, passed since he himself had come into that House. In 1857 a Bill was introduced to extend to Irish Peers the advantages extended to every Peer in England—namely, that the Lord Chancellor should inquire whether a son was the rightful successor to his father, or a brother to a brother, instead of obliging them to go before the Committee for Privileges, as was formerly always the case, even when no difficulty whatever arose. But this had nothing to do with the Act of Union, or with any Irish law, but was an Act which, as he had said, was passed since he entered that House.

LORD BALFOUR thanked the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack for having taken up this question; and he was glad to find that in the course of the present discussion the propriety of this Bill, and of giving it a second reading, had been acknowledged. He would defer saying anything upon the merits of the proposals that had been made in regard to it until he saw what Amendments were placed upon the Notice Paper in the next stage. He would observe, however, that he did not share in the least the jealousy which had been expressed in regard to the duty proposed to be laid on the Lord Chancellor under the Bill; it was a purely Ministerial duty, and in a matter so nearly affecting those who sat in that House, it seemed to him the Lord Chancellor was a very proper person to perform the work. He had no jealousy whatever of the Lord Chancellor. The noble Lord who had spoken from the Front Bench had disposed of the question of what was the position in the past of the Court of Session, as bearing upon the controversy. He was very glad that he had given a very clear exposition of the position of the Court of Session; but he could not share with him the desire to see the Court of Session called in to judge upon Peerage cases. That was a matter on which the House would do well to guard its jurisdiction, and he would view with the very greatest possible suspicion any proposal to transfer any part of the jurisdiction of the House, however small, to the Court of Session. He would be very glad if those who were in favour of that would say whether they intended to make the Court of Session a Court of First Instance in Peerage cases. Was the Court of Session to have the right of expressing any opinion? If the Court was not to express an opinion, he thought it was hardly proper to bring it into this matter. If it were to express an opinion, it was making it a Court of First Instance, and instead of having one tribunal to settle Peerage cases, they would have two. That, he thought, would be most unfortunate, for the result of that would be long and expensive processes. He should give general support to the noble and learned Earl's Bill, and he hoped his Lordship would press it on so that the question might be settled once for all during this Session of Parliament.

Lord MONCREIFF said, having had the honour of presiding over the Committee appointed to consider this subject, he wished to say a few words before the discussion closed. He did not propose, although the Bill of his noble and learned Friend did not proceed exactly upon the lines of the Report of the Committee, to throw any obstacle on the present occasion in the way of his proposition. On the contrary, he was glad his noble and learned Friend had introduced this Bill, and that for two reasons. In the first place, he thought that the difference of opinion which took place, and was exhibited in the Committee, and still more in the discussion which they had at the end of last Session, satisfied him that, except in the hands of the Government, they were not likely to bring this matter to a satisfactory conclusion. In the second place, although those proposals were not altogether, as he had said, upon the lines of the Report of the Committee, they did contain material out of which a satisfactory adjustment of the differences that still existed might be made. He wished, however, to recall attention to the real ground of the appointment of the Committee, and what was the subject with which they were mainly required to deal with. It was not to set up a tribunal for the adjudication of the rights of the Scottish Peers, but to remedy abuses which had existed ever since the Union, to which various Acts of Parliament and Resolutions of the House applied, but which objections continued as strong and as objectionable as ever. It was simply this—that, as regarded the meetings of the Scottish Peers to elect Representatives, there were, and had been, so far as the law was concerned, no means whatever to determine who were entitled to act and vote on such occasions, and for this reason, that the Roll called over was not a Roll of individual names, but a Roll of titles and dignities, to which anyone might answer, without their being power or authority in the body collectively to determine. That had been the subject of discussion in this House over and over again, and it was thought that state of confusion and irregularity ought to be put an end to at once and for ever. Accordingly, it was proposed that not a Roll of Peerages, but a Roll of names, should be made up by the Lord Clerk Register, whose official duty it was to take charge of those matters. Of course, in order to do that, it was necessary to have some means of ascertaining who were the persons whose names should be put upon the Roll. What was proposed by the Committee was not that any power should be given to the Court of Session or anyone to determine an absolute right to a title, but simply to set up a Registration Court, in order that the right of the franchise might be determined from time to time, not the absolute right, but the *primâ facie* right. The Committee thought it was not unreasonable, as the Lord Clerk Register was the Scottish official having charge of this matter, and the titles to Peerages were contained in the Register Office, that the Court of Session, in the first instance, should be the Court to which reference ought to be made in making up the Roll. The Committee did not wish to give to the Court of Session jurisdiction excluding that which belonged to their Lordships' House. It was thought the proposed arrangement would be for the convenience of all parties. Therefore, it did not certainly occur to them that they were in any degree entrenching upon the privileges of the House. It was only proposed to make up an Election Roll, and not to determine the absolute right of Peers. That did not seem an unreasonable proposition. The truth was, whether the Scottish Peers and English Peers were British Peers or not, the Scottish Peers did stand in a position different from the English, and the privilege of voting at elections without any authority was one which the Scottish Peers had enjoyed from the time of the Union. It was proposed in the Bill to deal with questions of protest. These were controverted and contested cases. There were few of them, and in order to make up an Election Roll there were not more than three or four at the most which would have to be decided. The Bill went further, and in the matter of succession affected a greater number. When a man succeeded his father, it was proposed, and must be proposed, that some means or other should be adopted in order that he might show his title to have his name entered upon the Roll. In regard to the protests, he had only to endorse entirely the recommendation of his noble and learned Friend opposite. When they came to Committee on the Bill, it might be worth considering whether the power of referring to the Court of Session contained in the 7th clause should not be made larger and wider. There was a recommendation to that effect in the Report of the Committee. In regard to the 5th clause, that was a matter of very considerable interest, and, although he had no desire to throw any obstacle in the way of the proposition, he ventured to think the proposition of the Committee was not an unreasonable one. Their object was to place upon the Roll, the successor to the title, and that the Lord Clerk Register should have access to the Court of Session in the first instance in a mere matter of propinquity or pedigree. It did seem rather hard that Peers who formerly required no proceedings should have to come to their Lordships' House, whatever the nature of their claims, when in all probability no one could take any objection to them. On the whole, the propositions were not very far apart; and after this discussion and the suggestions made, they might possibly be able to reconcile them.

The Marquess of LOTHIAN said, this question had caused a great deal of unnecessary feeling in Scotland. It was the result of a sort of Home Rule feeling. There was an idea in Scotland that the English were inclined to interfere too much with Scottish rights, and that the English Peers interfered with the rights of the Scottish Peers. That was not a matter which ought to have any influence upon their Lordships in deciding a question of this sort. The Bill, he thought, was a good one, and he thanked the noble Lord for introducing it.

The Earl of REDESDALE (Chairman of Committees) said, he would remind their Lordships that a great many of the Peers of Scotland, as well as of Ireland, were also Members of that House as Peers of the United Kingdom. In such cases the right of succession was necessarily determined in the ordinary way by this House, and there would thus be two inquiries, one before that House and the other before the Court of Session in the case of Scottish Peers, if the suggestion of the noble Lord were adopted. In his opinion, the simplicity of the proceedings proposed in the Bill brought in by the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack was such that no reasonable objection could be taken to them. If there was any difficulty in any case, the Lord Chancellor would report to the House, and if the proof of the successor were simple, it could be conducted in the cheapest way.

The LORD CHANCELLOR said, he had listened to the discussion which had taken place with great interest and satisfaction, because the tone of it had been such as to encourage him in the belief that the endeavour he had made to settle this important question would not fail. He assured their Lordships that he had not undertaken the matter from any disposition presumptuously to interfere with the privileges of the Scottish Peers, or with questions which he freely admitted noble Lords connected with Scotland might be much better qualified to settle. For a great length of time this matter had occupied the attention of their Lordships in Committees and otherwise, and no result had followed. Last Session a Bill was introduced by a noble Lord from Scotland, but it was not persevered with. It was suggested to him by more than one noble Lord, and that not from one side of the House only, that he should consider whether the Government could not do a service in this matter by endeavouring to settle the question. The Government were not unwilling to do so, having regard to the Report of the Committee presided over by his noble Friend (the Earl of Rosebery) in 1874. He had thought that, looking to the mixture of legal questions, and the position which, however unworthily, he held by the virtue of his Office in this House, it would probably be satisfactory to their Lordships—as it appeared to be the desire of all that the matter should be settled—that it should be in his hands as suggested. But for the manner in which this debate had been conducted, he might have repented of the decision which he then arrived at. He had no conception at the time that any feeling would be excited in Scotland or elsewhere upon this matter, or that it would be supposed there was any intention to show less than due consideration to the feelings of any portion of the Scottish people. His sole object was to get this matter settled upon reasonable, satisfactory, and practical lines. The only principle which to him appeared indispensably necessary was the maintenance of the authority and jurisdiction in these matters of the House of Lords. That he thought absolutely necessary. Nothing which he had yet heard or read—for there had been much interesting literature as well as speeches upon this subject—had shaken his conviction. He had no disposition to be inflexible, and he did not object to any changes in detail, provided they were consistent with that principle, and in his judgment really likely to work as improvements. He was bound to say that while he by no means rejected the notion that the particular manner in which he proposed to enable the House to refer for assistance to the Court of Session might be capable of being usefully amended or enlarged, yet he had heard nothing to lead him to think that it would be consistent with the principle of maintaining the authority of their Lordships' House, or practically convenient to go so far in that direction as was proposed by the Committee of 1882. He was bound frankly to say that, because, if he had thought otherwise, he should have been the first to admit the consideration due to the noble Lords who were Members of that Committee. But when it was proposed, in the first instance, to refer the settlement of the Roll to the Court of Session, and afterwards also to refer all disputed questions coming to this House to the Court of Session, he could not assent to either of those propositions. To say that the right of voting should in the first instance be settled by the Court of Session was not consistent with maintaining the authority and jurisdiction of the House. For what would be the effect of settling the right of voting by a body which had no jurisdiction? Either they might put persons practically in a position to vote, and it might be, by a majority of votes, to turn an election of Peers, whom this House might hold to have no such right, or they would gain no greater certainty as to the Roll of Peers, or as to their rights, than they had at present. If the body to whom such a power was given had jurisdiction already, it might be consistent; but not so, if it was recognized as having no jurisdiction, and as being called in simply by virtue of its presumed special learning. He had come to the conclusion that the method on which the Bill he had introduced proceeded was more certain in its effect, and more consistent with the principle he had laid down. As to the Electoral Roll of Peers, he thought the Lord Clerk Register should make out a Roll, including all those who were not subject to protest, and that those who were omitted should take the course necessary to establish their claim to the Peerage. If there was no real contest, the thing would be simple and easy. Coming to the question of succession, his noble Friend who first addressed their Lordships (Lord Kintore) did not seem to understand the provisions of the clause relating to that matter, and appeared to think that some arbitrary power was proposed to be conferred upon the Lord Chancellor by it. This was an entire mistake, which probably would never have been made if the practice as to Irish Peers had not been referred to. He was sorry he had put anything in about Ireland. It was a blunder to mention Ireland, and blunders were sometimes worse than crimes, as their Lordships knew. His excuse was that Ireland and Scotland were alike in this, that while the conditions of election differed, they both elected Representative Peers. The procedure as to both countries might, in that respect, reasonably be expected to agree in substance, and must necessarily differ from that of England. In the case of an English Peerage, the person who claimed to have succeeded on the death of a Peer applied to the Lord Chancellor, that a writ might be issued to summon him to Parliament, without any Petition being presented to the Crown or to the House. The Lord Chancellor had to consider the materials laid before him, and to say whether the proof of succession was complete and beyond question. If it were, he directed the writ to issue, and the Peer took his seat in the House according to the usual procedure of this House. If it were not—if there were any question whatever—the Chancellor reported to the House, and the House referred that question to the Committee of Privileges. The difference, and the only difference, in the case of Irish Representative Peers was this, that under the Act of 1857, a Petition was presented to this House, and the House was in the habit of referring it to the Lord Chancellor, who, when there was no writ to be issued, had no original authority. What was proposed in this Bill was merely that Petitioners on succession should present their Petitions to the House, and the House should then refer them to the Lord Chancellor. If any noble Lord from Scotland had any proposition to bring forward which would better ascertain the succession, and place it for the future more entirely beyond controversy—for that was the object of the Bill—he should be quite willing to accept any good method of doing it; although, *primâ facie*, he should have thought that what the Legislature, for practical reasons, had very recently considered proper for Ireland, were it only for the sake of avoiding differences of procedure, was that which would, in the first instance, seem best. With regard to the other criticism upon the point as to the order of precedence on the Union Roll, it was the practice of a number of noble Lords, who thought themselves not properly ranked in that order of precedence, to enter protests at every election. He saw it stated in learned works, although, for his own part, he doubted it, that the Scottish Prescription Act was supposed to run in favour of precedence, and that to avoid that Act these continual protests were made. He doubted whether the Prescription Act had anything to do with the order of precedence, but the practice of protests for precedence still went on at Holyrood at every election. He had not thought it safe to assume that it would be satisfactory to noble Lords from Scotland that the precedence upon the Union Roll should be stereotyped now by Act of Parliament. He had no attachment to the provision of the Bill on this subject, and should be quite content to be guided by the general sense of the House on the point. He did not know that he need say anything more; but he could not help observing that he had received great satisfaction from the general assent in this discussion to the principle that the jurisdiction was in this House, and ought to be maintained. Those of their Lordships who had made themselves acquainted with the literature to which he had referred, knew that there were those by whom that proposition had been very confidently and strenously denied. He had read a very interesting and able work, written by an accomplished Nobleman, no longer, he was sorry to say, among them, in which this House was put in the disagreeable position of exercising a usurped jurisdiction, without any warrant of law, in all Scottish Peerage cases, and indeed in all Scottish appeals whatsoever, except in so far as recent statutes might recognize them. And, with respect even to statutes of the Imperial Parliament, that noble Person did not appear to admit their authority on these subjects. He was very glad that it had become unnecessary to refer to antiquarian learning as to the jurisdiction, whatever it was, exercised before the Union, in cases involving rights of Peerage, by the Court of Session. He agreed with what had fallen from his noble and learned Friend (Lord Watson) on that subject. There were five or six cases in which the Court of Session, before the Union, exercised the jurisdiction of reducing, that was setting aside, deeds or charters purporting to grant, or to surrender, honours and dignities or rights connected with them. That appeared to him to be a different thing from a direct jurisdiction such as that which had been exercised by this House, since the Union, in questions of Peerage. In two or three other cases, the Crown, or the Scottish Parliament, or the Scottish Privy Council, seemed to have remitted, for determination by the Court of Session, questions more directly concerning the right to Peerages; just as King James VI., by the Decreet of

Ranking, referred to that Court the correction of any errors in the Decreet, as to the order of precedency. The anxious desire that he had to see this question satisfactorily settled, and that in a manner satisfactory to Scotland, as well as to other parts of the United Kingdom, would lead him to receive with great respect and attention all proposals for amending the details of the Bill which might come from any noble Lord.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY said, he was glad that the line adopted by the noble and learned Lord rendered it unnecessary for him to oppose the second reading of the Bill. He hoped their Lordships would agree to the second reading of his own Bill, without discussion, the more so because he hoped to point out the really small difference that existed between the two Bills. On the invitation of the noble and learned Lord, he proposed in Committee to move Amendments to the noble and learned Lord's Bill which would have the effect of making it very like the measure which stood in his own name upon the Paper. The noble and learned Lord seemed to think that a proposal had been made to abolish their Lordships' jurisdiction. He begged to assure the noble and learned Lord that no such proposal was contained in his Bill, nor was any proposal of that kind made in the Committee which had considered the subject. The whole question merely came to this—whether it was advisable that they should get the benefit of a Report of the Court of Session, instead of having the trouble and expense of ransacking charter chests in Edinburgh for transmission to London, and of sending up witnesses to be examined in London—whether it was not preferable that the Committee of Privileges should escape all that drudgery, and refer the question to the Court of Session to consider these points, to take the evidence, and send it up along with their own Report to this House, before the House sent the case at all to the Committee of Privileges? That was the main point of difference between the two Bills. The noble and learned Earl had said that he had made a blunder in putting Ireland into the Bill. He (the Earl of Galloway) thought there should be some Memorandum laid upon the Table of the House showing how the noble and learned Earl arrived at the conclusion as to who had the right to vote at the election of Irish Representative Peers, so that the House might be in a position to know by what means he proposed to arrive at a decision as to who had a right to vote at Holyrood as to the Representative Peers of Scotland. There was another point to which he would refer, though it was, perhaps, one rather of sentiment. Almost immediately after presenting the Petition which he had that day presented to the House, he had received a telegram to the effect that the Petition was to have been presented by his noble Friend Lord Napier, who was unable to be present owing to the inquiry now being conducted into the case of the crofters in Skye; and, therefore, it was put into his hands. He would refer to it for one moment. In addition to the signatures of the Provosts and of ex-Provosts of Edinburgh and Glasgow, it contained those of at least two-thirds of the Sheriffs of Scotland, of whose important position in the country the House was well aware, and also of all the Professors of Law and History in Scotland with the exception of three, the want of whose signatures was to be accounted for by unavoidable accident. He, therefore, thought the Petition was entitled to great weight. He wished to thank the noble and learned Earl for having taken up the subject, for he agreed that it was far better that a Bill of this sort should be in the hands of the Government of the day. He certainly hoped the noble and learned Earl would favourably consider the three points he had mentioned—namely, first, as regarded interference with the Union Roll; secondly, as regarded the primary reference to the Court of Session; and, thirdly, as to the unnecessary complication proposed as regarded the form of proof for future successors to Scotch Peerages.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly.

Moved, "That the Bill be committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Friday the 4th of May next."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY appealed to the noble and learned Lord to postpone the Committee until after Whitsuntide. He had had a communication from the Faculty of Advocates on the subject, who wished to have time to consider the Bill, and they would not be able to do so until after the conclusion of their present Whitsuntide Holidays.

The Duke of RICHMOND and GORDON said, he objected to the postponement of the Committee. He had also had a communication from the Faculty of Advocates, and he thought there would be sufficient time for them to consider the Bill.

Lord BALFOUR said, he wished to point out, as an additional reason for not deferring the Committee stage of the Bill, that the Chairman of the late Committee would be engaged in his judicial duties and would be unable to be present.

In reply to Lord Moncreiff,

The LORD CHANCELLOR said, that the Bill had been introduced into the House as far back as the 26th of February last, and then, according to desire, an unusually long time was arranged to elapse before the second reading to secure the presence of the noble Lord the Lord Justice Clerk; during that period the Faculty of Advocates had met and having discharged their duties in Edinburgh had dispersed. There was, therefore, abundance of opportunity for them, if they wished to make any suggestions on the subject of the measure, to do so; but it had not been done. Under these circumstances, he could not consent to the postponement.

The Earl of GALLOWAY said, that he made the suggestion for the convenience of the noble and learned Lord (Lord Moncreiff), and was perfectly willing to withdraw it, as the object did not appear to be attained.

The Marquess of HUNTLY said, that the Faculty of Advocates had only themselves to thank if they had not sufficient time to consider the measure. If they did not discharge their functions, he thought it was their own fault.

Motion *agreed to.*

REPRESENTATIVE PEERS (SCOTLAND) ELECTION PROCEDURE BILL.—(No. 6.)

(*The Earl of Galloway.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Moved "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Galloway.*)

Lord BALFOUR said, it was a somewhat unusual course to take on the same day—the second reading of two Bills on the same subject, but on different lines; and he thought it would be a more convenient course, if they were to postpone the second reading of this Bill of the noble Earl's (the Earl of Galloway) for a month or two, so as to give noble Lords an opportunity of considering in Committee the Bill which had already been read a second time, and if any Peer was not satisfied with it, he could move Amendments to it in Committee.

Lord MONCRIEFF said, it was not out of the ordinary practice to have two Bills on the same lines read a second time on the same day; and he thought it would rather jar on the general feeling, either to throw out this Bill, or postpone the second reading. He was sure that no bad result would accrue from doing so.

The LORD CHANCELLOR said, he had no desire to throw any difficulty in the way of adopting any course that seemed most desirable to the House; but he took it for granted that if the Bill was read a second time, the noble Earl would not fix an earlier date for the Committee than that which had been fixed for the other Bill—namely, March 4.

The Duke of RICHMOND and GORDON said, he thought the noble Earl (the Earl of Galloway) would do well not to press the second reading of his Bill at the present time, as it would be extremely inconvenient to have two Bills upon the same subject before them, and, besides, he would have an opportunity of proposing any Amendments he desired on the Bill of the Lord Chancellor. If the Bills were the same, one was unnecessary; if they were different, their Lordships would be undoing what they had just done.

The Marquess of HUNTLY said, it was only due to the noble Earl (the Earl of Galloway) that the Bill should be read a second time on that occasion, seeing that the noble Earl drew it up last Session; but when it had been read a second time, he would suggest that it should not be put down for Committee until after the Whitsuntide Holidays.

The Marquess of LOTHIAN said, he entirely agreed with what had fallen from the noble Duke (the Duke of Richmond and Gordon), and he was surprised that the second reading had not been withdrawn, as he was convinced, under the circumstances, that it would be extremely inconvenient to have two Bills on parallel lines; therefore, if the Bill was not withdrawn, he trusted that the House would reject it entirely.

The Earl of GALLOWAY said, he did not wish to inconvenience their Lordships; but the course he suggested was not without precedent. Just before the Easter Recess, two Bills on the same subject had been read a second time in the House of Commons on the same night. He would point out that his Bill was ordered to be printed on the 10th of July last year. He had duties to attend to in Scotland up to the middle of August, and he had the Bill put down for a day in that month, thinking it would be accepted practically without amendment. Meantime, there were a number of Amendments put on the Paper; and he was simply studying their Lordships' convenience by withdrawing the Bill last Session, on the understanding that he would re-introduce it at the earliest opportunity this Session. He asked their Lordships to act on the recommendation of the noble and learned Earl (the Lord Chancellor), and allow the Bill to be read a second time that night, in which case he would undertake not to bring it on before the Committee before the 20th of May.

The LORD CHANCELLOR said, it would be a convenient course if the noble Earl would withdraw the Bill. But, at the same time, he wished personally to take the course which was most courteous towards the noble Earl. He thought that, without compromising the principle their Lordships had affirmed, he might be at liberty to indulge the desire of the noble Earl if he pressed for a second reading of the Bill.

On Question? their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 20; Not-Contents 31: Majority 11.

CONTENTS.

Selborne, E. (*L. Chancellor.*)

Ailsa, M.

Denbigh, E.

Sidmouth, V.
Strathallan, V.

Blantyre, L.
Brabourne, L.
Clements, L. (*E. Leitrim.*)
Congleton, L.
Dunsany, L.
Ellenborough, L.
Hopetoun, L. (*E. Hopetoun.*)
Meldrum, L. (*M. Huntly.*) [*Teller.*]
Moncreiff, L.
Stewart of Garlies, L. (*E. Galloway.*) [*Teller.*]
Vaux of Harrowden, L.
Watson, L.
Wentworth, L.
Wigan, L. (*E. Crawford and Balcarres.*)
Zouche of Haryngworth, L.

NOT-CONTENTS.

Bedford, D.
Richmond, D.
Westminster D.

Belmore, E. [*Teller.*]
Doncaster, E. (*D. Buccleuch and Queensberry.*)
Lathom, E.
Mar and Kellie, E.
Redesdale, E.

Cranbrook, V.

Balfour of Burleigh, L.
Belper, L.
Blachford, L.
Carrington, L.
Coleridge, L.
Douglas, L. (*E. Home.*)
Elphinstone, L.
Fitzgerald, L.
Foxford, L. (*E. Limerick.*)
Hartismere, L. (*L. Henniker.*)
Hothfield, L.
Inchiquin, L.
Ker, L. (*M. Lothian.*) [*Teller.*]
Kinnaird, L.
Monson, L.
Ormonde, L. (*M. Ormonde.*)
Reay, L.
Romilly, L.
Saltoun, L.
Sudeley, L.
Thurlow, L.
Wrottesley, L.

Resolved in the *Negative.*

PARLIAMENT—SCOTCH BUSINESS.

QUESTION.

The Earl of MINTO asked Her Majesty's Ministers, Whether, after they shall have concluded their deliberation on the subject of the re-arrangement of Business connected with Scotland, it is their intention to make a communication to this House, as has been promised, in respect of the other House of Parliament; and whether a Notice of such intention would be placed on the Notice Paper?

The Earl of KIMBERLEY, in reply, said, that whenever the Government had decided upon the course to be taken in this matter, they would, of course, desire that their Lordships' House should have the information they had to give with regard to it as well as the other House. He did not think, however, it was a matter on which it was usual to place a Notice on the Paper; but he had no doubt an opportunity would soon be afforded noble Lords for making any observations on the occasion of its being brought forward, and they would then be glad to hear anything that any noble Lord desired to say. A statement on the subject would probably be made on Tuesday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 2) BILL [H.L.] (NO. 27.) A Bill to confirm Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the towns of Carlow and Listowel, and to the Newtownards Gas Undertaking: And

TRAMWAYS (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (EXTENSION OF TIME) BILL [H.L.] (NO. 28.) A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in Council under the Tramways (Ireland) Act, 1860, extending the time for the completion of the Dublin and Blessington Steam Tramways:

Were *presented* by The LORD PRESIDENT; read 1ª; and *referred* to the Examiners.

House adjourned at Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 10*th April*, 1883.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—Commons, *appointed* and *nominated*.

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee—Resolutions* [April 9] *reported*.

PRIVATE BILLS (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Devon and Cornwall Central Railway (Plymouth and Devonport Extension) *; East and West Junction Railway *.

Withdrawn—Kent and Essex Junction Railway *.

PUBLIC BILL—*Committee*—Patents for Inventions (No. 3) [99]—R.P.

Message to attend the LORDS COMMISSIONERS;—

The House went; — and being returned;—

Mr. SPEAKER *reported* the *Royal Assent to* three Bills.

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair at Four of the clock.

QUESTIONS.

GOVERNMENT ANNUITIES AND ASSURANCE ACT, 1882—THE TABLES.

VISCOUNT LYMINGTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, in regard to the fact that the new system of insurance and annuity under the Government Annuities and Assurance Bill, 1882, cannot be introduced until the new tables of rates have been prepared by the National Debt Commissioners, he can inform the House when these Tables will be ready?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, the Actuary of the National Debt Office has just made a valuable Report upon the mortality of Government life annuitants up to the latest possible date. The new annuity and assurance tables depend upon the figures of this Report, and on the probable future cost of management, as to which the Post Office has not yet satisfied the Treasury. There will be no avoidable delay in laying the tables before Parliament as directed by the Act; but no doubt my noble Friend will agree with me in deprecating precipitancy in a matter which is, to a large degree, experimental, and which may involve very serious liabilities to the State.

POST OFFICE (CONTRACTS)—THE IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Postmaster General, Under what circumstances the subsidy of £30,000 per annum was originally granted to the Chester and Holyhead Railway Company, in connection with the Irish Mail Contract, and whether it was under the Treasury Minute of the 17th September 1844, for a period of twelve years; whether this was in anticipation of the construction of the line, and in aid of the objects generally of the Promoters thereof, as expressed in Treasury Minute of the 20th August 1844; whether the payment was further continued by the present contract with the London and North Western, Chester and Holyhead, and City of Dublin Steam Packet Companies, to be payable until the termination of such contract; and, whether the payment will so terminate on the 1st of October 1883; and, if not, under what authority will it be continued, and what benefit will the Post Office or the public derive from this large subvention of public funds?

MR. FAWCETT: Sir, the circumstances connected with the original payment of £30,000 are so complicated that I fear it would be impossible for me to explain them within the limits of an Answer to a Question. I may state, however, generally, that the payment, which began in 1844, was made in the first instance not exclusively for postal services, and came to an end 12 years afterwards. A payment of the same amount was continued to the Company at the time when the present Irish mail arrangements were made in consideration of the general mail service—including the Irish—on the Chester and Holyhead Line. The payment of the £30,000 will cease with the expiration of the existing contract on the 1st of October. The advantages which the public and the Post Office derive from the payment in question are of the same character as those detailed in the Minute of 1858; and, as this is before Parliament, I do not think it will be desirable for me to occupy the time of the House in explaining them.

Mr. TOTTENHAM asked whether it was in contemplation that this payment, or an equivalent one, should be continued under the new contract?

Mr. FAWCETT: It has been already stated that it was part of the new contract to be confirmed by Parliament. I stated that on a previous occasion.

POST OFFICE (CONTRACTS)—THE IRISH AND SCOTCH MAIL SERVICES.

Mr. TOTTENHAM asked the Postmaster General, What amount per train mile is now paid for the Irish and Scotch Mail Services respectively over the London and North Western Railway system, and bringing into the calculation the £30,000 paid to the Chester and Holyhead Company's representatives, and any other sums that may be paid to subsidiary Companies, or their representatives, along either route; if he will also state what is the gross sum now paid to the London and North Western Company for the Scotch Mail Service from London to the end of their system; and, if he will lay upon the Table a Copy of the contract for the same?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, in reply to the hon. Member's Question, I beg to say that there are no Scotch mail trains in the same sense in which there are Irish mail trains; for the trains which carry the Scotch mails carry also the bulk of the mails for the English districts through which they pass; whereas the Irish mail trains are used almost exclusively for the conveyance of letters going to or coming from Ireland. But even were there no difference in this respect, it would be impossible to divide the payment made to the London and North-Western Railway Company, so as to assign a stated sum to particular mail trains, as the general contracts embrace under one payment the whole of the mail service performed within a given area, whether by trains under the control of the Post Office, or by trains run for ordinary traffic.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — THE BRIGHTON VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

Mr. MARRIOTT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention had been called to the great difficulties experienced by and the excessive cost entailed upon the authorities at Brighton in acquiring land for the recent Volunteer Review; and, whether, in consideration of the great importance of the Volunteer Force, and the great advantage of such Review to it, the Government would take steps to facilitate the compulsory temporary acquisition of land for such purposes, with proper provisoes for the reasonable compensation of those whose land was taken?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, my attention has been called, by a communication which the hon. Member has addressed to me, to the difficulty experienced by the local authorities at Brighton with regard to this subject. It does not, however, appear to me a matter in which it would be possible for the War Office to interfere. The War Department has in its own possession admirable ground for the furtherance of a Volunteer Review at Aldershot, within a convenient distance of the Metropolis. If the local authorities at Brighton are anxious to have the Review continued there it is incumbent upon them to show that they have sufficient space available; and I do not think it would be desirable for the War Office to give them extended powers to enable them compulsorily to acquire land for that purpose.

NAVY—THE CLYDE COURT MARTIAL.

Mr. R. T. REID asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the proceedings and sentence of the Court Martial on the late Commander of H.M.S. "Clyde," have been submitted to the counsel of the Admiralty; and, whether they have received the full approval of that official?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir; the proceedings of this court martial were not submitted to the counsel to the Admiralty, as no legal point arose in connection with it which required his opinion.

EXPLOSIVES ACT, 1875—STORAGE OF GUNPOWDER IN IRELAND.

Colonel KING-HARMAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that fresh regulations have recently been made, by Order of Council or otherwise, in Dublin, by which the rules hitherto in force relative to the storage of gunpowder have been altered; whether private holders of gunpowder, who have hitherto stored their gunpowder in the magazine in the Phœnix Park, have had notice given them that they would have to remove their stores; and, whether Messrs. Curtis and Harvey have intimated their intention of erecting a powder magazine in the neighbourhood of Lantry, in a locality which cannot be protected by any force except patrols from the neighbouring police barrack?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the facts are as stated in the first two paragraphs of the Question. The change is made in deference to the strong and often repeated protest of the military authorities against the practice of storing merchants' gunpowder in military magazines. Ample time was allowed for the provision of suitable accommodation elsewhere. No intimation has been made to the Irish Government by Messrs. Curtis and Harvey of their intention of erecting a magazine at Lantry. The Explosives Act of 1875 is administered by the Home Secretary, and applicants for licences must satisfy him that any proposed magazine complies with the Act and with the Orders in Council in pursuance of it to insure the public safety.

Colonel KING-HARMAN asked if the Irish Executive would take measures to secure that any powder magazine erected outside Dublin was not dangerous to the public safety?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, this was a matter in which the Irish Executive would not interfere unless the Home Office thought the place too far off, and asked them to act in the matter.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—INTIMIDATION.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any landlord, or person in the employment of any landlord, who speaks any word, or does any act, in order to, and calculated to, put any tenant of such landlord in fear of any injury to or loss of his property, business, or means of living, with a view to cause such tenant either to do any act which such tenant has a legal right to abstain from doing, or to abstain from doing any act which he has a legal right to do, or in consequence of his having done or abstained from doing either of such acts respectively, will be held by the Irish Executive to have offended against the seventh section of the Crime Prevention Act, and will be proceeded against in like manner as if he had been a tenant who had so acted towards any landlord, or any person in the employment of such landlord?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, if any person wrongfully, or without legal authority, acts in the manner described in the Question, he commits an act of intimidation, and may be prosecuted under Section 7 of the Prevention of Crime Act. This is the case whether he be a landlord or a tenant, or a person not coming under either of those descriptions. The Executive cannot, however, lay down as a general rule that it will prosecute in every case where a person—whether landlord or tenant, or otherwise—has brought himself within the provisions of the Statute, as each case must be considered with reference to its own special circumstances before deciding whether it is one calling for the application of the Act. It is always open to any person aggrieved, or to anyone on his behalf, to institute a prosecution under that Act should he think fit to do so. I am bound to say that if there was *primâ facie* reason to believe that there had been anything like combined intimidation in the way described in the Question in the case of a Poor Law election, or the election of a Member of Parliament, or if a landlord threatened any tenant over whom he had the power of annoyance, and if we believed that he intended it seriously, I am bound to say that if we were so satisfied I should consider it my duty to tender my advice in favour of a prosecution, especially in the present circumstances of Ireland.

Mr. SEXTON asked whether, as the Executive had hitherto taken the initiative only in the prosecutions of persons in an humble condition of life, they would for the future take the initiative in the prosecution of persons who belonged to the landlord class when charged with the same offence?

Mr. TREVELYAN: My last remarks were to the effect that in the present state of Ireland, and with the extreme probability that intimidation on the part of persons in the condition of landlords would lead, if not directly, at any rate indirectly, to violence and breaches of the law, I should consider it my duty to advise a prosecution.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—MILITIA REGULATIONS.

Sir JOSEPH BAILEY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, considering the large number of alterations that have been made in "Regulations for the Militia," issued in 1880, he will cause a new edition to be shortly published?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON, in reply, said, that a new edition of the Regulations referred to was in course of preparation.

ARTIZANS' AND LABOURERS' DWELLINGS ACTS.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department; What steps have been taken by the Commissioners of Sewers under "The Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Act, 1882," towards ensuring the building of suitable accommodation on the ground cleared under the Act of 1875?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that he had been in communication with the Commissioners of Sewers with regard to the proposals of December, 1882, for providing dwellings for artizans and labourers in Golden Lane and Petticoat Lane. The plans were carefully scrutinized by the Home Office; and the Commissioners, in their letter to him of the 4th instant, assured him that they hoped to recommit those plans for consideration during the present week, and expressed their earnest desire to come to a conclusion with the work as soon as possible.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL.

Mr. ONSLOW: I should like to ask the Prime Minister a Question of which I have not had the opportunity of giving him private Notice. Whether, in fulfilment of a promise made the other evening, he will give further information in regard to the Transvaal before the resumption of the debate on Friday next?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member has, I think, misapprehended what I said. What I said was that we should be happy to give every information if we had it; but I am not aware that we have anything to communicate.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, there was a Question on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth) in which the House took great interest, but which had not been asked. He did not know why it had not been put; but some hon. Members would like an answer, at all events. The Question was, When it was proposed to take the first reading of the Bill for the Reform of the Government of London?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that he had received a notification from his hon. Friend the Member for Chelsea to the effect that he had put down the Question in error for to-day, as he had no intention of asking it to-day. The right hon. Gentleman was perfectly entitled to ask it; but he was not in a position to give any reply of a substantive character in regard to that or any other important Bill. The Corrupt Practices Bill, which had been hanging over for some time, would have to be proceeded with, and further progress would have to be made in other matters before the House before he could be in a position to fix any period for any particular Bill.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked when the Government intended to take Supply?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, they were pledged, he believed, to take one day at an early date for the Navy Estimates, and he hoped on Thursday to be able to state the day.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he put his Question in view of the fact that a Vote had been granted for a limited period with the understanding that Supply would be seriously proceeded with.

INDIA—RUMOURED RETIREMENT OF THE VICEROY

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked, whether the statement in the morning papers was true that Lord Ripon would retire from the Viceroyalty at the end of the year?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I have heard nothing from Lord Ripon on the subject, and I have seen my noble Friend the Secretary for India within the last hour, and he has heard nothing about it.

MOTIONS.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—COUNTS OUT.

RESOLUTION.

SIR HUSSEY VIVIAN, in rising to move—

> "That if it shall appear, on Notice being taken, during any Debate, that forty Members are not present, the question under discussion shall be treated as a dropped order, and the House will proceed to the consideration of the next Order of the Day or Motion on the Paper,"

said, that, as far as he knew, the subject that he was bringing forward had never been discussed by the House. It had not been considered by the two Committees which had sat on the Rules and Standing Orders of the House, nor during the debates on Procedure in the Autumn Session. The fact was, that the question was one which did not affect the Business of the House generally, but only the interests of private Members. He had gone into the statistics of Counts out during the present Parliament. On Mondays and Thursdays there had been no Counts, except late at night or rather early in the morning, so that they did not come within the question. On Tuesdays, at comparatively early hours, there were five Counts in 1880, seven in 1881, and seven in 1882. On Wednesdays there had been no Counts, on Fridays, before 11 p.m.; there had been three Counts in 1880, one in 1881, and two in 1882. However important his Notice might be, a Member had to run the risk of being unfortunate in the ballot, and possibly of being never able to bring his Motion on at any time during the Session. The average number of Members who balloted on Tuesday was something like 40, and not more than five or six Motions, at the most, generally stood on the Paper on that day. It constantly happened that Members who had Motions of the utmost importance to bring forward, were unable to do so because they were unfortunate in the ballot. In his opinion, the ballot was not a scientific mode of conducting the Business of a great Assembly like that. It was a mere chance and haphazard mode of determining what Business should be taken. However important a Motion might be, and however much the House might desire to discuss it, the House had no choice but either to efface itself or to allow Motions of the most frivolous character to be put forward. He thought that was not a position in which a great deliberative Assembly, charged with the affairs of this vast Empire, ought to be placed. How, then, could the House be placed in such a position that it might choose between a good and a bad Motion? He knew of no mode so simple and so easy as that which he ventured to suggest to the House. It would be impossible to appoint a Committee to select particular Motions. That would be a most invidious office to undertake. He believed that no Committee would be willing to undertake it, and even if it did the House would not be satisfied with the decisions of such a Committee. But by the proposition which he ventured to make the whole House would decide the matter. If an hon. Member could not get 39 Members to support his Motion, it might be assumed, as a matter of course, that it could not be of very great importance. The position which this would place the House in was very much that of voting the Previous Question. The House would, in point of fact, decline to devote a certain portion of its time to the discussion of the particular question which was submitted to it, and it would do this in such a way as to enable it to arrive at the Motion which it desired to discuss. On the other hand, no injustice would be done, because any Member who could persuade 39 other Members to constitute a House for him, would be able to go on with the discussion of his Motion. It could hardly be expected that the Government could afford to give days to private Members' Motions. At present, private Members had two days in the week, and the best portion of another day, while the Government had two days, and the contingent reversion of another day. How could it be supposed, then, that the Government, with the enormous amount of work they had to do, could afford to give days for the discussion of private Members' Motions, however important they might be? "Counts" on Friday were very few in number. This arose from the contingent reversion possessed by the Government. The result was that Friday's Paper was very largely devoted to Motions. There were constantly over 20 Motions on the Paper on Friday, chiefly, he believed, because hon. Members knew that on that day the House would be kept for them. If his Motion were carried, he had no doubt that Motions of an important character standing on the Paper on Friday would be discussed, and he also had no doubt that many Motions of a frivolous and an irrelevant character would not be discussed. He hoped it would not be considered in any way incumbent on the Government to keep a House, so that any particular Motion on the Paper should be discussed on Friday. He observed that an Amendment was to be moved by the hon. Member for Youghal (Sir Joseph M'Kenna), but he could not see its reasonableness. If 40 Members could not be found to take sufficient interest in a Motion, that Motion ought to be dropped, and that Members should be compelled to listen to it because they wished to support a subsequent Motion was absurd. He had heard it said that if this Motion was carried there would be canvassing to keep Members away from one Motion so as to support another. But there was a great deal of that now, and he did not see any great harm in it. No doubt they all enjoyed holidays, and there was a feeling that if this Motion were adopted the number of holidays would be seriously curtailed. He would point out that there were only about seven or eight Counts in a Session; that they generally took place between 8 and 9 o'clock, and that, therefore, all that the House would sacrifice would be 25 hours. But if after long debates and late sittings a holiday was wanted, the adjournment of the House should be moved, and then there would be a simple remedy applied. This was not a Party question, nor did it in any way re-open the subject of the Procedure Rules, which had been so thoroughly thrashed out. It was essentially a private Member's question, and amounted to this, whether they would place themselves in the position of discussing such Motions as ought to be discussed. All he wished to do was to give the House control over the topics which it would and would not discuss, and to remove the feeling of people outside that while Business was so blocked as at present the House constantly effaced itself and sacrificed whole nights. He begged to move the Resolution standing in his name.

MR. DILLWYN seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That if it shall appear, on notice being taken, during any Debate, that forty Members are not present, the question under discussion shall be treated as a dropped order, and the House will proceed to the consideration of the next Order of the Day or Motion on the Paper."—(*Sir Hussey Vivian.*)

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA, in rising to move, as an Amendment—

"That it is inexpedient to institute any rule or practice whereby discussion of Motions in order, and before the House can be evaded by the withdrawal from the House of Members favourable to some Motion later in the Orders of the same day,"

said, when he contemplated the extent and effect of the proposed innovation, he looked on the Resolution of the hon. Baronet as the most audacious proposal ever submitted by a private Member. It threw aside all Parliamentary precedents, and ignored altogether the Parliamentary history of the greatest measures which had been carried in that House. The hon. Baronet came forward with a plan, cut and dried, for the purpose of extinguishing every right of individual Members to propose any measure to the House, unless there were 40 of them to initiate the discussion and protect its continuance. The effect of such a rule, if it had existed before, would have been to prevent the discussion of many of the most important questions on which Parliament had subsequently legislated. How could Villiers and Cobden have brought forward and discussed their Free Trade Motions, if the system proposd by the hon. Baronet had been in force? The Motion stated that after a question was treated as a dropped Order "the House would proceed" to the next Business. What House? The House in ambuscade in the Lobby? That was the new Liberalism. If this were possible to be done the Government could arrange a Count out for any Motion that was unpalatable to them. A Count out even now was easy enough. The reason that it was not more often done now was that he believed the Prime Minister was averse to it; but he would not trust Ministers generally. There were some who would be glad to shunt a train of ideas when it would cost them nothing. After all, what was the extent of the inconvenience actually inflicted on the House by the present system? Eight nights or thereabouts were lost in each Session. Last year the House sat 200 days and nights, and eight more would have been added in effect to their number if the proposal of the hon. Baronet had been adopted. Surely this was no reason why the Procedure of the House should in future be revolutionized on two days in every week, and the management of its Business on those days virtually placed in the hands of the Government? He thought the bear statement of the case was sufficient to insure the rejection of the Motion, and he therefore begged to move the Amendment standing in his name.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is inexpedient to institute any rule or practice whereby discussion of Motions in order, and before the House can be evaded by the withdrawal from the House of Members favourable to some Motion later in the Orders of the same day,"—(*Sir Joseph M'Kenna,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. ANDERSON said, he approved of the Motion as a whole, regarding it as a scandal that with such an enormous accumulation of Business the House should waste night after night by "Counts out." He had great sympathy for the officials of the House; but he thought their case might be met in the way which had been pointed out. At the same time, if 40 Members could not be got together to support a Motion, it would be better that the Motion should be set aside; but it was a pity that the whole night should be lost. The Motion before the House might give rise to a certain amount of Lobbying, and canvassing outside the House to get rid of a particular subject. He would also point out that as on Fridays the Business of the House consisted of the discussion of Motions brought forward as Amendments to the Motion for Supply, the scheme of the hon. Baronet would result, not in the discussion of successive Amendments, but in Supply itself becoming a dropped Order. His hon. Friend's scheme, therefore, needed alteration in this particular; but it had its merits, and he should support it as a protest against the deliberate waste of the time of the House by continual "Counts."

MR. BERESFORD HOPE said, that his hon. Friend's elaborate natural history of Counts out reminded him more than anything else of one of Professor Owen's masterly diagnoses of some unknown animal just called into existence by the discovery of a jaw-bone or a toe-nail. Only twice this Session had the House been counted out, and yet the hon. Member now got up, and, like Niobe, all tears, complained how often some Notice utterly frivolous and ridiculous stood in the way of something important. His hon. Friend was extremely ungrateful to Fortune for his double success at the ballot-box, and, in complaining of the harder fate of those whose Resolutions had been counted out, ought not to forget what the fickle goddess had done for himself. The objections to the proposal were very obvious; indeed, his hon. Friend had been good enough at once to dispose of all that could be said in its favour by his admission of the infrequency of the evil which he wished to remedy. The hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) made no such admission, but in the sorrow of his soul spoke in his most impressive manner of the mass of Business left undone in consequence of Counts out. Now, what the country understood by Business was Government Business, which ran no risk such as the hon. Member seemed to fear, and to ascribe an equal importance to the Resolutions of private Members displayed a certain confusion of thought which it was most desirable to avoid. It was not the fact that Tuesdays and Fridays were as valuable as Government nights, or, at any rate, they would not be so till the adoption of the proposal before the House. In that case it would inevitably happen that the Government would control all the days of the week except Wednesday. Motion after Motion would be dismissed, and at last the Government Orders of the day would be reached, and a House would be kept for them. He appealed to the House not to be beguiled by the syren voice of the hon. Member for Glamorgan, for the whole Friday night would go into the omnivorous maw of the Treasury Bench. The supporters of the proposal could scarcely imagine that it would merely dispose of a dull or an objectionable subject, and that hon. Members whose favourite topic was counted out would be so completely above all human prejudice as to be willing to return good for evil by making a House for the next Resolution on the list. The hon. Member for Glasgow might Count out the hon. Member for Glamorgan; but his triumph would be short, for the hon. Member for Glamorgan would come back in some 25 minutes and cut short the opening of the hon. Member's case. The effect of this Motion would be to reduce the Business of the House to a kind of intellectual leap-frog. Let them pass this Resolution, and instead of six or seven Motions, as now, as the Tuesday's or Friday's bill of fare, they would have 20 or 30 on the Notice Paper, and the Lobbying and manœuvring, the whispering and running in and running out that would follow, would make a much greater scandal than any that could be said to exist at present. He trusted the House would dispose of this Motion in the most summary way; and he would end by a quotation, which none who heard it had forgotten, of their late Friend Mr. Bernal Osborne, who appealed to their charitable feelings on behalf of those good men who—

"Do good by stealth and blush to find it fame."

Mr. Alderman W. LAWRENCE said, he was surprised that the hon. Member should have brought forward this Motion, which was only the *clôture* in another form, without any responsibility on the part of the persons who put it in force. The Motion as it stood did not apply only to Tuesdays and Fridays; it applied to every day, even to Wednesday. So that if a Bill was brought forward on a Wednesday, and 40 Members did not happen to be present, it was to be dropped. He presumed that the next Order was to be treated in the same way, and so one. A number of Members from the Principality or from the Sister Isle might combine and prevent a man from having his fair opportunity. It was for the benefit of the constituencies that some measures should be brought forward which, in their infancy, perhaps, did not interest a large number of Members. But it would be no satisfaction to the constituencies to find that a Motion which might be of the greatest importance to them could not be submitted to the House because their Members would not condescend to canvass in the Lobby. This Motion was one which would be most dangerous to the constitution of the House, and he trusted it would be rejected by such a majority as would prevent its being brought forward again.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he ventured to appeal to the Prime Minister whether, considering that the House had last year spent a vast amount of time in discussing the New Rules, it was advisable to make a fresh Rule before the other Rules had been fairly tried. He hoped the Prime Minister would not give his support to the Motion of the hon. Baronet. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) should like to ask the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Sir Hussey Vivian) whether he had ever been present to prevent a Count out? That was a question which he begged very seriously to put to him, because, if his memory served him right, he had never seen the hon. Baronet in his place when the House was counted out. One remark had been made which he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) was very glad to hear. The hon. Baronet stated that whenever the House of Commons felt interested in any question, it would always prevent that question from being counted out; and he further stated that whenever there was a "Count out," they might be quite sure that the House took no interest in the question under discussion. Well, the other night the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) had a Motion on the Paper which he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) very properly thought was counted out. He had no doubt the hon. Member for Salford felt that the question was a very important one. Perhaps it was, but it was not brought on at the right time. At all events, the House allowed it to be counted out. The hon.

Member for Glamorganshire must therefore think the Motion of the hon. Member for Salford came under the class of Motions which did not deserve the consideration of the House. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) rather agreed with him on that point. It was a question which, in his opinion, might be postponed for a considerable time. Then there was another question raised with regard to this proposed new Rule by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson), who showed that if the House was counted out on Supply no further Business could be gone on with, because all the Business that succeeded Supply would be stopped. But the House must remember that according to the present Motion, if a question in which the Government took no interest were counted out at 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning, Supply could then be taken by the Government procuring 40 Members. He ventured to hope the Government would not consent to accept the Motion now before the House.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN said, that he only wished to make one observation about the Motion. It was quite true that "Counts out" occasionally took place. It was also true that they were sometimes a source of annoyance and inconvenience, especially to the hon. Members whose speeches were closed by them. But it was altogether incorrect to say that the "Counts out" seriously impeded Public Business. He took some trouble during the Procedure debates last Session to inquire into the subject, and he ascertained that last year there had only been four "Counts out" which could by any possible stretch of imagination be said to have delayed the Government's Business. And on two occasions there were extenuating circumstances. "Counts out" might be inconvenient to the private Members whose Bills or Resolutions suffered thereby; but they were often a great relief to the overworked officers of the House. They usually occurred the day after there had been a prolonged Sitting. He never promoted a "Count out," and certainly never moved one; but he was very far from thinking that "Counts out" were not occasionally a very great relief to the Government, the House, and the officials. It was undesirable that the public, who did not know the Forms of Parliament, should labour under the delusion that the alleged congestion of Business was in any way caused by such occurrences. As for the Motion itself, he disapproved of it. The object of the hon. Member for Glamorgan was a good one; but certainly the means by which he proposed to get at that object would not be workable. Instead of counting out the House, he wanted to count out a debate. Whatever might be said to the contrary, if the Resolution became a Rule of the House, it would end to the disadvantage of private Members. Whenever they chose, it would be in the power of a Government to count out private Members' Motions one after another until such time as their own Business was reached. It was no use saying the Government would not do this — all Governments did strange things when Party ends were to be served; and the instrument that the hon. Member for Glamorganshire proposed to put into the hands of the Ministry would certainly be utilized to the detriment of private Members. The rights of independent Members had been greatly curtailed of recent years; but this Resolution, if carried in its present form, would absolutely annihilate them.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that his hon. Friend who had brought forward the Motion was well qualified by his experience and talents to call attention to a subject which must be debated from time to time. Undoubtedly, the question of "Counts out" was one which offered much scope for remark. It was a system against which much might be said; but he agreed with those who thought that, upon the whole, it did not bring about much substantial unfairness. It afforded a good deal of relief to persons who felt themselves under heavy pressure, and he thought it executed a good deal of rough and summary justice upon Motions of a class sometimes not well entitled to the attention of the House. But, as his hon. Friend had said very fairly, it was a private Member's question. It was eminently, but not exclusively so, though he had some doubt as to what the operation of the Motion might be upon Government nights of Business. But they had had a considerable number of declarations upon the question from the hon. Members on both sides of the House, and he was afraid his hon. Friend would have very little difficulty in collecting the general purport and tendency of those declarations, and would be obliged to admit that the tribunal to which he had appealed had decided against him. He was unwilling to interpose at an early period, on the ground that it did not appear to him that the question was one in which the Government ought to take any prominent part, or suggest that it had a great interest in it one way or the other. Nor did he consider it was a question as between private Members and the Government. What he did consider was that, while ostensibly, and in the mind of his hon. Friend, it was a question upon the system of counting out, it was really one involving a much larger and more important question—namely, whether the order of Business in the House ought to be determined—so far as it was not a Government night—by the free choice of independent Members taking their chance at the ballot, or whether the House should take into its own hands the arrangement of its Business with a view to giving the first chance of discussion to a Motion, or Motions, which it might deem best entitled to the first place? That was a question of vast importance. It was hardly possible to exaggerate the importance of it, because of the change which it might bring about in the relative positions of the independent judgment of individual Members and the general judgment of the House. That question was vitally affected by the present Motion. It was not at all a question of regulating the method of counting out. His hon. Friend himself had spoken of the vast importance of giving to the House a control over its own Business. He was very far from saying that that question might not at some time or other, possibly even at the present moment, be a subject deserving of consideration; it was clearly one upon which there was much to be said on both sides; but if it was to be entertained it ought to be entertained directly, and any measure upon the subject ought to be put in motion by means perfectly direct, simple, and unexceptionable. He could not agree that the system his hon. Friend desired the House to adopt was a simple one. Although it was capable of description in few and simple words on the Notice Paper, it would lead to the utmost complexity in carrying on the Business of the House. He thought, considering the principle which was involved in such a proposition, it was plain that it deserved very deliberate and distinct discussion, and that it was not a subject fit to be raised incidentally on a question about the method of working the system of counting out. And, finally, he agreed with the hon. and gallant Member (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) that Parliament had spent a great deal of time last year in settling a number of questions of great importance in regard to the Procedure of the House. In point of fact, they might compare the mass of Business with which the House then dealt to the passing of some great legislative measure, for Procedure was absolutely essential to legislation, and lay at the root of it. Now, it was quite true that the Motion did not re-open directly any points which they then decided; but he agreed with the hon. and gallant Gentleman that after they had adopted a scheme such as that, which cost them so much time and effort in the course of last year, it was desirable that they should give it some time to work, and to prove what it was worth, and that they should not revert from week to week to the consideration of isolated points of a subject which was eminently deserving of consideration as a whole. He would certainly advise his hon. Friend not to press upon the House a Motion which, he believed, it was disinclined to receive, for he did not think the Government would, under the circumstances of the case, undertake to adopt a system which involved so much more than it seemed to involve, and which would decide a very difficult question in a manner that would not be satisfactory to those who desired that the proceedings of the House should be straightforward, direct, and carried on in the public view.

SIR HUSSEY VIVIAN said, that, after the reception given to his Motion, he would not put the House to the trouble of a division.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

DISTRESS (IRELAND).

RESOLUTION.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER, in rising to call attention to the subject of Irish distress; and to move—

"That the chronic distress prevailing in certain congested parts of Ireland can be most safely and efficaciously relieved by a judicious and economic system of migration and optional emigration, together with a consolidation of the holdings from which tenants are removed; that, in the present condition of Ireland, such a scheme can be successfully carried out only by a Government Commission, with certain statutory powers, including those of purchase and sale; and, in the opinion of this House, this is a subject which demands the serious attention of Her Majesty's Government, with a view to early legislation,"

said, that the subject of Irish distress had repeatedly occupied the attention of successive Governments; and for the last nine years it formed the principal matter of the letters which he received from that quarter of the country which he was sent to Parliament to represent. During the recent Recess he had taken the opportunity of examining for himself the latest phase of that distress, having with that object paid visits to some of the distressed and congested districts in three of the Western counties of Ireland. In going over this ground he was greatly struck with the contrast presented between what he saw with his own eyes, and the evidence collected and reported by the Inspectors of the Irish Local Government Board. It would be impossible for him to describe the painful condition of things which he found in the neighbourhood of Loughglin, County Roscommon. Such was the normal condition of poverty in the district that the natural consequence was that little or no notice was taken of it by the residents in the locality. In fact, the people were so accustomed to feel the pangs of hunger, and to living on the very brink of famine, that, by some mental energy, they were able to overlook the magnitude of the misfortune from which they suffered. He found persons there half-naked, in and out of house, eating the worst description of food, and without bedding, their only couch at night being a handful of straw, with no blankets to cover them except the tattered garments which did service for clothing during the day. He had witnessed equal distress in travelling through the county of Mayo and the county of Sligo, even in the neighbourhood of the seemingly prosperous town of Ballina. In fact, it might be safely said that there were tens of thousands of people in the West of Ireland who were living in the lowest state of possible existence, and whose life was bereft of all incitement to industry or thrift, or even the slightest exertion. He had seen numbers of those who had been prostrated by the famine fever of 1880 stretched upon their pallets, which could not be dignified by the name of beds, with the very breath of life coming and going in their emaciated forms, and whose existence was a mere alternation between the pangs of hunger and fatal starvation. It must be borne in mind, not only that the distress which he described was painful, but that it was chronic in its character, and that the area over which it prevailed was sufficiently large to include 300,000 human beings. The history of Irish distress was a very painful one, and he was anxious not to touch upon matters in reference to it with which hon. Members were already familiar. The full effects which might have resulted from the Famine of 1880 had only been averted by the extraordinary efforts of private charity combined with public aid. Besides the £1,500,000 sterling which had been voted by that House out of the Irish Church Surplus Fund to meet that calamity, three private Associations had distributed more than an additional £500,000; so that in 1880 no less than £2,000,000 sterling had been expended in an attempt to apply a temporary remedy to meet the distress of one year alone in Ireland. When they came, however, to see what had been the cost to the country generally of Irish distress during the last 50 or 60 years, the figures were absolutely appalling. The total public expenditure on account of the Great Famine of 1846-7 was, according to Sir Charles Trevelyan, the then Secretary to the Treasury, £10,723,908 19*s.* 5*d.*, while the expenditure on behalf of private charity during that terrible time had been, at least, £3,000,000 more. The contributions by Irishmen in America in aid of their distressed friends and relatives in Ireland during the last 35 years, according to the calculations of the Emigration Commissioners, averaged £750,000 per annum. That, however, was the sum which had been remitted through banks and commercial houses alone; and the Commissioners estimated that the sums which had been sent through other channels would raise the average to £1,000,000 per annum. There must, however, be added to the £35,000,000 so remitted the sums sent over to Ireland by the Irish labourers who were working in

England and Scotland. Taking all these sums together, he thought it might be safely assumed that during the last 35 years a sum of, at least, £50,000,000 sterling had been expended in supplementing poor incomes in Ireland, and in relieving the distress of hundreds of thousands of people. He would now ask the House to consider what were the real causes of this chronic distress in Ireland. They were, in his opinion, political, social, and industrial. Into the political causes of that distress he did not believe that that was the fitting occasion to enter, because he was anxious to submit his observations to the House in a form which would strip them of all Party bias or political partizanship. Regarding Ireland as a country whose chief wealth sprang from agriculture, he thought that the main causes of the chronic distress in that country arose, first, from overcrowding on small farms where the land was poor; secondly, from unskilful husbandry; and, thirdly, in too much dependence on the potato as a staple of life; and, as a consequence, a standard of living below that which was necessary to maintain healthy existence. In looking at the history of congested populations in Ireland, he found that from 1793, when, after nearly a century of continuous disabilities, the Irish Catholics were permitted to vote for Protestant Members of Parliament, it had become the interest of influential politicians to multiply their voting power as much as possible, and to create large numbers of holdings, giving the tenants votes, according to the low rural franchise of those days. It was in furtherance of this object that the 40*s.* holdings had been created, and tenants were encouraged to subdivide their holdings as much as possible. Another cause that had led to the creation of congested districts in Ireland was the terror which the Famine of 1846 had inspired in the minds of Irish landlords that its recurrence would vitally affect their fortunes. With the prospect of having the workhouses crowded with paupers for whose support they would be chargeable, the landlords naturally took alarm; and a system of clearances began from the rich and fertile lands, which had been pursued, with more or less persistency, down to the present time. The evil of a congested population would not remedy itself by the operation of natural causes. In 1881—the latest year for which Returns had been made—there was an actual increase in each of the three classes into which the smaller holdings of Ireland might be divided—namely, first, those not exceeding one acre; secondly, those between one and five acres; and, thirdly, those between five and 15 acres. Of the first class, there were no fewer than 50,996; of the second, 67,071; and of the third, those exceeding five and not exceeding 15 acres, 164,045. The smallest of the three classes had increased in 1881, over the preceding year, by 383, the next by 2,779, and the third by 2,710. It was only in the larger farms—those above 15 acres—that there had been any diminution. Some time ago he ventured, through the kindness of his hon. Friend the Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone), to ask Mr. Tuke three questions, to which, as yet, he had been unable to obtain answers. The questions were—first, what became of the holdings from which families or the previous occupiers had been emigrated; second, were those holdings consolidated or re-occupied by other tenants; and, next, what number of holdings had been permanently cleared, what number consolidated, and what number re-occupied? He should be glad to know if his hon. Friend, through more recent communications with the agents of his Committee in the West of Ireland, could now throw some light on those questions, and on the practical operation of emigration, so far as the evil of a congested population was concerned. There could, he thought, be but little difference as to the nature of the problem with which they were confronted in Ireland, though there might be considerable differences as to the practical remedies which ought to be applied. In moving the Resolution which appeared on the Paper in his name, he thought it right to say that he did not undervalue other schemes of national improvement which had been put forward on behalf of Ireland from time to time. He did not recollect any scheme proposed by an Irish Representative which he had not, in some way or other, found himself able to support; and he had always proceeded on the principle that, although he might not be able to agree to every detail of the proposal, it would be better, on the whole, to encourage the efforts of anyone, who, single-handed or otherwise, made an honest, sincere attempt to grapple with a great difficulty. He had supported, for example, schemes for the development of Irish fisheries, the extension of the railway system, and other objects. In connection with those proposals, and in connection with his own, he should like to say that their object in recommending Irish undertakings ought to be to try and get the control of Irish resources for the purpose of carrying them out; and, whatever proposal they made to that House, they ought always to be prepared to carry it out on the strength of Irish resources alone. He wished especially to emphasize that point. No one esteemed more highly than he did the value of self-help; and all he wanted was to put the farmers of the West of Ireland in a condition in which it might be said, for the first time in their history, that they could help themselves; and he was confident that the result would be very disappointing to their enemies, if they had any, and very gratifying to their friends on both sides of the Channel. He came first to the questional of optional emigration. During his recent investigations he had conversed much with the farmers of Roscommon, Mayo, and Sligo, and consulted them as to the questions of migration and emigration. He found that in every case where he asked, would the man willingly quit his small patch of two or three acres of land, and undertake to enter upon the cultivation or the occupation of 20 acres of land elsewhere, on condition of paying a fixed rental for a limited number of years? he always received an affirmative reply; and, notwithstanding their attachment to their wretched holdings, they did not go so far as to prefer misery where they were to the chance of comparative prosperity in another portion of their own country. But he was bound to tell the House, on the other hand, that whenever he proposed the question of emigration he found the greatest unwillingness on the part of the people to contemplate such an escape from their difficulties. He was aware that 30 Unions had applied to be scheduled for emigration purposes under the Arrears Act, and had applied to Mr. Tuke's Committee. He had always advocated freedom of choice by the tenant farmers themselves in that matter; and that choice and that option would settle the question as to whether or not they were prepared to go. But in those Unions there practically was no choice. He would neither promote emigration nor oppose it; but, recognizing that in the present condition of Ireland it was inevitable, he would regulate it, and he desired to see a regulated system set on foot, instead of the old haphazard landing of families on American soil, with no one to see to their welfare. It was, above all, necessary that emigrants should not have rankling in their minds, on their arrival in Canada or the United States, a burning sense of wrong, or injury, or banishment, or expatriation. He might be asked why, if he believed that migration was a practical remedy, he should trouble himself with emigration, or, if he thought that emigration would be beneficial, he should also advocate migration. He had no crotchets; and, if he were asked that question, his answer would be that emigration alone would not do, because at least half the people in need of relief were not fit to emigrate. Emigrants should be neither too young nor too old; they should not be infirm or feeble, but persons of courage and enterprize. Such people, leaving the abodes of their decayed industries in the Old World, in order to apply their labour to the fresh and vigorous industries of the New—especially if they went to join their relatives and friends—would be sure of making their way as emigrants in the country of their adoption. He now came to the question of migration, and the regret he felt in connection with that proposed mode of finding a permanent remedy for Irish distress was occasioned by the circumstance that in the nature of things it was slow, and that the necessary operations could, in the first instance, only be carried out in a gradual and experimental way. Neither of the schemes was alone sufficient to afford immediate relief and provide a permanent remedy; and, therefore, he proposed to give to the people themselves the option of saying whether they would migrate to certain unoccupied tracts in the old country or emigrate to the other side of the Atlantic. At present the only method of relief for those who were not prepared to emigrate was the workhouse. In his recent tour in Ireland he often found that a small farmer well able to work was surrounded by a family so young that they were unable to give him any assistance. What was to be done with a family like that? The father would, in such a case, be unwilling to incur the danger, to his young ones, of a voyage to a far-off land; but if he could be removed elsewhere to another farm in his native country, his family would in time be able to second his efforts in the cultivation of the land. No matter how favourable the conditions were under which emigration was carried on, it ought to be limited in its character. They ought to say that up to a certain point, if the people wished to emigrate, they would assist them; but that they would only make provision for a certain number in each year, and for a number in all not greater than the country could spare without detriment to its future prosperity. No doubt many parts of Ireland were retrograding from the want of a population properly employed in productive labour. In some parts of the West of Ireland the population was so deficient that persons engaged in large farming operations were fettered in their action because they could not procure sufficient labour to effect the rotation of their crops. It was, therefore, not enough simply to say—"Get rid of your distressed population, and then the difficulty of distress will be solved." He had always held the belief that Ireland, as a whole, was not over-populated. There was not a man, woman, or child in the country who could not find the means of competent subsistence if the country were controlled by Irish opinion and Irish experience, and the people were enabled to use their own resources, unfettered by extraneous conditions. He would now invite the attention of the House to the provisions which at present existed with respect to emigration. By the 18th section of the Arrears Act Guardians of the Poor were empowered to borrow money at 3½ per cent in aid of emigration; and under the 20th section the Lord Lieutenant might authorize grants in aid of emigration to Boards of Guardians, or to any body of persons, to the extent of £100,000; and it was provided in the Act that the sum for each person should not be greater than £5. To this latter provision he entirely objected. Considering the difficulties of settling on the other side of the Atlantic, it would not be safe to emigrate any Irish family unless they were prepared to spend £100 in the operation. Here he might incidentally state that he believed he made a mistake, a short time ago, in crediting the Imperial Exchequer with this sum of £100,000. As a matter of fact, he found that that amount was chargeable on the Irish Church Surplus, and not on the Consolidated Fund. The 21st section of the Arrears Act authorized the Lord Lieutenant to make arrangements for securing the satisfactory emigration of persons for whom the means of emigration were provided under the Act. But the power of the Lord Lieutenant ceased with the application of £100,000; and, therefore, he maintained that for the purpose of promoting emigration on the conditions on which alone it was likely to be successful, that Statute was entirely inadequate. Under the 32nd section of the Land Act the Land Commission might contract with any public Company to promote emigration by means of loans; but the amount must not exceed £200,000 altogether, or one-third part thereof in any single year. On the question of emigration it was impossible for him, as a private Member, to speak with any confidence. He did not profess to know how many people would be likely to emigrate; but he should, at all events, like to give them first the option of migrating. Migration was a very incorrect word, however, and it failed to accurately express his meaning. Creatures who, like the swallow, migrated, went and came back again; whereas he proposed to remove people from one place and to re-settle them permanently in another. This removal and re-settlement might be done by the Government; but he was opposed to the Government undertaking the work of reclaiming the land, because he thought it would lead to intolerable jobbery. It might be done by a Joint Stock Company, as was suggested by the Land Act. But Companies would have to proceed by means of hired labour, and that would be too expensive; and, in his judgment, the land could never be profitably cultivated by that means. Then the work might be done by individual landlords; but the Irish landlord was, at the present moment, a gentleman steeped in debt, fettered by incumbrances without capital, and therefore without enterprize, and he had the additional excuse that his income had been cut down 20 per cent by Act of Parliament. It was not a sound objection to his scheme that if the land he referred to could be reclaimed and improved profitably the work would be undertaken by Irish landlords. Under the present circumstances, to expect the landlords to enter upon the cultivation and improvement of the land was in itself an expectation very wild and very imaginary indeed. Therefore, he came to the conclusion that it was the tenant living and working upon the land, in the expectation of future ownership, who alone could cultivate it with profit and advantage. So intimate was the subject of the reclamation of land with migration in their debates, that he found them treated under the same head in the Land Act. He should like to explain the process of migration as he proposed to carry it out. He calculated that at least 50,000 families, or 250,000 persons, ought to be permanently moved from their present holdings. It was hard to say what proportion of these, if the option were given them, would elect to emigrate; that would have to be determined by future experience; but for the purpose of migration he would take now only half the number; and, allowing 20 acres of land for each family, this would involve, for 25,000 families, the acquisition by the Commissioners of 500,000 acres of semi-waste, unoccupied land. The question naturally arose as to the size of the farms upon which these removed families would be set, and there was some conflict of evidence upon that point. It was impossible for a small farmer to cultivate 20 acres with the spade. But it was easy if he had a horse and a plough and domestic labour; therefore the 20 acres was not necessarily a limit. He put it down as an average. He would take the land as worth 5*s.* per acre. He would estimate it at 20 years' purchase, and the tenant right at four years' purchase; the 20 acres would cost £120, which, multiplied by 25,000, the number of the new holdings to be created by the Commission, would amount to £3,000,000 sterling. He estimated the cost of dwellings, main drainage, and main roads at about £2,000,000 more. Thus the sum of £5,000,000 sterling placed at the disposal of any Government Commission appointed for the purpose would, in his humble judgment, be adequate to meet the entire cost of the removal of these 25,000 families. When the economic character of the scheme had been tested, he had no doubt that its success would be established; and his hope was, that Parliament would then be willing to sanction further expenditure in the same direction, so long as a single acre of land, suitable for tillage, remained to be occupied and cultivated. He proposed that the repayments of the money thus advanced should be by means of fixed rentals, including principal and interest for a certain number of years, at the termination of which the tenants would become the owners. He would propose that no rent should be paid in the first two years after the settlement, and during this time the tenants would be supported by wages for work done under the supervision of the Commission. He did not mean that the Government or its agents should engage in the direct supervision of the cultivation of the land. The supervision of the Commission to which he referred was a supervision which should be sufficient to satisfy them that the tenant was working for a certain specified time in the improvement of his own farm. He had stated already that one of the causes of distress was unskilled husbandry; and it was, therefore, an essential part of this scheme that wherever a colony of these new settlers was founded a school-house should be immediately erected, for the purpose of imparting technical instruction in the improvement of agriculture. This building could also be made a storehouse for agricultural implements; and if any small farmer was unable to keep a plough or a horse, facilities might be provided at this central store for his hiring them to carry on his husbandry. He also would like to see houses built somewhat after the excellent example of those belonging to the Midland Great Western Railway Company, situate near Enfield, and referred to by the Bessborough Commission. When similar schemes had been discussed on former occasions, the security of the land itself had always been offered for the return of the money advanced. That security was generally, and he thought rightly, held to be insufficient. He proposed, therefore, in order that the Treasury might have the most solid security possible, that the charge should fall on the whole of the assessable property of Ireland, and that the Lord Lieutenant should have power to levy a rate in aid over the whole county in which migration took place, or, if necessary, over a still wider area, so that by no possibility could the Imperial Exchequer suffer a loss. He did not, however, believe it would be necessary to levy a rate over more than a county; but he thought the area of taxation should not be less. It was always said to be inadvisable to make the farmers tenants of the State, lest they should be at the mercy of political agitators; but security of the kind he suggested would do away with this familiar objection to all schemes for the creation of a peasant proprietary. Whatever area was chosen for the levying of the rate, the condition should be maintained of not allowing the tenants ever to fall below one-half of their stipulated payments. It was necessary, at the same time, that the Government Commission, the creation of which he contemplated, should have power to purchase compulsorily semi-waste lands, to consolidate holdings when the tenants had voluntarily quitted them, to prevent subdivision, and to award, subject to an appeal to the Land Commission, compensation to all whose property was taken for the purposes of the Commission. Having thus stated his plan, he had to say he could never have placed it before the House had it not been for the spontaneous assistance he had received from the hon. Baronet the Member for South Shropshire (Sir Baldwyn Leighton), for whose kind co-operation he was sincerely grateful. He had only to remark that proposals had often before been made to deal with semi-waste and improvable land in Ireland; and of these one of the most noticeable was that of Lord John Russell in 1847. Speaking in the House in that year, Lord John Russell quoted the authority of Sir Robert Kane to the effect that the waste lands in Ireland which might be dealt with amounted to about 4,600,000 acres. The scheme of the noble Lord, which was, in principle, essentially similar to the proposal now before the House, included the outlay of £1,000,000 sterling, compulsory power of purchase by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, the reclamation of waste lands, the making of roads, the establishment of a system of drainage, the erection of buildings, the division of the land into plots, but prohibited, as he would now, any cultivation of the land, through the agency of a Public Department. His Lordship anticipated that many advantages would accrue from this plan, and that many persons who had been driven to despair, and even into crime, would be able to earn a comfortable living, and that by it would be raised a class of small proprietors which would form a valuable link in the social life of Ireland. As to the availability of the land, he would refer to the evidence of Professor Baldwin and Major Robertson, the Assistant Commissioners to the Richmond Commission, to show that even in the neighbourhood of some of the over-populated districts there was a great deal of semi-waste and rapidly-deteriorating land, which needed only preliminary improvements to make it admirably fit for the purposes of his scheme. Indeed, Professor Baldwin spoke of it specifically as land to which it was desirable to migrate people, and mentioned vast neglected tracts of land, the mere drainage of which would increase their value at least 50 per cent. In various debates in that House reference had been made to the Bessborough Commission; and until he had read up the evidence given before that Commission he was really under the impression that the Commission had reported against a scheme of this kind. He found that the Earl of Bessborough and Baron Dowse had spoken disparagingly of the project; but the O'Conor Don, although he did not believe in the economic wisdom of a project of the kind, still said he would like to see the project tried. He also spoke of emigration in most disparaging tones. The hon. Member for the County Cork (Mr. Shaw) strongly advocated the purchase by the Land Commission of waste and semi-waste lands, to which people might be removed from the more thickly-populated districts. Professor Baldwin also referred to two estates—those of Mr. Crosbie, in Kerry, and of Colonel Pitt Kennedy, in the North of Ireland, where the process of transferring persons in one form or another had been successfully carried out. He was sure, moreover, that the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry) would, on the present occasion, as he had on a former occasion, be prepared to say that his efforts had been attended with success as far as the improvement of the land was concerned. He (Mr. O'Connor Power) thought he was entitled to say that if this proposal, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, was not feasible, it was the duty of Her Majesty's Government, in view of the condition of those Western counties, to produce some plan of its own. He knew of no question which more urgently called for attention, acknowledging even the other heavy responsibilities of the Government. He would say England's interests in Egypt, the Transvaal, and Afghanistan dwindled into insignificance compared with her interests in Ireland, and the expenditure involved was much less than what had been expended on one of England's small wars, three of which they had been engaged in within a very recent period. That expenditure would, he believed, solve for ever the difficulty of chronic distress in Ireland. Some 65 years ago, on the occasion of a King's visit, Byron described in these memorable words the condition of Ireland—

> "The castle still stands, though the Senate's no more,
> And the famine that dwelt in her freedomless crags
> Is extending its steps to her desolate shore."

How often had not that picture been vividly reproduced in the sad history of Ireland since the day George IV. landed at Kingstown? Was not Ireland still at the world's gate in tatters and poverty? During the last few days, had not the Bishops of Ireland appealed from the impotence of her Government to the charity of mankind? Had they not raised again the piercing cry of Irish distress, which had so often before startled humanity, and excited its sympathy—a cry now borne, by every wind that blows, to the expatriated children of Ireland in every part of the globe; and should it be said that in this Imperial Parliament there was no sufficient statesmanship to grapple, once for all, with the cause of Ireland's protracted suffering and accumulated misfortune? He, for one, would not abandon himself to so melancholy a conclusion. On the contrary, he preferred to indulge a hope that the Government and the House of Commons would now, at last, realize the gravity of the situation in Ireland, and the measures required to promote her welfare, and that in the very extremity of her distress might be found the means of restoring to that country her prosperity, her tranquillity, and her freedom. The hon. and learned Gentleman concluded by moving the Resolution which stood in his name.

SIR BALDWYN LEIGHTON, in seconding the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Mayo, said he hoped no apology was due from an English Member for taking a prominent part in an Irish question; and perhaps even an Englishman was placed at an advantage in taking part in supporting such a proposal, inasmuch as he might be considered as regarding the matter from an impartial point of view. The present Motion sprang out of the Debate on the Address. At that time, in reply to the Prime Minister's sort of appeal and cry of help to the House generally upon this subject, he got up and said he would support any proposal of a practical kind to deal with this distress. And he might even be allowed to add these facts. In 1880, at the time of the appointment of the Bessborough Commission, he tried to have the scope of inquiry extended to the question of the reclamation of land, as he considered it of vital importance. At the time of the passing of the Irish Land Act he asked the Prime Minister whether he would deal with this question; and last year, in the Debate on the Address, he put before the House the utter inability of the Land Act to touch the condition of the West of Ireland. Before the Railway Rates Committee, he proposed and carried, with the aid of the Irish Members, a recommendation that the Irish Canals should, as a means of providing better communication, be handed over to the management of the Local Bodies. There was a remark of Lord Dufferin's which exactly expressed his own feelings on the subject. His Lordship said that for years past there had existed in Ireland a broad fringe of poverty which no legislation could touch, and a condition of things only varied by intervals of famine—intervals which would probably recur. This would continue until something was done to change the condition of the existence of the people. In former days Lord John Russell and Sir Robert Peel made proposals in this direction; but they were stopped by the financial *crux* of the question. In the present proposal of the hon. and learned Member for Mayo provision was made for dealing with the financial question. With reference to loans to Ireland, he (Sir Baldwyn Leighton) admitted that that country had not been a satisfactory debtor. She had already repudiated debts she had incurred; but that would not altogether induce him to refuse to advance money. He listened with disappointment to the proposals made by the Government in the Debate on the Address. It was like offering a stone when the people asked for bread. The Motion before the House raised two questions—emigration and migration. As to emigration, he looked upon it only as an alternative and last resource. He would exhaust every possible plan before he would give his adhesion to anything like a scheme of wholesale emigration. He did not look into the past—there was no use in doing so. They should look at what the Irish people were at the present moment; and it should be remembered that the Irish were passionately attached to the soil, to their homes, and to their domestic relations. He regretted the language used by the Government, which only led to agitation, and taught the people not to rely upon themselves. Emigration would not solve the question of dealing with 250,000 or 500,000 starving people. Then came the other alternative—that of migration. Charity, with which they had attempted to arrest famine, had proved unsatisfactory. Until a few years ago, he believed that it would have been possible to relieve the pauperism of Ireland by the development of industries. Something might have been done to extend the flax industry, both in the production and the manufacture. The fisheries, also, might have been developed. But those and all other commercial enterprizes required capital, and no capital would now go to Ireland. As industrialization would not now solve the question, it, therefore, remained to see what other remedies they could discover for the present pauperism of a great part of the country. The remedy proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Mayo was a re-settlement of the people upon the land. The question that presented itself was whether or not there was sufficient land available, and what would be the financial aspect of the scheme. Probably they would hear from the Government that no land was available. But here were six witnesses to the contrary. The hon. and learned Member for Mayo, having made inquiries in his own county, told the House that there was available land there; and the hon. Member for Galway County (Mr. Mitchell Henry) would certify to the same for his district. Then they had the evidence of Professor Baldwin and Major Robertson, given before the various Commissions on the Land Question. Besides that, two practical landowners, Mr. Crosbie, of Kerry, and Colonel Pitt Kennedy, of Tyrone, had actually carried out such an undertaking on their own estates. The evidence of Professor Baldwin was conclusive as to the necessity for doing away with the overcrowding in the South and West, and for migrating and emigrating the people from the congested districts. Now, if this witness's evidence is unworthy of credit on this point, and it is the gist of his evidence, then his whole evidence must be rejected. Professor Baldwin and Major Robertson were also strongly of opinion that there was plenty of land available for re-settling the people and preventing overcrowding. As Professor Baldwin was a Government witness before the Commissions, and had since been appointed to office under the Land Act, the Government must have confidence in his opinions. But it might well be asked, where was the money to come from, and what was to be the security? He could imagine half-a-dozen places where it might come from; but he knew of only two sources from which it could come. There was the Money Market. Did any hon. Member suppose that a company or a private individual, or anybody else, could go into the market and ask for advances of money on land in the present state of affairs? He did not think they could. There was private capital in the possession of the landlords or of someone who chose to spend money, like the hon. Member for Galway. He did not think the present state of Ireland was such as greatly to invite private capital. He was obliged to dismiss these sources, and there were two others which he should mention, only, however, to dismiss them—one was that milch cow of Irish finance, the Church Surplus Fund, and with regard to which, perhaps, the Chief Secretary would say if there was any of it left. He would also dismiss what he would call the American Dollar, which, no doubt, had come into Ireland lately, in some form or another, to a considerable amount. This brought him to the only two sources from which they could expect to raise the necessary capital—one was the local rates; the other was, perhaps, even a safer source—the thrift of the people. He believed in the thrift of the people if it could be developed and brought out, for there was a great deal of thrift in the Irish people if it were stimulated, while it was also a sound source of capital. These were the only two sources to which they could look for any capital in carrying out any scheme of this kind. He invited the Government, therefore, to consider what could be done, in the first place, by Union rating; and, in the second, by the extension of the Post Office Savings Banks in Ireland. To carry it out there must be a Commission, and great care should be exercised in selecting the men. If the right men were not selected the scheme would fail. They should be men of practical experience, and if the scheme failed at first he would not, on that account, be inclined to give it up, but would appoint other Commissioners—indeed, he would have two or three sets of Commissioners. Then there was another consideration which, like the one just mentioned, might be regarded as a matter of detail by some, but would, he should be inclined to consider, be a matter of principle, and that was the selection of the tenants. If this were a proposal for England, he would only take tenants with a little money; but in Ireland they would be compelled to take tenants of very slender means, and their labour must be regarded as their capital. With regard to the payment of the interest, he would suggest that it should be thrown on the rates of the Union, so that there would be no shirking of payment by the people. For the first three years this interest might be repayable without the Sinking Fund. He earnestly hoped the Government would so far adopt the proposal as to make a trial of it. It could not involve any great financial loss. If the Government did not see their way to make the trial, he hoped they would be able to give the House some very satisfactory reason for their refusal, though he did not know what reason they could offer. The proposal having been brought forward, the Government must not only give a good reason for not making the trial, but must make an alternative proposal, for things could not remain as they were. The condition of the people in the West of Ireland was like a barrel of gunpowder near a fuse; and if duty did not move the Government, the fact that the condition of those people was a danger to the State ought to induce them to provide a remedy. It was a strange thing that we—the most practical and administrative race in the world, the most colonizing and governing nation—should manage other more distant races—India, South Africa, and Egypt—and yet fail in bringing about even moderate prosperity with people at our own door, part and parcel of our Imperial domain. And then that English statesmen should get up and say they could do nothing—as they would, perhaps, tell them to-night! The hon. Baronet concluded by seconding the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the chronic distress prevailing in certain congested parts of Ireland can be most safely and efficaciously relieved by a judicious and economic system of migration and optional emigration, together with a consolidation of the holdings from which tenants are removed; that, in the present condition of Ireland, such a scheme can be successfully carried out only by a Government Commission, with certain statutory powers, including those of purchase and sale; and, in the opinion of this House, this is a subject which demands the serious attention of Her Majesty's Government, with a view to early legislation."—(*Mr. O'Connor Power.*)

Viscount LYMINGTON, in rising to move, as an Amendment, the omission of the words "migration and optional," said, he felt bound, before dealing with the question of emigration, to say a few words about the scheme which had been propounded by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Mayo in his able and interesting speech. He was quite at one with his hon. and learned Friend as to the magnitude of the distress and the urgency of the question, and he hoped that that House would attempt to apply a remedy to the existing evils. But the magnitude of the question might be made more apparent by the statement of Professor Baldwin that there were 100,000 tenants holding farms of less than 10 acres each and of a valuation of £5 or under. The actual condition of the tenants was most pitiable, and they were in a hopeless state of insolvency, as was shown by the evidence given before the Duke of Richmond's Commission. Much might, no doubt, be done by better farming and model farms, and prizes for dairy and other produce might be productive of much good. But it would be a serious thing to attempt to carry out in full the programme of his hon. and learned Friend. It must be borne in mind that the migrated families would have to be supported, and even clothed and educated, in the interval between their migration and the time when they would have begun to work their 20-acre farms to advantage. Besides, farms of that kind could not be worked without capital. In farms of that size the use of horses would be indispensable, and the occasional loan of a horse would by no means answer the farmer's purpose. Besides, Ireland did not really lend itself to cultivation in small farms. The climate was not genial enough, or the land rich enough, to enable it to compete with those countries in Europe where small cultivation prevailed. Such farms were too large for peasant cultivation, and too small for ordinary farming. Whence, too, was the money to be derived for carrying such a scheme into operation? His hon. and learned Friend seemed to have forgotten the provisions of the Land Act of 1881. His hon. and learned Friend had spoken of buying up the tenant right at four years' purchase. But the tenant right had enormously increased in value since the passing of the Land Act, and then there was the landlord's interest. In those cases, moreover, when the landlord occupied his own land, and no tenant right existed, the owner would be apt to set a very high price on the land which enjoyed so exceptional an advantage. If the State undertook this it would have to ask the tenants to pay a rent far higher than the rents of the surrounding tenants who would be assessed at a fair rate by the Sub-Commissioners. Therefore, supposing that there were no economic disadvantages, and no other complications or difficulties in the scheme of his hon. and learned Friend, the result would be that these Crown tenants would be at a disadvantage as compared with other tenants, and would, consequently, be dissatisfied with their own position. His hon. and learned Friend suggested that the whole cost of the scheme should be paid for out of Irish rates; but, for his own part, if he could support a scheme of this kind, he should contend that the whole burden ought to fall on the National Exchequer. The statistics with regard to local taxation in Ireland were appalling. Local taxation had increased since 1871 from £2,786,000 to £3,391,000 at the present time, while the amount of rateable property in Ireland had remained almost stationary. To take another view—in the Province of Connaught the poor rate, exclusive of other rates, varied from 1*s.* 1*d.* to 9*s.* 8*d.* in the pound. Under these circumstances, would it be wise to propose that a scheme which must involve such a very serious outlay should be charged upon Ireland? He maintained that the scheme of the hon. and learned Member for Mayo was not a wise one. It was too complicated—it was an impossible matter which no State and no Government could wisely undertake. If such a scheme were wise, it was certainly the duty of this country, and of the United Kingdom, to accept it as a national charge for a national purpose. Undoubtedly, the tendency of agriculture in Ireland was to large pastoral farms, grazing lands for cattle; and it was a remarkable fact that since 1860 the decrease of the land under arable crops amounted to nearly 1,000,000 acres. It might be true that in certain cases proprietors had in times past rather hardly and unfairly pressed forward the development of this particular industry; but it was also true that in the long run it had succeeded as regarded the prosperity of agriculture in Ireland. But the hon. and learned Member, in the speech which he addressed to the House, really told them a very painful fact, which was apparent to everyone—that in Ireland there was no other outlet for industry but agriculture. The remedy for this lay, and could only lay, in the introduction of capital into the country; and that depended both on the temper in which Parliament approached Irish questions, whether they approached them with patience and firmness, and also upon the attitude of the people of Ireland themselves. Parliament had, by the Act of 1881, conferred great boons on the Irish people, and he trusted the Irish tenants would devote their time and their energies to making the most of those boons, and to taking advantage of the opportunities they possessed in the naturally productive character of the soil. In this respect he thought the Land Act would have an effect. It must be gradual. Free sale could not at once, but it would gradually, tend towards the consolidation of the holdings. He quite agreed that the distress which prevailed in Ireland demanded a present remedy. It was not right for them to overlook it, or for Parliament to permit it to exist, without, at least, taking some energetic steps to alleviate it. The only remedy to hand that was practical lay in a well-devised scheme of State-aided emigration. The opposition to emigration, so far as he had been able to understand it, had been a very strong feeling of distrust on the part of the priests, because it would have the effect of landing their flocks on other shores, separating them from the religious influences which they had at home, and placing them on the confines of great cities across the Atlantic with divers temptations, the result of which had often been that men who in Ireland, although poor, led virtuous lives, drifted into the paths of crime. This was a matter which would be rectified if the Government would undertake by a Commission, or by entrusting the agencies which already existed for the purpose in the West of Ireland, to regulate emigration. He believed it would be necessary for emigration to be successfully undertaken, and in a manner to give satisfaction to the people of Ireland, that arrangements should be made as to the homesteads on which they were to be placed on arrival in Canada or the United States. It would also be very desirable that the emigration should be that of families, and not of individuals only, and that large bodies of emigrants should be accompanied by a priest. The State, he thought, would well lay out several hundred thousand pounds in assisting emigration; but there was naturally a very strong disinclination on the part of the taxpayer to accept any large and new liabilities, and especially to undertake expenditure that would necessarily be periodical. He was decidedly opposed to emigration being conducted under the auspices of the Poor Law Guardians. The interest of the Poor Law Guardians was obviously to emigrate all persons who were likely to come upon the rates, and the effect was very largely to discredit the scheme of emigration. The House should make up its mind whether it intended to spend any public money. He did not think that the distress in Ireland could remedy itself. It was a matter which could not be met by local taxes. He maintained that public money would be well expended in emigration, because it would be an attempt to rescue from a life of squalid poverty and degradation a class of men who had in them the seeds of industry, and of offering them some opportunity for raising their position. He did not, by his Amendment, nor would the House, if it were to accept it, pledge itself to stand by emigration as the only possible remedy; and he wished to remark, lest it should lead to any misunderstanding, that he proposed to omit the word "optional," not because any scheme of emigration could be other than optional, but because the use of the word was tautological and unnecessary. Emigration not optional would be transportation. He would welcome most heartily any practical remedies that might be suggested for Irish distress. But in regard to any scheme that might be suggested the House could only be guided in its judgment and decision upon its practical merits. Abstract expressions of sympathy were valueless. It seemed to him that it would be best, while negativing the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for Mayo, which appeared both mischievous and unpractical, to utilize the present discussion by pressing upon the Government the only remedy to hand which would entail some expenditure of Imperial money for a practical benefit, and, in spite of misrepresentation, thereby indicate that there was a strong sympathy in that House towards Ireland—that while they were determined that Ireland should be united to them by every tie, they were also resolved that she should benefit by being associated with her richer neighbour. He moved the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "migration and optional."—(*Viscount Lymington.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY said, that if anything was clear from the Resolution of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Mayo, it was that they had a population considerably excessive in certain districts of their country. This population could not be called a farming population. It was quite true that it farmed; but the farms were so small that the people could not live on them. They did not attempt to live on them. Their holdings were really little more than a home for their families. They found it very difficult to secure labour in their own district, and many thousands were driven to seek employment in England. The effect of this was to keep the wages of those who remained at home down to a miserable sum, and to keep the standard of living and comfort so low that all those motives which were found by experience to be the best stimulants for the improvement of a nation were really wanting in Ireland. It had been said that these men ought to give up their holdings and become mere labourers. If there was permanent and regular employment to be had in Ireland there would be something to be said for that proposal. But such was not the case. The Motion of the hon. and learned Member proposed two remedies for the excess of population admitted to exist in the districts referred to. One was to turn these men into farmers, properly so-called, to give them farms of sufficient size; and the other was emigration, which he was glad the hon. and learned Member for Mayo suggested should be optional. Compulsion or undue stimulation of emigration would be impolitic and futile. No one would suggest it; but he was glad that his hon. and learned Friend had emphasized the point. The number of candidates for the sum given from the Duchess of Marlborough's Fund, and for Mr. Tuke's scheme, proved that many of the people desired to emigrate. He had received a statement from Mr. Vere Foster, showing that a large number of Catholic clergymen had sought his aid on behalf of parishioners wishing to emigrate. The Catholic clergy looked with natural and proper reluctance on the departure of the people; but Mr. Vere Foster's experience showed that they largely recognized the necessities of the case. The principal opposition came from Boards of Guardians, and he did not think the farming interest on the Boards were quite wise on the point. The alternative to emigration was that labourers were to become farmers. Now, where were they to get land? The cry against large farms and pasture farms answered that question. The programme was not exactly what would suit the farming interest. True, the presence of a large population kept labour cheap; but if outdoor relief were extended, as opponents of emigration urged, farmers would pay dearly for cheap labour, and learn that low wages meant exorbitant rates. It was said that France, with its peasant proprietary, was able to do without emigration. But France was manufacturing as well as agricultural; and commerce drew off its excess agricultural population. Besides, the population of France did not increase substantially, and its agricultural population was actually decreasing in many districts, while the town population was increasing. There was a stream of emigration from Germany, which sent out nearly 250,000 last year, from Denmark, Sweden, Italy, and every old country where the population increased, and there was no corresponding expansion of commerce. Suppose all Irish cottiers and small holders were given 10 acre farms. No doubt there would be great industry and care, and things would go on pretty well for some time. But, in the meanwhile, unless manufactures sprung up quickly and expanded, and if the natural growth of population went on at an accelerated pace, in 20 or 25 years the present problem would arise again. There would be a larger number of people in the country; and they would be compelled, at the end of a few years, either to look to emigration, or to make a subdivision of the land, which would lead to the same miserable state of things as existed at present. Turning to the project of providing the cottiers with larger holdings two proposals had been made—one to distribute among them for purposes of tillage the large farms now used for pasture; the other to give them lands not in cultivation. The rich pasture lands were all in occupation, and should be obtained by agreement or compulsion. If obtained by agreement, they should be paid for at a high price, and therefore bear a high rent—a rent which they could not pay unless turned to the best account, and which they never could pay as tillage farms. As to compulsion, would it be practical to apply it? Even if it were applied it would only lead to the necessity of paying a higher price, and imposing consequently a higher rent, which could not be paid. Another proposal was to allocate inferior lands, or lands that had gone out of cultivation. Why did they go out of cultivation? Because their cultivation did not pay. Spade industry would certainly make land pay which would be unprofitable with a large farmer. If industry could succeed, the industry of the hard-working men who went habitually to England for work would be sure of success. But spade industry in Ireland was still rude as compared with Continental countries. It would require time to grow, and the improvement of waste lands would be carried on under great difficulty at first. Medium tillage lands would be most suitable if the experiment were tried, but with three conditions. First, the rent or amount of instalment of purchase should be fair. Now, if the Government were to purchase they would have to pay the usual high price, and a high rent or rate of repayment by the peasant should be charged. He did not think the Government should undertake the purchase. That would be better done by independent responsible organizations, to whom the Government could lend on proper security. He confessed he did not like the prospect of the Government undertaking the duties of a landed proprietor on a large scale. With regard to the proposal to throw the security for the repayment upon the counties, he believed it would be looked upon with considerable misgivings and anxiety. They must admit that there had not been great anxiety to pay the small potato rate.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER said, that rate was levied on the Poor Unions.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Then, again, which county would they charge? The county the people left? It would reply that when these people were living in their cottages they cost the county nothing, and it did not see why it should be called upon to pay for them when they had left it. The county to which they went? It would say it saw no reason why it should be taxed for the poverty of another district; and, further, he was bound to say that the 2*d.* in the pound proposed by the hon. Baronet (Sir Baldwyn Leighton) as the rate to be levied would be nothing at all compared with the responsibility which would be cast upon their shoulders. It would be the duty of the Government to enforce the payment of these instalments; but he was afraid that if the same movement that was started some time ago arose again, and if someone in Chicago said—"You did not pay rent to the landlords; are you now going to pay it to the English Government?" a condition of things would arise which would bring the country nearer to civil war than it was before. [*Cries of* "Shame, shame!" *from the Irish Members, and Ministerial cheers.*"] He would say that deliberately. [*Cries of* "Shame, shame!"] The theory of this movement was that the tenant should pay a fair rent for the land in question; and it would be the duty of the Government to enforce that rent if a combination was formed against paying.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER: Certainly. Why not?

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY said, that, for his part, he was in favour of purchases and lettings or re-sales being made by independent organizations standing between the Government and the people. Capital was another necessity. Some small holders might have it; many would be without it. If this were to be obtained otherwise than by accumulation, from which there was not much under present circumstances to be hoped, it could only be obtained by the agency of loans from voluntary organizations. Another requisite was agricultural skill, which was a different thing from agricultural industry, and did not at present exist in an advanced state among spade cultivators in Ireland. M. Laveleye, the Belgian economist, who understood these matters and discussed them from a most sympathetic point of view, had pointed this out. The skill would come by degrees; but its absence at first would cause some difficulty and many failures. On the whole, the change from cottier proprietary could only be a matter of slow growth, and the Government could do little more than aid responsible organizations by loans for the purpose. He doubted if compulsory purchase was practicable; but, if so, it was not wise, because it would mean high prices and heavy rents. The best prospect was purchase by agreement, and for this an organized system would be necessary. The people had shown an aptitude for political organization which would now prove useful if transferred from politics to this subject. The organization wanted was not that of financial companies looking for profit, but organizations like Mr. Tuke's. Their main duty would be to supervise purchases and re-sales or lettings, and to provide security for repayment of Government advances, no very serious responsibility if land were bought at a fair price, and if the new tenants were honestly disposed to meet their liabilities. Two things were required for the success of such organizations. First, all classes, landlord as well as tenant, and all parties, should co-operate. It was certainly the interest of the upper classes to settle the question, and the only obstacle was the bitterness which had grown so much lately. It would be the duty of popular leaders to tone down the bitter feeling and try and restore harmony between classes. The second and most important condition was the restoration of the financial credit of the cultivating class, which had been severely shaken by the promiscuous refusal to pay rent which had existed before the "no rent" manifesto, and had not died out when it was announced that that manifesto was to become inoperative. The State was only the trustee of the public purse, and would not be permitted to lend except on trustworthy security. The project of the hon. and learned Member for Mayo would have an improved prospect of success when the lessons of the last three years were unlearned, and when the credit of the agricultural class was somewhat restored.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Limerick (Mr. O'Shaughnessy) was likely to create more interest in Ireland than in that House; and, if he had to give a summary of it, he should say that on that occasion the hon. and learned Member had played the part of pilot fish to the Treasury Bench shark, who would probably follow him. The hon. and learned Member sought to convince the House that this way of dealing with Irish distress was a very good way; but, unfortunately, it was not practical; that the other way suggested was also excellent, but not practical; that the third, fourth, and fifth plans were, unhappily, all equally unpracticable; and that the only solution of the present difficulty in Ireland was for the people to put their trust in a Liberal Government that had a keen appreciation of the talents of their Liberal supporters. The hon. and learned Member professed to sympathize, to some extent, with the spirit of the Resolution of the hon. and learned Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power); but, so far as any purpose was discernible in his speech, it was in support of the Amendment of the noble Lord opposite (Viscount Lymington). With reference to the speech of the noble Lord, he could not help thinking that it was very well summarized beforehand in a cartoon which appeared in this week's *United Ireland*. That cartoon represented an eminent Liberal on one side of the page, and Cromwell on the other, an eminent Radical who anticipated some of his followers in the initiation of the policy of "Hell or Connaught" for the Irish race. A conversation was represented to be going on between the eminent Radical of the 17th century and the eminent Liberal of the 19th. The gist of the conversation was, that Cromwell was congratulating his successor in the government of Ireland on having hit upon a more effective method of getting rid of the Irish race than he had hit upon himself. Cromwell only suggested that the Irish people might be driven into Connaught, while the Chief Secretary gave them no alternative on this earth upon this side of the Coast of America. He had no doubt that the Government would be prepared to endorse the plan; but he regarded it as nothing less than a policy of extermination. It might be called the dynamite policy of Her Majesty's Government in Ireland; and the crime, when committed by a responsible Government upon hundreds and thousands of people, was hardly less than the offences committed by any other class of misdoers. To his mind, the English nation owed the Irish an enormous debt of gratitude for inestimable services rendered them. The British nation, according to the testimony of the Duke of Wellington, would have failed in the contest against the French had it not been for the Irish soldiery. They now only asked for a paltry sum—whether it was £7,000,000 or £20,000,000, it was a paltry sum compared with the vast sum the Government had flung among the Afghan mountains, into South Africa, or Egypt. It would enable Ireland to make a fair start, of which it had hitherto been debarred. But what was the return the British Government made for the service he had mentioned? Why, only a policy of rack-renting and extermination. During the past half-century the Irish people contributed in rack rents, which were spent in England, the sum of £500,000,000 sterling, and had also enormously contributed by their labour to the profits of British manufacture. In the name of expedience, and in the name of the present and future, he called on the Government not to trifle, or shuffle, or put forward any flimsy, small pretexts of the murderous "pinch of hunger" policy, but to meet the exigency as if it occurred in Lancashire. Let the necessary sum be forthcoming on the Imperial credit or from the Imperial Funds; and he ventured to say that were £20,000,000 to be advanced without delay for the purpose of giving these poor people a fair start, in 10 years time the interest on the money lent would be paid over and over again. Within the last three years 100,000 men, women, and children had been driven from the shores of Ireland. In spite of the efforts of so-called remedial legislation, the sentence of banishment was at that moment imminent over the heads of 40,000 more. This monstrous, unmanly, and murderous war against Ireland must cease. The history of English conduct towards Ireland was a history of infamy. Was it not time for it to cease? The Irish Party might not be listened to now; but they would be listened to, perhaps, when the words "too late" were on the lips of Englishmen. It was no use introducing peddling remedies, or putting Liberal place-hunters in fat sinecures for the evils of Ireland. This the Government had already done. The Government, using the arguments of some of their supporters, might declare that they could not accept the extravagant proposals made from the Home Rule Benches; but for every £10,000,000 which was refused to Ireland there would be £10,000,000 wanted; and he feared that, before the century was passed, it would be regretted that no attempt had been made to do justice to Ireland. It was the height of folly, and an insult to human intelligence, to delay assistance to Ireland until she was able to stand on her own legs; for the country had been struck down and kept down from generation to generation. Only for a short period of 18 or 20 years had Ireland been free from the grasp of England. The Government might pass Coercion Acts and make them permanent, and continue to adopt the policy of the Mississippi steamboat captain, who got a negro to sit on the safety valve of the engine; but, some time or other, an explosion would take place. He would only add that, if English statesmen were determined to get rid of the Irish people, then he would advise the Irish race all over the world, by every legitimate means, to get rid of English misgovernment in Ireland.

Mr. EWART said, he cordially supported the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power). He felt mortified that the affairs of his country should occupy so much of the time and labour of Parliament; and he thought a remedy for the existing state of things ought to be devised. There was no remedy, however, except the removal of the people from their miserable holdings, which were not sufficient to support nature, to some place where they could find a respectable living. He preferred voluntary emigration as a means of obtaining relief; but he thought that much good would be effected by the reclamation of waste land. He would urge the Government to give the present proposal a trial on a small scale first. He saw no difficulty in raising the money by the poor rates; but as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that by the aid of the Terminable Annuities the National Debt was being paid off at the rate of £5,000,000 a-year, he thought that some of that money might profitably be expended in reclaiming the waste lands of Ireland, although he was well aware of the enormous difficulties of such an undertaking.

Colonel COLTHURST said, he thought that far more people would desire to emigrate than could possibly be properly provided for. He wished especially to warn the Government against using the agency of Boards of Guardians for that purpose. The only desire of Guardians was to get rid of the poorest and most helpless, who could not possibly succeed as emigrants. Emigration could only be successfully carried out under a Special Commission which should be wholly independent of the Boards of Guardians. With respect to the reclamation of land, experience had amply proved that it was possible, and in many cases profitable. The Government had, some 50 years ago, undertaken reclamation at King William's Town, and it was commonly said to be a failure. In 1854 the land was sold at a very low price, owing to mismanagement; but the work had been by no means a failure. Unfortunately, the land had been disposed of, not to the occupiers, but to speculators. But, in spite of that, when he visited the place not long ago, he found it an oasis in the desert, compared with the surrounding more or less unreclaimed or badly reclaimed land. In 1843, under the Act of 1843, an attempt was made to encourage works of arterial drainage, and during the 10 following years 500 applications were made under that Act, and many most useful works begun, which had since been completed. But, unfortunately, during the famine years, some works were undertaken, and the scope of others enlarged, with a view to affording employment; and a very large, and, in many cases, an injudicious outlay incurred. Some owners became alarmed, a Committee of Inquiry was appointed, and a change of system determined upon, under which only about 20 works had been carried out from 1863 to 1882. He would only add that neither the scheme of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Mayo, nor any other scheme, would have a chance of success, unless the law gave the power to the Board of Works to initiate works of arterial drainage as well as to carry them out.

Mr. O'BRIEN said, that, although he had an Amendment on the Paper, he found that the difference between him and the hon. and learned Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) was not so substantial as the terms of his Motion had led him to anticipate; but he was afraid that it was of no use shutting their eyes to the fact that the two words in the Motion that had the greatest charm for the ears of that House were "emigration" and "consolidation." He could not agree that the transportation of the Irish people—no matter under what seductive conditions—was the duty or business of any Government worthy the name; and he was quite sure that, as a measure of relief for this particular class of tenants under any conditions that the Government were likely to concede, any scheme of Government emigration would be a curse to the unfortunate people themselves, and would be a reproach to anyone who had hand, act, or part in sanctioning it. He had no sympathy for the Government that could find no better plan for dealing with a difficulty which was one of the hereditary punishments of English crime in Ireland. At best, it was the resource of feebleness to say, as the Government said—"We have here 50,000 or 100,000 people, whose misery is always appealing to us and rebuking us. Let us buy them off and ship them away to another hemisphere, so that whatever happens to them we will be out of earshot." Whatever the motive of this scheme of emigration was it would only end in failure. The scheme of emigration by families was a perfectly delusive one. The people they wanted to keep at home—the young and the strong, and those who had means to carry away—would go readily enough. They wanted no stimulus to emigrate; 84,000 people went last year, and 3,000,000 had emigrated since the time of the Famine—a pretty severe drain on Ireland if blood-letting were any good for her. The very people the Government wanted to go would not go; and no country would receive the old, the helpless, and the feeble, as had been mentioned by the hon. and learned Member for Mayo. What were many of these poor people to do in a new country, where they were just as much out of place as if they were Red Indians—people, one-half of whom did not speak English and had never handled a plough? He had had the curiosity to inquire into the success of the Government scheme of emigration in Donegal, and found that the cases were not such as touched upon the real question at all. As regarded the question of consolidation, he wished to say that if Government succeeded in tempting away any large portion of the population they would not in any way benefit those who remained behind. As the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had often stated, those little holdings were altogether worked by the spade labour of the tenants and their family; they would not pay anybody who would have to use hired labour; they were utterly worthless for grazing purposes; and if they were not cultivated, they would, in a few years, rush back into heath and rushes. It was quite possible that if a lot of these little holdings were suddenly thrown on the market, there would be land-grabbers to grasp at them, and offer impossible rents for them; but had not Ireland suffered enough from earth-hunger of that sort already? No; the true remedy was that suggested by the Bishops—to take things as they found them, and make the best of them. These little holdings were capable of supporting their tenants with the other means of living which they possessed if the tenants had some little stock—were more skilled in agriculture, if the rack-rents were reduced, and some security given for the improvements made. If the proposal of the Bishops of Ireland, made three months ago, had been accepted, and a few hundred thousand pounds risked in loans to these small tenants, the Government would have had, by this time, the men earning the money on their own lands; they soon would have been able to feed themselves and re-stock their holdings; and if, in addition, some little encouragement was given to their fisheries, the Government would have done something that statesmen might be prouder of than of their empty workhouses and emigrant ships. The Royal Commission proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Mayo might have some result; but he had no faith in official Commissions. It seemed like a mockery that they should be debating this subject that night without any reference to the fact that while they were talking thousands of people were in a state of frenzy and despair for want of food or of seeds to put into the ground. Inspector Woodhouse himself stated that in the parish of Glencolumbkill there were 1,400 people; one-third of the whole population did not own any possession, except some fowls and, perhaps, a pig, and had no seed potatoes or oats; but while making these admissions the Government Inspectors sent in Reports the obvious effect of which, he did not say their purpose, was to whittle away and to minimize the poverty and sufferings of the people, and not only to stay the hand of the Government, but stay the hand of private charity as well. These officials seemed to think it was all right as long as the people were not dying like flies of hunger. Anybody who had been through these districts could tell them that people had died and were dying of hunger. The neglect of the last few months had sowed the seeds of permanent disease and decay in thousands of constitutions; and if the people were not dying like flies they might thank, not the foresight of the Government, but the charity of people who did not allow themselves to be chilled by the scepticism of the Government, for the Government had done nothing except to send officials through the country to see, apparently, how much longer the people could hold out. To tell them to go into the workhouse was to betray a most heartrending incapacity to understand the feelings of the people. They would die first—not even the priests could induce them to go there. If there were, as they were told in that House, local arrangements for Poor Law relief, they were unworkable and inoperative. All the Government offered was a ticket of admission to a workhouse perhaps 20 miles distant. He did not want to harrow the House by going into details of the distress which he had himself seen among the people; but he would ask whether the Government were going, for the next four and a-half months, to leave the whole of that wretched population to depend upon that charity which the Government themselves, by their attitude, were discouraging? Until the potatoes were fit for digging—and in Donegal that would not be until the middle of August—if there were any potatoes to dig at all, the great bulk of these people would have to be supported by private or public charity if they were to remain alive, and that was apart altogether from where they were going to get the seeds to put down at all within the next few weeks. The other night Members from Ireland appealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for the sake of these poor people, for some share of the £2,700,000 that he was dispensing with such lordly generosity among rich people who did not want it. They pointed out that in dealing with these people they were not dealing with turbulent politicians, but with a people who, perhaps unfortunately for themselves, were about the meekest and most inoffensive on earth. They pointed out that it was not a matter of politics, but of common humanity; but they might as well have appealed to the winds and waves on the Donegal shores. He had no further appeal to make, except that which had been made by the Catholic Bishops—namely, to ask the Irish people abroad to do what they had often done before—to feed their unfortunate fellow-countrymen whom an English Government and rack-renting landlords, supported by England, had left to starvation. He would be glad if he was wrong, and if the speech of the Chief Secretary undeceived him; but he confessed that he had not much hope of any great or permanent amelioration of the condition of the peasants in the West of Ireland until their country obtained the control of its own resources, and used them not for the extermination of the people, but for their encouragement, happiness, and prosperity in their own land.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, that he did not propose to refer at any great length to the speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down. It was a speech marked by great earnestness and sincerity; and the language, though strong and energetic, did not, he was quite certain, run ahead of the hon. Member's convictions, and was merely strong and energetic for the purpose of impressing those convictions on the House. The reason that he did not propose to follow his speech closely was that he had very much work before him, not in the length of the speech which he was about to make, but in the extreme gravity of the subject which had been brought forward. The hon. Member could not be said to have spoken outside his Amendment, which, although he could not move, he had referred to. The hon. Member's Amendment contained certain negative propositions and some very positive proposals for granting outdoor relief, for making loans to small occupiers and other purposes, and the three or four most important questions to which, if he attempted to reply, he should consume more time than the House would be willing to concede. With no want of respect to the hon. Member, he should refer him, on those subjects, to the speeches which he had made on former occasions, and should address himself at once to the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power), which, to save time, might be said to embrace all proposals with regard to reclamation. With respect to the other speeches that had been made, the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) had used large words introducing a great many issues, and had endeavoured to persuade, or rather to force, the House to contribute £10,000,000 or £20,000,000 as a reward to Ireland for her former services and as compensation for her injuries. The hon. Member, with all his eloquence, certainly did not do anything to contribute towards persuading him that the scheme in favour of which he was speaking was a scheme on which £10,000,000 or £20,000,000 could be spent with any advantage to Ireland. The speech of the hon. Member for Belfast (Mr. Ewart), who spoke more quietly than the hon. Member for Dungarvan, was, however, more calculated to alarm financiers, for he proposed to take the £60,000,000 or £70,000,000 accruing from time to time by the determination of Terminable Annuities, applicable to the reduction of the National Debt, and apply them to the development of Irish resources. But the services of the country must be considered on their own merits, and a proposed service must be defended absolutely on its own ground, without the money that was required for another service. The importance of this debate he considered to be great, and the question one of the most urgent character; while, though the Resolution was in somewhat vague terms, there was much in it which gave the Government satisfaction, for it called attention to the chronic character of the distress in parts of Ireland. The hon. and learned Member said he intended to propose a permanent remedy, and the fact was that it was no use looking for any relief from temporary measures. In order to be effectual they must be permanent. What was the remedy proposed? With regard to that, the hon. and learned Member had wisely given the Government Notice of his scheme, knowing that it would be of no use to bring it suddenly forward when it was impossible for them to consider it. What, then, was the cause of the chronic distress in some parts of Ireland? Certainly, it was not so severe as it was in 1847. It was much more local, and that enabled the Government to look at those parts of the country which were suffering at that time, and which were not suffering now, with a view to determine what remedies to apply to the rest. When he was in Ireland he was always inquiring, and it was rather hard to find an answer, for some district to be pointed out which was very much distressed in 1847, but which was not so now, and he found one in Skibbereen. Mr. Senior, a gentleman of great authority, talked about certain districts being reduced to "one vast Skibbereen," meaning that they would be reduced to great poverty. Skibbereen was now very much the reverse of unprosperous. He had been able to obtain the figures respecting its three baronies—namely, Carberry East, Carberry West, and the West of East Carberry—he could not obtain statistics regarding the Unions—but they showed that whereas in 1841 one district contained a population of 130,000, it now contained 68,000, a diminution of 47 per cent. In the rural part of Cork County,—that was, excepting the City of Cork—the population had fallen 46 per cent, in Limerick 50, and in Tipperary it had fallen from 435,000 to 199,000, or 54 per cent. Now, the diminution in the Union of Clifden was only 30 per cent, in Belmullet 29 per cent, in Newport 16 per cent, in Oughterard 13 per cent, and in Swinford only 4 per cent. It would be seen, therefore, that there was no proportionate reduction in these years in the districts now distressed. [Mr. Sexton: Since what date?] Since 1841; and this diminution was not in the more populous, but in the poorer parts. Therefore, they came to the conclusion that the distressed districts were those in which the population was large and the land usually poor. So far they agreed with the hon. and learned Member. They also agreed that the automatic reduction of population was not sufficient, and that it required to be stimulated. They agreed also in promoting emigration; but side by side with the emigration scheme he promoted a scheme of migration, and it was on the system of migration that the Government joined issue with the hon. and learned Member. It was a very important issue, and if the Resolution was carried the country would be pledged to action of a very serious character. The hon. and learned Member proposed to place families upon farms of 20 acres of semi-waste land. The scheme of the hon. and learned Member did not, he was glad to find, refer to the breaking up of rich grazing farms in the central districts of Ireland. That proposal, he imagined, was only advanced upon the platform, and the cost of that plan for each family would be so great that it would be ruinous to the Exchequer, and also ruinous to the most successful industries in Ireland. The hon. and learned Member proposed to take land of the value of 5*s.* per acre, and he assumed that the fee simple might be secured for £6 an acre. In order to settle these 25,000 families he would require 500,000 acres, which would be equivalent to an outlay to the public of £3,000,000, with £2,000,000 extra for farm buildings, roads, and so on, as against the £625,000 for which they would be emigrated by the Government, being at the rate of £5 per individual; but he said the £625,000 would be a dead loss, while the £5,000,000 would be advanced in the shape of a loan, which would be repaid after the lapse of a certain number of years. Now, what were the difficulties which the Government felt with regard to this scheme? The groundwork of it was the assumption that there were 500,000 acres, chiefly in the West of Ireland, of waste and semi-waste land fit for cultivation, and that 20 acres would support a family and pay a tolerably large rent. But observe how large that rent was. If the finance of the hon. and learned Member was correct, every such family would owe the Government £200 for the 20 acres, a sum to be paid off, together with the interest, at 3 per cent. Now, in the first place, the hon. and learned Member put at too low a figure the debt from the tenant to the Government. He would not dispute as to the number of years' purchase. He would allow that the selling price was £6 on an acre. But, allowing that, he thought he could show that £120 for the purchase money, and £8 for the proportion of the rent for the farm house, farm buildings, roads, &c., was too low. They brought these people from one district to another, in order to better their condition, and to do so permanently. Now, in the opinion of Sir Richard Griffith—than whom no higher authority on Irish matters existed—no farm ought to be less than 30 statute acres as an absolute minimum. It was most important that the farmer should have 40 or 50 acres; but, at least, he should have 30 acres of good arable and grazing land, to enable him to become one of a solid, prosperous yeomanry; for if they did not do that he did not see what object they should obtain. Now, to stock such a farm, to raise the buildings, and make the roads, would demand, not £80, but at least £250.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER: I do not propose to stock the farm. As I explained in my speech, I would only proceed very gradually.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he was going to take the hon. and learned Member's figures, because the Government were not satisfied with them as they stood. The purchase of a farm of good land would require, not £200, but £750. £200 would have to be repaid to the Government, with 3 per cent per annum for interest. To repay that sum at the end of 30 years would be equal to £10 4*s.* a-year, or 10*s.* 2*d.* an acre; if repaid within 40 years it would be £8 13*s.* a-year, or 8*s.* 8*d.* an acre; if within 50 years—which was a long time indeed to look forward to for becoming a peasant proprietor—it would be £7 15*s.*, or 7*s.* 9*d.* an acre. In the "Bright Clauses" of the Act of 1870, and in the Act of 1881, 31 years was taken as the limit; but, in order to bring the thing to a narrow issue, he would allow that it was safe to take the term of 50 years. If that was admitted, it had to be proved that 500,000 acres of land could be found susceptible of such cultivation as would not only support a family, but enable the tenant to pay 2*s.* 9*d.* for every acre more than was paid under the present conditions. How did such land exist? According to a paper by Mr. Ball Green, who was in the office of Sir Richard Griffith, the area of Ireland in bog, moor, and mountain was 4,497,000 acres. This bog, moor, and mountain was classified thus. There were 1,200,000 of deep fat bog in the low country. A small sum might be expended in draining this partially, and in making roads for the purpose of making this land accessible and available for farming; but, except in very small portions, to turn this into arable land was altogether out of the question. There were 1,100,000 acres of wild mountain tops, ranging in elevation from 1,000 feet and upwards. This elevated land was quite incapable of the improvements of the nature suggested. This gave 1,000,000 acres ranging from 800 feet to 1,000 feet in height. Now, said Mr. Ball Green, something must be done to try and make these mountains better adapted for grazing, especially young cattle in the summer months; but any large outlay with a view to reclamation and the culture of crops would not be remunerative. There remained something like 1,200,000 acres. This land might be improved by opening surface drains, which would cost about 20*s.* an acre. He remembered seeing pastures of that sort, which reminded him of the Cheviot Hills in his own county. Mr. Ball Green had said that the value of these lands might be increased by about 2*s.* 6*d.* per acre; but the condition under which the value of the land could be increased was that it should be taken by capitalists for the purpose of feeding large flocks of sheep, and not by small cottier tenants, for the purpose of growing crops. But the general conclusion of Sir Richard Griffith with reference to those lands was that it was expedient to encourage parties with capital to open drains for the purpose of improving the quality of the natural grass, and that would be most advantageously effected by the proprietors themselves. That system was carried out in Scotland successfully. Such lands were not suited for allotments for the poor, as the cultivation of potatoes was always doubtful. How provident Sir Richard Griffith was in that opinion was proved by the fact that in the last 10 years 400,000 acres had got out of tillage. That had been quoted, he hardly knew why, to prove the necessity of legislation such as that recommended by the hon. and learned Member; but, in his (Mr. Trevelyan's) opinion, it was a powerful warning against it. Land that had been going out of tillage for economic reasons was hardly suited for the purpose recommended. [Mr. O'Connor Power: I said the tenants had no security.] The tenants would have security now; they had now an absolute security; but it was better to leave it to economical causes, and see whether they would induce them to take it. If there was much land capable of tillage in Ireland, but not tilled, even if it were not the interest of the farmer to bring it under tillage, it was the highest interest of the landlord to do so. The hon. and learned Member had said there were people who were not fit to emigrate on account of their being unenterprizing and not strong in body. But he (Mr. Trevelyan), believed that if a man were not good in work he was not fit to emigrate. They might augur from the Bright Clauses and the Land Act how very little chance there was of the proposal of the hon. and learned Member being successfully carried out; for it was, after all, another form of peasant proprietary, and proposed that the peasant should buy indifferent or bad land. There had not been more than 1,200 applications in 12 years from men who had had the opportunity of purchasing land, and among those were a surprising number of men of good and even high position. A very small number of Irish farmers had availed themselves of the opportunity of purchasing good and improvable land though they already had the stock; and now the Government were asked to induce a vast number of poor people without stock, with no connection with the soil, to purchase bad land, which had been rejected by tenants and landlords as not susceptible of cultivation. The land in question, though bad for tillage, was good for grazing; but there were tenants on it already, and the work of ejecting those tenants was one of extreme difficulty, and cause for great irritation, because an improving landlord in Ireland who wished to buy out had, at certain periods, been most unpopular; and that would be the position of the British Government if the proposal of the hon. and learned Member were carried out. Then, again, there were the labourers in the neighbourhood, often badly enough off, so that if the present occupiers were dispossessed they would have the first claim to the land; and he was not sure that the Government, even with money in their hands, would find it more easy to get rid of the existing tenants than the landlord who now wished to clear his land for consolidation or other purposes. But, besides having the same difficulties in clearing the land as a landlord, the Government would have the same difficulty in getting in the rent. It was impossible for anyone who had watched the commencement of public ownership in Ireland to be blind to the danger of extending that system indefinitely, or under unfavourable circumstances. On a limited scale, and in isolated cases, it might be that the Government could collect rent more easily than the landlord; but the case might be very different if, in a large district, the Government was the only landlord inheriting all the feelings which had at times been felt and expressed against the landlord class. And if they were now to try the experiment of making the Government a landlord and rent-charger they would make it under the most unfavourable circumstances. The people in the congested districts—the districts from which the population had to be migrated—had, in many cases, got entirely out of the habit of paying rent. He was not now entering into politics; he was mentioning facts. [An hon. MEMBER: The Church Body collected their rent.] If the hon. Gentleman who had interrupted him had listened to his argument he would have heard that he admitted that there were isolated cases scattered over Ireland in which rent had been paid. The Church tenants had been mostly people who paid rent; but the people in the congested districts had not been paying rent—that was a plain fact. In some of the districts the average rent was 30*s.* a-year; and that rent had not been paid, in many cases, for five or six years past. Clergymen, whom hon. Gentlemen opposite would recognize from their point of view as the greatest friends of the tenants, had spoken of the terrible hardships which these poor people had had to undergo; and it had been represented as a very great grievance, and a main cause of the present distress, that they had had to muster a single years' rent in order to take advantage of the Arrears Act. And they were to take these people, with their habits and with their ideas as to the payment of rent, and they were to tell them to pay a rent, not of 30*s.* but of £8 a-year—a rent some 40 per cent greater than the land could bear. To bring the Government into relations with such people in the character of an exactor of rent, and an evictor if it did not get the rent, would be as unfortunate a proceeding as could well be devised. They would be told they had the collateral security of a rate in aid from the neighbourhood, or from, in case of need, the whole of Ireland. The hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Baldwyn Leighton) had said he would begin by making the Union from which the people went undergo its share of the burden, together with the Union to which they went. The hon. Baronet mentioned Mayo. He (Mr. Trevelyan) would turn to the circumstances of the distressed Unions in Mayo—namely, Glenties and Swinford. The united valuation of those Unions was £96,000, and the population 110,000. He was willing to let the hon. and learned Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) say how many of the 110,000 people might be migrated under his scheme; but he (Mr. Trevelyan) reckoned that the number would not be less than 20,000, and 20,000 persons at £20 per head would involve the two Unions in an outlay of £400,000. Two Unions with a valuation of £96,000 would, according to the hon. Baronet (Sir Baldwyn Leighton), have to bear the responsibility of a debt of £400,000.

Sir BALDWYN LEIGHTON: I said the county.

Mr. TREVELYAN begged the hon. Baronet's pardon, and would withdraw anything he had said under the misapprehension. The hon. Baronet, however, did say that the nature of the rate in aid would be such that it would extend as required, first over the Union, then over the county, and then over the whole of Ireland. Now, if they knew anything of human nature, they knew that when the people were aware that they had behind them, first their Union, then their county, and then the whole of Ireland, a penny of rent would not be got from any except the most exceptionally honest and energetic, and that not because they were Irishmen, but because they were human beings. If they failed, then, in paying their rent, with what justice could the Government go to the neighbouring baronies and counties, and ask them to pay money to make up the shortcomings of rent of tenants in what would be comparatively distant districts? The Government already found some difficulty in collecting taxes to which any exception could be taken. Great difficulty was experienced in collecting such taxes as those for compensation for injury to life and property, and for the outstanding loans towards the relief of distress. The people did not like paying such taxes; but just fancy asking one farmer to pay another farmer's rent! The hon. and learned Member's scheme was interesting and extremely well worked out; and he (Mr. Trevelyan) should be very glad if it could be carried out to a limited extent by a company—or by an association which had at its head Mr. Tuke. If ever the time came when any responsible body was prepared to take the matter in hand, and to lay any carefully devised scheme before the Government, it should receive their best consideration. The Government were reluctantly obliged to differ from the hon. and learned Gentleman; and he (Mr. Trevelyan) now begged the House not to vote with the hon. and learned Member because of the hearty support he had given to the notion of emigration. By declining to adopt the Motion of the hon. and learned Member no hon. Member would commit himself against emigration; for the Government, while they were forced to differ from the hon. and learned Member, agreed that the chronic distress of Ireland must be relieved by a permanent method, and the permanent method which they believed to be most effective, and most in accord with the wishes of the people, was emigration. They believed this because they were told so by people they could trust, and because of facts which no one could gainsay. Since 1851, the date when official information began to be collected, 2,800,000 emigrants had left Ireland; and this enormous emigration had been conducted by the private resources of the people, except so far as it was assisted, to a limited extent, by Boards of Guardians—to the extent of 34,000 persons. This emigration, being conducted by private means, failed where it was most needed—namely, in those districts where the misery and depression of the conditions under which the people lived left them without the means of exchanging those conditions for others and better ones. This fact had been long known to private men of great benevolence, who had offered the means of emigration to certain families in the West of Ireland, and who, whatever else they had effected, had ascertained that the people were largely anxious to try their fortunes in another land. At this point the Government determined to step in and assist with money where money was required; but in stepping in they felt they incurred very heavy obligations. The automatic emigration in earlier days from Ireland had been conducted under conditions which involved the emigrants in great hardship, both when they were going out and in the land where they found themselves; and the Government, though their action in the matter was only that of offering to assist those who wished to emigrate, felt bound to see Government money only given to emigration of the sort that would benefit both those who went and those who stayed in Ireland. On this point they differed from the Conference of Roman Catholic clergy of the diocese of Swinford, who, in a series of resolutions they passed, said they had neither publicly nor privately discouraged emigration, but they were opposed to family emigration. The Government did not dispute the sincerity of the Roman Catholic clergy; but they differed from them as to the sort of emigration desirable. The Government held that if a whole family emigrated it would be happier when it was on another shore; and there was much more hope that if a whole family emigrated the land left would be added to the neighbouring farm, and that, therefore, permanent congestion of the population would be prevented in the future. If they disagreed with Professor Baldwin in certain matters, they agreed with him in this—that when emigration or migration took place a whole family should go together. But even without the alternative of a scheme of migration, the people had gladly, and in great numbers, accepted emigration. At the last Report 21,462 people had applied from 29 Unions. In most of these the people had to supplement the Government grant out of their own resources, unless the Union thought fit to borrow; but in four Unions, or parts of Unions, the operations were put under the care of Mr. Tuke and his associates. In those four Unions, out of a population of 45,900, 6,420 had applied to be emigrated. Mr. Tuke and Mr. Sydney Buxton, giving that time and personal labour which people were so much less willing to give than money, undergoing hardships and toils in wild and scattered districts, had commenced, incidental to extended operations, the work of emigration in a manner most satisfactory to the people in their charge. Mr. Tuke, in a letter to the Under Secretary, said—

> "I think the Lord Lieutenant may like to know that our work has really commenced, and that our first detachment left Galway on Good Friday. The party consisted of 33 families and a few single men and women, together 24 persons. The whole of the emigrants were going to friends or relatives in the United States, and the accompanying list of their destinations may be of interest as showing how widely they are spread. There was not the slightest sign of regret on leaving—no shedding of tears. This must largely be attributed to the adoption of the family method of emigration, in place of the single member of the family leaving as has usually been needful hitherto in the absence of any assisted passage."

Since then 350 men, women, and children had gone from Belmullet in a spirit of hope and cheerfulness which excited the sympathy of those who witnessed it. In all, he supposed, Mr. Tuke and his friends alone had emigrated from the four Unions placed under their charge from 4,000 to 5,000 persons; and only within the last few days he (Mr. Trevelyan) had learned with great delight that by making personal efforts of an extreme nature, and especially by enlisting the services for that purpose of Mr. Hodgkin, they hoped to take over the Union of Glenties, and, perhaps, several of the districts in Donegal. There was another Committee working hard at Ardfert, and another at Killarney. Great care was taken to accept only those families in which the workers outnumbered the non-workers, in order that the people might find themselves in their new home in a condition to face the difficulty of their new position. This had produced one very painful result—namely, that many families, whose appeal for help was the most urgent and the most piteous, had to be refused. The expectations of the Government as to the economical effects of their action had been fulfilled. They had made careful inquiry as to what became of the land which was abandoned by the emigrants; and they were told that in the majority of instances it was let to the adjoining occupiers, being either sold by the outgoing tenant or given by the landlord. Such was the Report of Mr. H. A. Robinson, the Local Government Board Inspector; and he had written to-day for the statistics which Mr. Robinson had collected. Emigration was successful when those whom people knew and trusted invited them across the water; and the Government were determined to send no one to the United States who had not such an invitation, and no one to Canada whose place was not prepared for him either by private benevolence or public organization. He had got a Report from Mr. Tuke in which that gentleman informed him that—

> "As regards the families selected for Canada, some will go direct to situations promised for them to Mr. Hodgkin during his recent useful visit last autumn. A few will proceed to Winnipeg, where a Committee has been formed for their reception by Archbishop Tuché, and all others are consigned to the care of the emigration agents of the Canadian Government at Toronto, to be forwarded as required."

Hon. Members must not think this was a small matter. It was necessary to begin somewhat slowly and carefully. Hon. Members must not think the results inadequate; they must not lose sight of the enormous importance of the assertion of the principle of Government aid to emigration, and the translation of that principle into ever so moderate an amount of effective action. Offers of the most interesting nature had been made to the Government, offers which he did not wish to describe in detail, but which the Government believed involved a far smaller expenditure than that which would be required by the less extensive scheme for re-settling whole families in Ireland. Those offers showed that a very large number of families might be settled where they would be very much wanted, and where they would be welcomed under circumstances which would absolutely insure their success, as families and as small communities, within a very limited time. The only reason why the offers had not been closed with already was that the Government were determined not to spoil by hurry the success of their operations. If, as was now the case, the emigrants went out with friends and to friends, with a comfortable outfit, in a good ship, with everybody they cared for most about them—if, when they were on the other side of the water, they found themselves in a place where they were wanted and welcomed, they would send back accounts which would draw out those whom they left behind — their neighbours and connections; and by a process which was consistent with humanity, with sound policy, and with the true economic outlines and principles of Government action, a result would be produced which would make the West of Ireland a far more prosperous, and, as he believed, a far happier country in the future than it had been in the past. In what he had said he had endeavoured to be practical, and he did not think hon. Gentlemen would accuse him of having been heartless. He had only now to say that if the Government could not accept the Resolution of the hon. and learned Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power), even after his admirable speech, it was because they believed that it would deal a serious blow at the true doctrines of Government interference.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY said, he hoped the House would indulge him for a few moments while he addressed himself to this subject, to which, for many years, he had paid the greatest attention. He was, of course, well acquainted with the West of Ireland; and he and others interested in that part of the country could not but feel grateful to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for his concluding observations. He confessed, however, that with this exception the whole tone of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman had gone like a lump of lead to his heart. All that the right hon. Gentleman had said came to this—human beings, our fellow-countrymen in Ireland, were to be considered as so many economic entities, and were to be got rid of out of the country because it was too much trouble to consider, and too difficult to determine, what was to be done with them in their present condition. When Chief Secretaries, who knew little or nothing of the country, stood up in the House of Commons and proclaimed such sentiments, he felt sure they would be heard of in Ireland with dismay and horror. The right hon. Gentleman had said, in language which could not be mistaken, that in the economy of the United Kingdom Ireland ought to be a grazing farm. He (Mr. Mitchell Henry) denied that. He maintained that the rearing of beasts consequent on the extirpation of the people was neither wise, nor could it ever be successful. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that wherever the population had declined there had been something like prosperity. How much would he like the population of Ireland to decline? Did the House know that, at the present moment, there were fewer people in Ireland than in any year during the present century? The decline in population commenced in 1800, the year of the Union of Ireland with England

and with short intervals it had continued to decline, until, at the present moment, the population was 1,000,000 below what it was in 1853. How was that decline brought about? By emigration, forced by hunger and the pangs of suffering. If that was a thing of which a Government ought to be proud, he admitted the British Government had reason to be proud. Were they not, on the contrary, told by everybody who had written on economical questions that the glory and prosperity of a country depended upon its population? Let them compare the state of things in England and Scotland with the state of things in Ireland. In Ireland there had been, ever since the beginning of the century, a decline of population, until at this moment there were fewer people there than ever before—he believed that now there were only 5,129,000. The population of England during the same time had increased three-fold, for instead of 9,000,000 people in England and Wales in 1801, there were now 27,000,000. In Scotland, in place of a population of 1,608,000 in 1801, there was now a population of 3,734,000. Was it not a fair question for the House to ask itself—"How is it that in England there has been this trebling of the population and prosperity, and in Scotland there has been more than a doubling of the population and prosperity, while in Ireland there has been nothing but misery and famine and a decrease of population?" That was the practical question they had to answer; and the reply to it was that the mistaken economical laws which this country had imposed upon Ireland, against the advice of her chosen Representatives, had been absolutely fatal to the population. But more than that; he knew that during the whole time the country had been governed by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who had no practical knowledge of the place which they had to govern. If his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, who had told them, when they proposed to make a better use of the land which God had given to the people of Ireland, that it was impossible to reclaim it or make it better, was in earnest, he recommended him to take a tour in the West of Ireland and see whether reclamation and improvement were impossible. His right hon. Friend had introduced into his speech a number of figures taken from a Paper emanating from Mr. Ball Green, which were, no doubt, intended to produce a considerable effect upon the House. But he would ask what authority was Mr. Ball Green, who lived at the Valuation Office in Dublin, upon this question—what did he know about the reclamation and improvement of land? [*A laugh.*] The Secretary to the Treasury laughed at this; but he could assure the House that the person who had been quoted as an authority by the Chief Secretary had no knowledge whatever of what ought to be done in Ireland. He had always stated in that House, and it would soon be acknowledged in this country, that, however the population of Ireland might be thinned out by emigration, there would always be a residuum which would remain in a state of chronic starvation unless the Government did something to improve the quality of the land on which they must live. What was necessary to be done it was easy to see. In the West of Ireland, the part of the country he was best acquainted with, there was a great deal of the land in a state very much like that of a sponge saturated with water; and, if this had been a matter to be dealt with by any Foreign Government, the work of reclamation would have been carried out years ago. The amount of money required for that purpose was not nearly so great as that which had to be expended in keeping the Irish people in subjection. If the land were drained, he could say, from his own experience of 20 years, that at an expenditure of £10 per acre it could be raised from a state of absolute unproductiveness and made worth no less than £1 an acre. But they were told by the right hon. Gentleman that it was impossible to reclaim this land. He was not, and had never been, in favour of a great ideal scheme to reclaim the whole of the land of Ireland to be carried out by the Government, or by a Commission, or by public Companies. But he said that every portion of the country that was distressed should be separately treated after investigation of the particular circumstances of those portions of the country. That appeared to him the common-sense way of proceeding. If they wished to relieve the distress in Connemara, they must undertake some of those works, which he, in his private capacity, had carried out on a very small and insignificant scale, but with some success. The result would be that the land would not only pay for the expenditure of money, but it would be made as good agricultural land as could be found in England, Ireland, or Scotland. He did not say it could be made into land equal to the grazing lands in Meath and some parts of Wicklow, which yielded perennial grass crops without labour for the cattle to fatten upon; but it could be made to repay the cultivator as well as any average land in the kingdom. But what was the next thing to be done? How could the Chief Secretary talk to the House about the prosperity, the happiness, and the prospects of the West of Ireland, if the farmers in that part of the country, after rearing stock remained unable to get it to market without a considerable loss? There was a large trade in pigs in Connemara which represented no less a sum than £20,000 a-year. But those pigs were 40 miles from a railway, and every head of cattle and every bit of produce which an industrious farmer had to sell in that part of the country lost one-third of its value, because it was out of the district of railways. He had never ventured to approach the present Secretary to the Treasury, or make any request of him on this subject, because he knew how unfailing were his tendencies to economy, although he had besieged other Secretaries to the Treasury and the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government for some slight assistance to make a light railway from Galway to Clifden; but as for getting any practical help or assistance from them, one might as well "bay the moon." And yet, what happened? They had been horrified, during the last two or three years, at crimes of the most dreadful character which had been committed in Connemara. Did the House know that previous to those years crime was almost unknown in that district; that the peace had been kept within its area of 50 square miles by about 20 policemen, and that, too, for years in the midst of the starvation which prevailed there? But these were practical matters, and they had been congratulated because those poor creatures who were in a state of starvation were willing, when someone offered them a £5 note, to emigrate. He knew that any number of them could be induced to go, and he admitted that in regard to a certain number of them it would be a great kindness to remove them. But again he asked, what was to be done with those who remained behind? Was the question to come up year by year as it had done in the past? How many famines there had been in Ireland since the beginning of the century he did not know; but it was a fact that five years never elapsed without a public appeal being made, not to the benevolent of England only, but to the whole of Europe and America; and yet, because it was said that the political economy of this country required that the works of the kind he had indicated should be carried out by private enterprize, they did not take the smallest pains permanently to relieve the distressed districts. Supposing that 4,000 people were emigrated as the right hon. Gentleman suggested, or even if that number were doubled, it must be remembered that Irish families were not very small as a rule, and in the course of a few years the children of the present day who remained in Ireland would have grown up, and then there would be the same congestion of population as now existed, with the same distress, unless the quality of the land on which they had to live was improved, and the people were placed within easy communication with markets. But there was another matter to which he would allude very briefly. Had the House seriously addressed itself to the question why it was that the poverty of Ireland was so intense and distressing? The real answer to this was, that the wealth and produce of the country came over to England in the shape of taxes and rents to absentee landlords. While, in England, the taxation did not amount to 10 per cent of the income of the country, very nearly one-fourth of the whole income of Ireland went in taxation. They might talk of political economy and benevolent intentions; but was it not a scandal that while the income of Great Britain was £1,000,000,000, there were many hundreds of people in Ireland who, at some time of every year, lived upon boiled seaweed sprinkled with oatmeal? That went on from year to year; and he asked whether it was not the duty of our statesmen to grapple with a problem of the kind, and endeavour to raise the condition of those people. Were they to be told that the only thing that could be done was to clear them off the face of the land. It was impossible that this state of things could continue. They knew what the present condition of Ireland was. He had condemned with perfect sincerity what had occurred during the past two or three years, and the views he now expressed he had maintained from the first, having neither swerved from them nor gone beyond them. But he firmly believed that unless a different view of the Irish problem was taken than that which favoured the proposal to clear away the Irish population, no measures of repression would shelter this country from the inconveniences resulting from Irish disaffection. The good feelings of a people could not be aroused by treating them as stocks and stones. England, at the present moment, was employing a very large portion of its Army in Ireland; and they knew very well that it would be impossible for her to go to war, while that state of things continued, with any foreign nation. The man who prophesied that the distress in Ireland could be permanently removed by getting rid of a certain number of persons, and who, by means of the emigrant ship, would put out of sight this dreadful spectre of starvation and destitution, was no friend to this country. The friend of England was the man who would tell the naked truth, and that was that neither political disabilities nor questions of nationality were the causes of the difficulties with Ireland. The causes of these difficulties were to be summed up in the simple phrase—Empty stomachs and idle hands. If those hands were idle from causes over which the people had control—that was to say, if the people were wilfully idle—he would be the first to condemn them; but he knew well that the poor Irish cottier was one of the most hard working of God's creatures, and when he came over to this country to work in the way of trade or harvesting he presented a picture of self-denial and perseverance that was not to be met with amongst any other class. Let hon. Members consider how these men conducted themselves at harvest time in this country, and at such places as Jarrow, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and Liverpool, where they worked from morning till night for the smallest pay. It was only that evening that an hon. Member had said to him in conversation, when urging the desirability of giving something for the people to do in the shape of task-work—"I have seen the Irish labourer in our towns engaged in such work as digging out the foundations of buildings, and my heart has bled for them when I considered the kind of work they have to do for the merest pittance." These were the people who in England readily did hard work, but at home they had none to do. How could they till a soil that was saturated with water, and what hope had they from their flocks when they found that one-third of their value was lost in the cost of getting them to market? But the Government held out no hope that they would do anything for the starving population of the West. He had addressed the House in warm tones on this question. For the last two or three years these subjects had not been under discussion. They had had exciting political topics, and many matters had engaged their attention, the memory of which was not very sweet to him; but throughout all he had cherished the hope that his right hon. Friend, when he came into Office, and before making up his mind, would go to the West of Ireland and see for himself the state of things which existed there. But he had not done that; he had preferred to go on in the old way, getting his information from the old sources in Dublin. If this were continued he saw no hope of any amelioration of the people's distress. He concluded as he began, by stating that the land in the West of Ireland could be reclaimed economically, wisely, and profitably; and he repeated that until they did deal in some way with the land, upon which a certain residuum of the population must live, they could never hope to solve, in a satisfactory manner, the dreadful problem coming constantly before them.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I have no wish to prolong, except for a few moments, this very interesting debate; but I cannot refrain from making a few observations on the Motion before the House. In his closing words the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry) said the land of Ireland was capable of being reclaimed profitably, and he implied that it was the duty of the Government to attempt that work, which has not yet been successfully accomplished. I cannot help reminding the hon. Member that there exists on the Statute Book a positive obligation on the part of the State to advance, to any persons properly qualified and able to give sufficient security, money at a rate of interest considerably below that at which money can be borrowed for any other undertaking. It seems to me that this country have given an invitation to persons who, like the hon. Member himself, are interested in the prosperity of Ireland, if only they will undertake the task of doing that which they say will be profitable. There is a margin between the interest to be charged on that money, and the ordinary interest on money, which would give a profit to the hon. Gentleman if he and his friends will undertake the duty. The Resolution which the hon. and learned Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) has asked us to assent to is not in any sense a Party Resolution, nor is this a Party debate; but the House is asked to consider a question of the most vital importance concerning the interests of the people of Ireland. We are asked to consider what will be for their best interest; and, for my own part, I wish to put aside all considerations which usually enter into debates in this House, and, if it be possible to do so, to ask the House and the country to deliberate on the course which should be best for the distressed people of Ireland. I understand the hon. and learned Gentleman to object to emigration, because it is treating human beings as if they were economic realities. What are human beings but economic realities? How can we get rid of the fact that we are realities, and must be dealt with upon sound economical principles? The great fault in all our discussions has been that we have not been willing to look on the people of Ireland as if they were economic realities, but have discussed their condition with a great amount of sentiment, and I am afraid with an amount of Party feeling, which has deprived us of the power of looking upon them as economic realities. What we have desired to do has been to put these people in a position in which they ought to be, to maintain themselves as they ought to do, and to not only sustain themselves, but to discharge their duties to society as they ought to discharge them. The hon. and learned Member for Mayo says that it is impossible and we who know anything of the West of Ireland know that it is actually impossible, for the people who are located in the distressed districts to discharge the duties of human beings in the condition in which they are placed. We are all agreed that something must be done to lift them from that position; and the hon. and learned Member for Mayo proposes that there shall be a double process. He admits that emigration is desirable, and he distinctly recommends emigration; but the hon. Member for Galway declines to accept emigration.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY: I have always favoured emigration from congested districts; but I say it is not a permanent remedy. There are railways and drainage works.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I entirely admit that drainage and railway works are desirable; but why are not such works provided for these districts? Simply because there is no probable economic result. The hon. Member is acquainted with the ordinary ways of business; how is it he has not put himself at the head of some organization to set on foot railways and drainage which would yield a moderate profit, while providing occupation for the people and fix them on the land on which he desires that they should remain? There is no one in this House or in this country who would not desire to see the people now in Ireland actively and profitably employed, if proper and successful employment could be found for them. It is a painful necessity of the position in which we are placed that we should offer them an opportunity to emigrate to improve their position. I regard it as a misfortune that the sufferings of these people should render it expedient and desirable to offer emigration to them; but I feel that emigration is better than starvation. Emigration is, no doubt, a misfortune; but it is a misfortune which many English people have to face, and do face. The circumstances under which the people of Ireland at present exist are such as to render it expedient, and a matter of simple kindness to the people, to offer them that assistance which the hon. and learned Member for Mayo admits as necessary in regard to a certain portion of them. Then the question is—Is migration possible? The hon. and learned Member says there are 500,000 acres of land to which migration would be possible, and recommends that occupiers should be compulsorily expropriated, that this land should be acquired, and these cottiers placed on 20 acres of this poor land each, where they could obtain happiness and prosperity. I have some knowledge of this poor land, and I cannot imagine anything that would be more pitiful than to remove occupiers who have very little knowledge of farming from the West Coast of Ireland to 20 acres of bog land, or improvable land as it is called, which is only worth 5*s*. an acre. My own conviction is that we should only change a very bad condition for something which would be infinitely worse, and perpetuate the state of things to which attention has been called—a condition of things in which sub-division and increased poverty and misery must result. The hon. and learned Member for Mayo referred to one circumstance which certainly was alarming and saddening—namely, the great increase of sub-divisions in 1881, especially of holdings between five and 15 acres. I do not know whether his figures are strictly accurate; but if they are, the argument I should draw from them is that there exists an incurable disposition to sub-divide small holdings in Ireland; and if you transfer the people who have that inclination to poor and miserable holdings, with a perfect right to sub-divide, you will have in a few years a repetition, in a still worse form, of the distress and misery from which the people are now suffering. I trust the Resolution which the hon. and learned Member has moved will not be accepted by the House. It is one which I think cannot bring any hope of redress or security to Ireland; it will not heal the distress from which the people are suffering; and it will only postpone the evils which at present afflict that country.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I do not propose to enter into the general debate, nor do I rise to answer the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Mayo. My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland has stated generally the views of the Government; but I wish to call the attention of the House to the manner in which the vote will be taken. The noble Lord the Member for Barnstaple (Viscount Lymington) has moved an Amendment in two portions, and the first part is to leave out the words "migration and optional." It is our intention to vote with the noble Lord on the first part of the Amendment; but I do not thereby mean to convey—nor did my right hon. Friend mean to convey—that the Government are opposed, under all circumstances and conditions, to every plan of migration. That does not at all follow; but the hon. and learned Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) has proposed—and, I must say, in a speech of very great ability and moderation of tone—a plan of migration which is based on large public advances, with a thorough and complete re-imbursement. That being the basis of his proposal, my right hon. Friend has shown that, however well-intended re-imbursement might be, it would be impracticable. In the first place, the tenants could not bear it. The Lord Lieutenant could not, I believe, venture to tax them outside the area, for the purpose of making those inside the area pay the rents of certain occupied lands of the State; and if the Lord Lieutenant should so charge rents on the rates, I am afraid the temptation would be irresistible to the favoured occupiers to decline to pay the rents, when they knew that the rents would be paid from the public funds. I am bound to say there is another reason why we cannot accept the plan of migration. Although a large portion of the plan and the speech of the hon. and learned Member proceeded on an exposition of this method of making the resources of Ireland liable for re-imbursing this money, there is not a word of that in the Motion. Hon. Gentlemen who will consider the Motion will see that the Motion charges the entire liability on the funds of the State, but says not one word about replacing those funds. Therefore, not from any universal or pre-conceived hostility to plans of migration which, under other circumstances, I can conceive might be practicable, we must support the Amendment. I am sorry that we have not had an opportunity of considering all the Amendments which have been put on the Paper. I do not very often agree with the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar); but I must say I think there is a good deal of sense in the Amendment he has put on the Paper. My object is to explain to the hon. and learned Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) that we are obliged to vote against the introduction of the words "migration and optional" in his Motion, but that it is not out of any general hostility to every plan of the kind that we cannot accept the responsibility for or accept his plan.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, he thought the House would be in some difficulty if the proposal of the Government was accepted. He had come down to vote for the Motion; but after hearing the discussion he was not able to do so. If, however, the House divided on the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Barnstaple they would strike out a certain part of the Amendment, and then pledge themselves to deal with the distressed districts in Ireland in a manner which might not be agreeable to all, because they would pledge themselves to a plan of State emigration. It seemed to him that if the Government did not approve of the Motion in its entirety, much the simplest course would be for the noble Lord to withdraw his Amendment, and then the Government might move the Previous Question, and so enable the House to go to a direct vote.

Mr. DAWSON said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, with his very brief experience of the West of Ireland, had put himself at issue, not only with the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power), but with a Catholic Archbishop and four Catholic Bishops, whose dioceses were affected by this Motion. The Chief Secretary, instead of being guided by the views of these eminent ecclesiastics, who so well knew that part of the country, preferred to take his information, forsooth, from Mr. Ball Green and other officials, whose knowledge, compared with that of the personages to whom he had referred, must be extremely limited. Nothing was more disappointing to the people of Ireland than to find that when right hon. Gentlemen came over from England to govern them, they fell back for all their information on gentlemen of this kind—gentlemen of proved worth, no doubt, but, compared with the Archbishops and Bishops, of no importance, and of no experience in regard to the internal affairs of the Island. It was a great misfortune that the right hon. Gentleman had almost entirely ignored the opinion of those high ecclesiastics, and that he had almost retired from his own platform as a responsible Minister by putting to the fore the opinions of men whom nobody knew in Ireland, and who were only humble officials. The right hon. Gentleman had said that if they made the State the landlord and the rent collector there would never be any return—nothing would ever be paid. Well, they could only judge in such matters by the experience of the past. Whilst the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had been speaking, he (Mr. Dawson) had, as the House would remember, called his attention to a Church Body who had acquired land. That Body had got in the thin end of the wedge in this matter by advancing sums and giving credit to small tenants in Ireland. Could anyone show him a single one of the tenants who had been so treated who had not loyally met his responsibilities? He challenged the right hon. Gentleman, on the part of the people of Ireland, to point out a single case where these tenants had neglected to pay for their holdings. Were the Irish Members to tell the Chief Secretary to read the Cobden Papers—to tell him how small advances in Germany and Prussia had been made and repaid; were they to tell him that in those countries the very system advocated by the hon. and learned Member for Mayo had been carried out by means of the consolidated taxes of the country? Were they to tell him that the great land revolution in those countries had been worked out, and how, if he appreciated the importance of the statement, he could work out a similar reform in Ireland? But the right hon. Gentleman had said that a nation like Ireland could not buy the land, and had gone into statistics and figures upon the point—and everybody knew that statistics and figures could be made to prove anything. Well, he (Mr. Dawson) would give the right hon. Gentleman three points in proper order of time which might serve to alter his opinion on this matter. In the first place, the Society of Friends, after the Famine of 1846, had spent a great deal of money in reclaiming waste lands, and these had been secured by a well-to-do peasantry. The Devon Commission had referred to the reclamation of waste lands in Ireland, stating that the people had been supported on the mountain sides, that small sums had been advanced to them which they had paid back with interest; and they had become, as they reclaimed the land, respectable and well-to-do, instead of wretched and impoverished. He (Mr. Dawson) was sorry the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) was not in the House at this moment pursuing the *rôle* that he at one time affected—for the right hon. Gentleman was a member of the Society of Friends, who had recommended the plan which the right hon. Gentleman had put in practice in Ireland with benefit to the tenants and profit to those who had managed it. Then, again, would the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary tell him that he did not know that Mr. John Stuart Mill, in his work on Political Economy, had laid down abundant proofs of the profitable reclamation of land in Ireland—reclamations which had not been attended by a single loss to those who had made the advances? And, lastly, would the right hon. Gentleman tell him that he had not read the statements of Professor Baldwin? That gentleman had told them, in regard to Donegal, exactly what the Archbishops of the Province and the four Bishops had told them—namely, that there was an immense quantity of land in that district capable, not only of supplying the people with food, but of keeping them in plenty, if it were properly reclaimed and cultivated. Donegal was only half reclaimed, and Professor Baldwin told them that land, which years ago was only valued at 1*s.* an acre, was now worth 20*s.* and 25*s.* an acre, and was capable of supplying the people with comforts which before they knew little or nothing about. He (Mr. Dawson) was no sentimentalist, and should not advocate the keeping of the people in Ireland; and he should not complain so much if the Government could say that in this matter they had done all they could—if they could say—"We have developed Ireland all we can, and we find there is really a superabundant population." No false sympathy whatever would induce him to keep the people in their own land if it was not capable of supporting them; but he maintained that the evidence to which he had referred incontestably proved that there were millions of acres of land in Ireland capable of reclamation, and of supplying the means of support to the people. He believed the real reason why these lands were not reclaimed, and the capacity of the country for maintaining its population was not fully developed, was this—that the very moment they got anyone in Ireland who knew anything about the country, whose experience was considerable, and who had plenty of intelligence and knowledge of the country, he was drafted away and someone put in his place. They had an example of that just now in the Irish capital; a man who understood everything connected with his department was being drafted away, and some new apprentice was coming to try his hand at the work. The opinions of the Bishops were all set at nought in that House. The right hon. Gentleman told the House nothing, either from his own knowledge or on the authority of these Bishops; but he gave them all the information he received from Mr. Ball Green, or other raw recruits in the administration of Ireland. He would put it to the House, was it right for the Chief Secretary to put the opinion of such a man as that against the opinions of such high authorities in all matters concerning the condition of the country and the welfare of the people as he (Mr. Dawson) had mentioned? He asked the House, was it right for the right hon. Gentleman to put the opinions of these officials against what he might call National opinion in Ireland—was it right that the opinions of people who were paid for advising should be taken before those who had only the morality and well-being of the country at heart? His advice to the Irish people, through their Representatives in that House, would be that they should keep their money from the Post Office and from those banks in Ireland which sent their capital over to England to develop the resources of that country—if they kept their money from the payment of extravagant duties—if they kept their money from whisky, and, as the people of Northern Italy had done, restrained themselves for a time from luxuries—if they kept away from England that

£5,000,000 or £6,000,000 a-year which they sent over, and applied it to developing their internal resources, they would be doing more for the country and more for its industry and commerce than anything they could do by other means. He only hoped that the talent and earnestness and eloquence of the Party with which he was connected would be devoted to instructing the Irish people that every penny of money of theirs which crossed the Channel, in the shape of deposits in the banks and the payment of duties, went out, not to improve their position, but to advance the interests of Great Britain; and to show the people of Ireland that their duty was to keep their money at home for the forwarding of industrial, progressive, and reproductive measures. But, whatever they might do, it was not for a responsible Minister for Ireland to tell them, after the proofs they had received of reproductive reclamation, after what they had seen as the result of the action of the Society of Friends subsequent to the Famine, to tell them that the lesson they had never learnt was that a radical cure for the evils Ireland was suffering was emigration. The amelioration of the condition of Ireland was not to be found in that, nor by the adoption of terrible repressive measures such as they had passed in a few hours the other night. With regard to that measure, he did not blame them for passing it; but, while they only took a few hours to pass that Bill, a Bill, as he said, of a repressive and terrible character, which might be very questionable in its results, it took hours, and days, and weeks, and years of weary talk to induce them to adopt a policy which would tend more than anything else to secure a lasting peace in Ireland. Every decade was showing them a decreasing population in Ireland. Lord John Russell, when he introduced his Poor Laws, had said that the population of Ireland, which was then 8,000,000, was one which he would not say it could not support, but that it was a population which might increase and still be supported. Was it, then, for an administrator in 1883, in view of the large reduction that had taken place since the time of Lord John Russell, to say that it was only on a diminishing population that they could base the loyalty of the Irish people? Was it a prudent thing for this country to send 80,000, or 90,000, or 100,000 people a-year perforce across the Atlantic to the United States—and he said the United States, because everybody knew that Irish emigrants went there in preference to Canada? Was it a prudent thing to expatriate so many people forcibly? Who could sleep safely in his bed in this country threatened with such a course of conduct as that which they had to contemplate when they hurried through the Explosives Bill? Was it worth while, for the sake of keeping up a small minority in Ireland, to risk the expatriation, the defection of millions of the Irish people—to drive them from their own land, and sow the seeds of revenge in the breasts of millions of people in another land? No doubt, the problem was a grave one. For his own part, he had never advocated, either in that House or out of it, any but Constitutional measures. He had said, give the people a share in their own government; but he looked in vain for measures of that description. They were always postponed; and he saw in their place only a lot of useless measures of oppression hurried into law. He would suggest that the Government should say to the people—"Emigrate, or cultivate the land you have got." They should give the people the chance of cultivating the land of their own country—give them the opportunity, give them a chance, and then, if they preferred to emigrate, they would not leave their homes with heart-burnings, and with the fearful feelings of revenge which possessed so many of them now. It was extremely dangerous to tell the Irish people, as the right hon. Gentleman had done, and as he (Mr. Dawson) had heard him tell them with extreme sorrow, that the only possible answer that he had to give them in this matter was—"Emigrate, emigrate, disappear, disappear; and the more you go, the more you emigrate—the more you depopulate Ireland, the more prosperous will that country become." If that was what the right hon. Gentleman preached to the Irish people to produce permanent peace and prosperity, he would undertake to say that a more mistaken course was never followed by any English Minister.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that a considerable portion of the discussion had been occupied by hon. Members who had a very slight acquaintance with Irish affairs; and now, perhaps, an Irish Member, who did know something about Ireland, might be allowed to occupy a few moments. It had been proposed that the Amendment to the Motion should be withdrawn; but to that course the Irish Members objected. They should insist upon its being put to the House, because it pledged the Government to emigration pure and simple as a remedy for the ills of Ireland; because it was the only remedy the Government had to propose. It was all very well for the Prime Minister to say the Government objected to migration put forward in the form in which the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) had put it forward. The Government said they were ready to consider a scheme of migration, and such a scheme was now before them on the Books of the House in the Motion they were now debating. The Motion simply dealt with migration, and the plan the hon. and learned Gentleman had proposed was his own, to which he had definitely pledged himself. The Government put their foot down against it, and, by so doing, showed themselves opposed to migration in any form. Let them take the attitude of the Government as demonstrated in the speech of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, and was it not evident that the only plan they had to offer was emigration? If that were so, let them say it frankly—let them vote for the Amendment, or let that be the record of the opinion of the Government which should go forth to the people of Ireland. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, if it meant anything at all, meant that emigration was the only possible remedy for the distress in Ireland. [Mr. Gladstone dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman had said so distinctly, and it was all nonsense for the Prime Minister to shake his head at that proposition. When a right hon. Gentleman was declaring that it was with sorrow and distress that English Members found themselves compelled to agree to the emigration of the Irish people—when the right hon. Gentleman said that that was the feeling of every Member of that House—he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had cried out "No, no!" The right hon. Gentleman had turned on him, and repeated that he was expressing the real feelings of every Member of the House; and then he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had ventured, perhaps contrary to the Rules of the House, to interject in an interrogatory manner, when the right hon. Gentleman was referring to the numbers of people in this country in a state of distress—"Why don't you propose emigration for them?" There was not a city in England or in Scotland in which there were not tens of thousands who would be only too glad to go to New Zealand, America, or Canada, if the State would emigrate them. They were not so much attached to the aristocratic institutions of this country that they would not care to leave it if they had the opportunity. Had the Government more sympathy for distressed Ireland than they had for England or Scotland? Why did they not propose emigration for the people of England and Scotland? Because they did not want to get rid of them, and they did want to get rid of the Irish population. He was willing to admit there were a certain number of Englishmen who were awakening, at a late hour, to the wrongs and injustices of the people of Ireland. He was aware there were a certain number of Englishmen who considered the emigration of the Irish people a desirable thing from a pecuniary point of view. Even Lord Derby had said that a few millions of pounds spent on the people of Ireland would pay very well. The Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had been accused of cold-bloodedness; he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) accused him of levity. The right hon. Gentleman brought to the consideration of the question as clear and able a mind as other Members of the House did; but he spoke in one way and acted in another. The right hon. Gentleman was diffuse upon the want of economy in regard to the system of reclamation. He supposed the Chief Secretary could have told them that reclamation had been tried and failed in this country, and could have said—"See how many acres are going out of cultivation on account of the inclemency of the seasons and the severity of foreign competition." How was it that, with American competition the same in both cases, land was going out of cultivation here and not in Continental countries? The answer was plain. In foreign countries they had a small land system and small holdings, while here there was an unsound land system and large holdings. The right hon. Gentleman had quoted Sir Richard Griffith; but if he had gone to Madame Tussaud's and trotted one of the figures out as an authority on agriculture, it could not have been more antiquated an authority on the subject than Sir Richard Griffith. In Switzerland some holdings were as small as one acre, and the majority of the people were a great deal better off than the people of England; and yet the right hon. Gentleman quoted Sir Richard Griffith to show that 30 acres was the smallest holding upon which a man could live respectably. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) had asked why Companies did not take up the task of reclamation. The real reason was that there was no security and no tranquillity in Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] He was very glad to find himself for once at one with the Tory Party. He repeated, there was no peace and no security in Ireland. Did the House think there would ever be peace until the Government was placed on a better basis? And what would be a proper basis? A basis which was approved by the people. Did the English Government receive the approval of the people? Did it not meet with their constant and earnest, and sometimes violent protest? If there were a popular Government in Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary would not long remain in Office. He objected to the withdrawal of the Amendment of the noble Viscount (Viscount Lymington). The Motion of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. O'Connor Power) might have been assented to by the Government without any hesitation. They had not chosen to accede to it; and, therefore, he and his hon. Friends intended to force them to stand true to their principles.

Question put.

The House *divided:* — Ayes 33; Noes 99: Majority 66.—(Div. List, No. 54.)

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I now propose to put a negative upon the Resolution, because, if carried in its present shape, it would give a place and a sense to emigration which was not placed upon it in the speech of my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, and which never has been placed upon it by the Government. It would, moreover, involve the appointment of a Royal Commission on Emigration, which, in our opinion, would be inexpedient.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER said, after the division that had taken place, he did not propose to trouble the House to go to a division.

Main Question, as amended, put, and *negatived.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o:o:o—

PATENTS FOR INVENTIONS (No. 3) BILL.—[Bill 99.]

(*Mr. Anderson, Mr. Brown, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Hinde Palmer.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Mr. ANDERSON, in rising to move, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," said, he should explain that it was his intention to report Progress immediately the Bill went into Committee, because, in all probability, this Bill would not go any further, but would subsequently be withdrawn in favour of the Government measure, but not until that was further advanced. He wished to put the Bill more completely in the power of the House than it was at present; because, as the House was aware, any Bill which came from private Members was exposed to the action of one particular Member, and was not really under the control of the House, owing to the blocking Motions which he placed on the Paper.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Tuesday* 8th May.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Resolutions [April 9] *reported*, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That it be an *Instruction* to the Gentlemen appointed to prepare and bring in a Bill upon the Resolution reported from the Committee of the whole House upon Ways and Means on the 6th day of this instant April, and then agreed to by the House, that they do make provision therein, pursuant to the said Resolutions.

MOTION.

COMMONS.

Select Committee *appointed*, "to consider every Report made by the Inclosure Commissioners certifying the expediency of any Provisional Order for the inclosure or regulation of a Common, and presented to the House during the last or present Sessions, before a Bill be brought in for the confirmation of such Order."

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee, that they have power in respect to each such Provisional Order, to inquire and report to the House whether the same should be confirmed by Parliament, and, if so, whether with or without modification; and, in the event of their being of opinion that the same should not be confirmed, except subject to modifications, to report such modifications accordingly with a view to such Provisional Order being remitted to the Inclosure Commissioners.

Committee to consist of the following Members:—Sir HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON, Mr. ACLAND, Sir WALTER BARTTELOT, Mr. PELL, Mr. BROADHURST, Mr. BRYCE, Mr. RICHARD POWER; and Five Members to be nominated by the Committee of Selection:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records; Five to be the quorum.

House adjourned at a quarter before Two o'clock.

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LONDON: CORNELIUS BUCK, 22, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

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HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

VOLUME CCLXXVII.

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EXPLANATION OF THE ABBREVIATIONS.

In Bills, Read 1°, 2°, 3°, or 1ª, 2ª, 3ª, Read the First, Second, or Third Time.—In Speeches, 1R., 2R., 3R., Speech delivered on the First, Second, or Third Reading.—*Amendt.*, Amendment.—*Res.*, Resolution.—*Comm.*, Committee.—*Re-Comm.*, Re-Committal.—*Rep.*, Report.—*Consid.*, Consideration.—*Adj.*, Adjournment or Adjourned.—*cl.*, Clause.—*add. cl.*, Additional Clause.—*neg.*, Negatived.—*M. Q.*, Main Question.—*O. Q.*, Original Question.—*O. M.*, Original Motion.—*P. Q.*, Previous Question.—R. P., Report Progress.—*A.*, Ayes.—*N.*, Noes.—*M.*, Majority.—1*st. Div.*, 2*nd. Div.*, First or Second Division.—*l.*, Lords.—*c.*, Commons.

When in this Index a * is added to the Reading of a Bill, it indicates that no Debate took place upon that stage of the measure.

When in the Text or in the Index a Speech is marked thus *, it indicates that the Speech is reprinted from a Pamphlet or some authorized Report.

When in the Index a † is prefixed to a Name or an Office (the Member having accepted or vacated office during the Session) and to Subjects of Debate thereunder, it indicates that the Speeches on those Subjects were delivered in the speaker's private or official character, as the case may be.

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Africa (South)—Affairs in the Transvaal—Policy of Her Majesty's Government

Moved, "That, in view of the complicity of the Transvaal Government in the cruel and treacherous attacks made upon the Chiefs Montsioa and Mankoroane, this House is of opinion that energetic steps should be immediately taken to secure the strict observance by the Transvaal Government of the Convention of 1881, so that these chiefs may be preserved from the destruction with which they are threatened" (*Mr. Gorst*) *Mar* 13, 413

Amendt. To leave out from "The," add "very grave complication that must attend intervention in the affairs of the native populations on the Western Frontier of the Transvaal, this House is of opinion

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that the action of British authorities in those regions should be strictly confined within the limits of absolutely unavoidable obligations" (*Mr. Cartwright*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. W. E. Forster*); after further short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned

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Africa (West Coast) (The River Congo)—Proceedings of Portugal

Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *Mar* 19, 813

Africa (West Coast) (The River Congo)

Moved, "That, in the interests of civilisation and Commerce in South West Africa, this House is of opinion that no Treaty should be made by Her Majesty's Government that would sanction the annexation by any Power of territories on or adjacent to the Congo, or that would interfere with the freedom hitherto enjoyed by all civilising and Commercial agencies at work in those regions" (*Mr. Jacob Bright*) *April* 3, 1284

Amendt. to leave out from "Government," add "affecting territories on or adjacent to the Congo that would compromise any engagement into which Her Majesty may heretofore have entered, or would not afford adequate securities to all the civilising and Commercial agencies at work in those regions" (*Mr. Wodehouse*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Amendt. withdrawn; Motion withdrawn

Resolved, "That, in the interests of civilisation and Commerce in South West Africa, this House is of opinion that no Treaty should be made by Her Majesty's Government affecting territories on or adjacent to the Congo that would compromise any engagement into which Her Majesty may heretofore have entered, or would not afford adequate securities to all the civilising and Commercial agencies at work in those regions" (*Mr. Wodehouse*)

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(*Mr. Heneage, Mr. Duckham, Mr. Foljambe, Mr. Gurdon, Mr. Mellor*)

c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 13, 446; after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Viscount Emlyn*); Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned

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c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 16 [Bill 123]
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Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "this House will, upon this day six months, resolve itself into the said Committee" (*Mr. Sexton*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn
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Considered, after short debate *April* 6, 1715
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3°;" after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Onslow*); Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned
Read 3° * *April* 9
l. Read 1ª * (*Earl of Morley*) *April* 10 (No. 25)

Army* (*Auxiliary Forces*)—*The Militia
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Return, showing the loss in numbers occasioned to Militia battalions trained at the brigade depôts under the new system compared with those Militia battalions detached from depôts, and, in consequence, permitted to train as heretofore" (*The Earl of Galloway*) *Mar* 15, 527; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

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c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 19, 912; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*); after short debate, Question put; A. 41, N. 76; M. 35 (D. L. 39)

Original Question again proposed, 917; after short debate, Debate adjourned

Question, Mr. Onslow; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 20, 944

Debate resumed *April* 6, 1723; after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Warton*); after further short debate, Question put; A. 41, N. 74; M. 33 (D. L. 53)

Original Question again proposed, 1731; Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Onslow*); after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Original Question again proposed; Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 5]

Bankruptcy Bill (*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Solicitor General, Mr. John Holms*)

c. *Official Receivers*, Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *Mar* 12, 197

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 19, 816

Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "this House, while anxious to remedy the proved defects in the existing Law and practice in Bankruptcy, is not prepared to entrust the powers proposed in the Bill to any department of the Government" (*Mr. Stanhope*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Tomlinson*); after further short debate, Question put; A. 45, N. 89; M. 44 (D. L. 38)

Original Question again proposed, 908; after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn; Bill read 2°; further Proceedings after 2R. deferred [Bill 4]

Order read, for resuming Further Proceedings after 2R. *Mar* 20, 962

Moved, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures"

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Bankruptcy Bill—cont.

Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "in the absence of any definite regulations for the transaction of public business by the Standing Committees, it is inexpedient to transfer to those bodies the jurisdiction hitherto exercised over Public Bills by Committees of the Whole House" (*Mr. Raikes*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Main Question again proposed, 986; after short debate, main Question put, and agreed to; Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures

Ordered, That the Committee do sit and proceed on Monday 9th April, at Twelve of the clock.

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c. Considered in Committee *Mar* 29, 1102

Moved, "That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of compensation to persons whose office may be abolished, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to amend and consolidate the Law of Bankruptcy;" Resolution agreed to

Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Carbutt; Answers, Mr. Chamberlain *April* 2, 1178

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Moved, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution;" after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Captain Aylmer*); after further short debate, Motion withdrawn

Original Question put; A. 70, N. 13; M. 57 (D. L. 47)

Bankruptcy (No. 2) Bill
(*Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Baring, Mr. Davey, Mr. Samuel Morley, Mr. Whitley*)

c. Read 2° *Mar* 19, 922 [Bill 82]

Order for Committee read; Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" *Mar* 20, 988; after short debate, Question put; A. 65, N. 55; M. 10 (D. L. 42); Committee—R.P.

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(*Mr. Richard Martin, Mr. Magniac, Mr. Buxton*)
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Cartwright, Mr. W. C., *Oxfordshire*
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  Contempts of Court, 2R. 1609, 1617
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  Representative Peers (Scotland) Election Procedure, 685; 2R. 1962, 1963
  Stolen Goods Bill, 1882, 143

Channel Tunnel—The Joint Committee
 COMMONS
  Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 29, 994
  Moved, "That a Committee of Five Members of this House be appointed to join with a Committee of the House of Lords, to inquire whether it is expedient that Parliamentary sanction should be given to a submarine communication between England and France; and to consider whether any or what conditions should be imposed by Parliament in the event of such communication being sanctioned" (*Mr. Chamberlain*) *April* 3, 1363

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Channel Tunnel—The Joint Committee—Commons—cont.
Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "before entering upon the questions whether it is expedient that Parliamentary sanction should be given to the establishment of submarine communication between England and France, and upon what conditions (if any) such sanction should be granted, it is desirable that the House should be put in possession of the views of Her Majesty's Government on these subjects" (*Sir Stafford Northcote*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 106, N. 74; M. 32 (D. L. 49)
Main Question put; A. 106, N. 72; M. 34 (D. L. 50)
Moved, "That the Correspondence with reference to the proposed construction of a Channel Tunnel, presented to Parliament in 1882, be referred to the Committee" (*Mr. Chamberlain*); Motion agreed to
Message to the Lords

Lords
Message from the Commons *April* 5, 1449
Message considered *April* 6, 1621
Moved, "That a Committee of five Lords be appointed to join with the Committee appointed by the House of Commons, as mentioned in the said Message, to inquire whether it is expedient that Parliamentary sanction should be given to a submarine communication between England and France; and to consider whether any or what conditions should be imposed by Parliament in the event of such communication being sanctioned" (*The Lord Sudeley*); after short debate, Motion agreed to
Message to the Commons *April* 9, 1733

Chaplin, Mr. H., *Lincolnshire, Mid*
Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment, 2R. Amendt. 464

Chelmsford, Lord
Army—Line Battalions—Training of Men as Mounted Infantry, 1468

Childers, Right Hon. H. C. E. (*see* Chancellor of the Exchequer)

China—The Chefoo Convention
Question, Mr. Alderman Cotton; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *April* 6, 1633
[See title *Opium Duties* (*China*)]

Churchill, Lord R. H. S., *Woodstock*
Africa (South)—Transvaal—Policy of H.M. Government, Res. 748
Army (Annual), Consid. 1715
Bankruptcy, 2R. 970
Egypt—Rumoured New Loan, 931
Factories Acts—Salaries of Inspectors, 1166, 1167
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Church of England—Training Colleges—Admission of Dissenters
Question, Mr. Morgan Lloyd; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *April* 3, 1275

Civil Service
The Census Department, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Courtney *April* 2, 1161
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The Playfair Scheme, Question, Mr. Puleston; Answer, Mr. Courtney *April* 2, 1159

Clarke, Mr. E. G., *Plymouth*
Bankruptcy, 2R. 875
Court of Criminal Appeal, 2R. 1216, 1218, 1245

Clive, Colonel Hon. G. W., *Ludlow*
Army—Infantry Colonels, 784

Colchester, Lord
Education—Higher Board Schools, Motion for a Select Committee, 664

Coleridge, Lord
Contempts of Court, 2R. 1614
Law and Justice (Ireland)—"Regina *v.* Matthew Smyth," 671

Collings, Mr. J., *Ipswich*
National Expenditure, Res. Amendt. 1678, 1679
Parliament—Public Business, 807

Collins, Mr. E., *Kinsale*
Navy—Marine Pensioners—Auxiliary Forces, 1273
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Colonial Defences—Report of the Royal Commission
Question, Mr. A. F. Egerton; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *April* 6, 1639

Colthurst, Col. D. La Zouche, *Cork Co.*
Distress (Ireland), Res. 2014

Commons
Select Committee appointed; List of the Committee *April* 10, 2053

Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill
(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney*)
c. Resolution in Committee *Mar* 10
Resolution reported, and, after short debate, agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1°* *Mar* 12, 309
Read 2°* *Mar* 13
Committee*; Report *Mar* 14
Considered * *Mar* 15
Read 3°* *Mar* 16
l. Read 1ª* (*The Earl Granville*) *Mar* 16
Read 2ª*; Committee negatived; read 3ª *Mar* 19
Royal Assent *Mar* 20 [46 *Vict.* c. 2]

Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill
(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney*)
c. Resolution in Committee *Mar* 15
Resolution reported, and agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1°* *Mar* 16
Read 2°* *Mar* 19
Committee*; Report *Mar* 20
Read 3°* *Mar* 29
l. Read 1ª* (*The Earl Granville*) *April* 3
Read 2ª* *April* 5
Committee*; Report *April* 6
Read 3ª* *April* 9
Royal Assent *April* 10 [46 *Vict.* c. 5]

Consolidated Fund, &c. (Permanent Charges Redemption) Act (1873) Amendment Bill
(*The Lord Thurlow*)
l. Royal Assent *Mar* 20 [46 *Vict.* c. 1]

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts
Disinfection of Hides and Offal of Animals Slaughtered under the Acts, Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Dodson *April* 9, 1819
Foot-and-Mouth Disease, Question, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answer, Mr. Mundella *Mar* 16, 696

Contempts of Court Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Chancellor*)
l. Read 2ª, after short debate *April* 6, 1609 (No. 15)

Coope, Mr. O. E., ***Middlesex***
Science and Art Museum (Dublin), 370, 1276, 1277

Corbet, Mr. W. J., ***Wicklow Co.***
Ireland—Questions
Poor Law—Industrial Instruction of Pauper Children, 550, 799;—M'Mahon Eviction Case, 791
Prisons—Murder at Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum, 694;—The Inquest, 798
Public Health Act, 1878, 41 & 42 Vic. c. 52, s. 149—Infectious Diseases—Case of Bartholomew Roe, 364, 693;—Outbreak of Fever in Dublin, 798
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Cottesloe, Lord
Payment of Wages in Public Houses Prohibition, Comm. *cl.* 3, 315

Cotton, Mr. Alderman W. J. R., ***London***
China—Chefoo Convention, 1633
Straits Settlements—Opium Smuggling, 1632

Courtney, Mr. L. H. (Financial Secretary to the Treasury), ***Liskeard***
Civil Service—Census Department, 1161
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Government Annuities and Assurance Act, 1882—The Tables, 1966
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Labourers' Cottages—Lord Crichton's Committee, 1274
Land Commission and the Board of Works —Loans for Labourers' Cottages, 1160
Land Law Act, 1881—Sec. 31.—Loans, 209;—Practice of the Board of Works, 1160
National School Teachers' Pension Fund—Annual Statement, 1820
Science and Art Museum (Dublin), 370, 1276, 1277
Law and Justice—Secretary of the Master of the Rolls, 1639
Metropolitan District Railway—Ventilating Shafts on the Thames Embankment, 1178
National Expenditure, Res. 1713, 1714
Stamp Duties—Marine Insurance, 1502
Supply—Civil Contingencies Fund, 128, 130, 132
Trade and Commerce—Customs Dues in Cork, 1491
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 1585, 1912

Court of Criminal Appeal Bill
(*Mr. Attorney General, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Solicitor General*)
c. Questions, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Hopwood; Answers, The Attorney General *Mar* 13, 366; Question, Mr. Warton; Answer, The Attorney General *Mar* 19, 814
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 2, 1181
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Sir Hardinge Giffard*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after long debate, Question put; A. 132, N. 78; M. 54 (D. L. 46)
Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 9]
Moved, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure," 1244; after further short debate, Question put, and agreed to

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Court of Criminal Appeal Bill—cont.
Ordered, That the Committee do sit and proceed on Thursday 12th April, at Twelve of the clock

Cowen, Mr. J., *Newcastle-on-Tyne*
Bankruptcy, 2R. 852
Explosive Substances, Comm. *cl.* 5, Amendt. 1863
Parliament—Business of the House—Easter Recess, 564
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Spain—Expulsion of certain Cuban Refugees from Gibraltar, 189
Supply—Royal Palaces, 1054
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Cranbrook, Viscount
Africa (South)—Transvaal—Policy of H.M. Government, 315, 323
Army (Auxiliary Forces)—The Militia, Motion for an Address, 537
East India — Code of Criminal Procedure (Native Jurisdiction over British Subjects), 1767, 1772, 1790, 1793
Explosive Substances, 1R. 1811
Law and Justice (Ireland)—"Regina *v.* Matthew Smyth," 671
Medical Act Amendment, 2R. 1459

Criminal Code (Indictable Offences Procedure) and Court of Criminal Appeal Bills
Questions, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answers, The Attorney General, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 19, 813

Criminal Law
Case of Thomas Perryman, Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *April* 2, 1155
Conviction for announcing a Religious Service, Question, Mr. Illingworth; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 12, 201
The Convicts Hardwick and Walford, Questions, Mr. Burt, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answers, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 19, 780

Cropper, Mr. J., *Kendal*
Africa (South)—Transvaal and Bechuanaland, 926
Transvaal—Supplies of Ammunition, 1636, 1637, 1638
Bankruptcy, 2R. 904
Madagascar—Security of British Residents, 1832

Cross, Right Hon. Sir R. A., *Lancashire, S.W.*
Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Acts—New Schemes of the Metropolitan Board of Works, 1812, 1971
Ballot Act Continuance and Amendment, 2R. 917

Cross, Right Hon. Sir R. A.—*cont.*
Bankruptcy, 2R. 907, 912, 969
Channel Tunnel—Joint Committee, Res. 1376
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Crown Lands Bill
(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Herbert Gladstone*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Mar* 15 [Bill 122]
Read 2° * *April* 5

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Cruelty to Animals Acts Amendment Bill (*Mr. Anderson, Sir Frederick Milbank, Mr. Samuel Morley, Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Passmore Edwards, Mr. Buchanan*)
c. Committee*; Report *Mar* 13 [Bills 13-118]

Cyprus, Island of—The Currency Proclamation of 3rd *May*, 1882
Observations, Lord Stanley of Alderley; Reply, The Earl of Derby *April* 5, 1465

Dalrymple, Mr. C., *Buteshire*
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Question, Mr. Cartwright; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *April* 9, 1827

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Africa (South)—Transvaal—Policy of H.M. Government, Res. 426

Dawson, Mr. C., *Carlow*
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Dilke, Right Hon. Sir C. W. (President of the Local Government Board), *Chelsea, &c.*
Africa (River Congo), Res. 1332
Ballot Act Continuance and Amendment, 2R. 912, 917, 944, 1726, 1733
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Dominion of Canada—Regulations as to the Emigration of Pauper Children from England, 1481
Municipal Corporations (Unreformed), Comm. Motion for Adjournment, 1248, 1253, 1254
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Dillwyn, Mr. L. L., *Swansea*
Africa (South)—Zululand, 1168
Mercantile Marine—Increase of Scurvy—Mr. Gray's Report, 795
Parliament—Business of the House—"Counts out," Res. 1976
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Distress Law Amendment Bill
(*Sir Henry Holland, Mr. Heneage, Sir Walter Barttelot, Mr. Cropper, Sir Joseph Pease*)
c. Read 2°, after short debate *Mar* 12, 313 [Bill 44]

Dixon-Hartland, Mr. F. D., *Evesham*
Bankruptcy, 2R. 843
Heligoland—Erection of a Breakwater, 1639
Parliament—Business of the House, 218

Dodds, Mr. J., *Stockton*
Mercantile Marine—Harbour Accommodation on the East Coast, Motion for a Select Committee, 407
Warrington Tramways, 2R. 1474
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Dodson, Right Hon. J. G. (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster), *Scarborough*
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Foot-and-Mouth Disease—Disinfection of Hides and Offal of Animals Slaughtered under the Acts, 1819

DUCKHAM, Mr. T., *Herefordshire*
Distress Law Amendment, 2R. 313

ECROYD, Mr. W. F., *Preston*
United States—Revised Tariff, 362

Education—Higher Board Schools
Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working of the higher schools now being established by several school boards in England" (*The Lord Norton*) *Mar* 16, 654; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

EGERTON, Admiral Hon. F., *Derbyshire, E.*
North Metropolitan Tramways, 2R. 358
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EGERTON, Hon. A. F., *Wigan*
Colonial Defences—Report of the Royal Commission, 1639
Mercantile Marine—Harbour Accommodation on the East Coast, Motion for a Select Committee, 398
Navy Estimates—Sea and Coastguard Services, 634

Egypt (Military Expedition)—Mission of the Late Professor Palmer
Questions, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Mar* 12, 210
Moved, "That there be laid before this House papers and correspondence respecting Professor Palmer's Expedition" (*The Lord Wentworth*) *Mar* 16, 672; after short debate, on Question? resolved in the negative

Egypt
COMMONS (*Questions*)
Finance, &c.
Questions, Sir George Campbell, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *April* 5, 1489
The New Loans, Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Buxton, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 20, 929; Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *April* 5, 1479; Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *April* 9, 1826

Military Expedition
Army Medical Department—Medals for Nursing Sisters, Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *Mar* 12, 213; Question, Mr. Greer; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *April* 5, 1483
Glanders, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *Mar* 13, 360
Purchase of Camels, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Mr. Brand *Mar* 16, 697
Purchase of Mules, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Mr. Brand *Mar* 30, 1106

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Egypt—COMMONS—*cont.*
Re-organization
The Earl of Dufferin's Despatch—Proposed Reforms, Question, Sir William Hart Dyke; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *Mar* 13, 376; Questions, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Mr. Bourke; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *April* 2, 1164; Question, Mr. Bourke; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *April* 5, 1478; Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Mr. Gladstone, 1504; Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 9, 1837
Sir Auckland Colvin, Question, Captain Aylmer; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *Mar* 19, 780

Army Re-organization
British Officers, Question, Mr. M'Coan; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *Mar* 12, 208
Case of Colonel Dulier, Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. A. Elliot; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *Mar* 19, 778

Criminal Law — Prisoners, Question, Mr. Bourke; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *April* 5, 1477
The Cattle Plague, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross *Mar* 19, 809; Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Sir Arthur Hayter *Mar* 30, 1106
Arabi Pasha, Question, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *April* 5, 1501;—*Conditions of Detention at Ceylon*, Question, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *April* 6, 1640

Elementary Education Provisional Orders Confirmation (Cummersdale, &c.) Bill
[H.L.] (*The Lord President*)
l. Presented; read 1ª*, and referred to the Examiners *April* 6 (No. 23)

ELLIOT, Hon. A. R. D., *Roxburgh*
Egypt—Colonel Dulier, Case of, 779
Parliamentary Reform, Res. 1133, 1142

ELPHINSTONE, Lord
Representative Peers (Scotland), 2R. 1942, 1943

EMLYN, Viscount, *Carmarthenshire*
Agricultural Holdings (No. 2), 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 448
Parliament—Order—Prints of Bills, 805

EWART, Mr. W., *Belfast*
Distress (Ireland), Res. 2014

Exeter, Teign Valley, and Chagford Railway Bill (by Order)
c. Read 2° *Mar* 13, 350

Explosive Substances Bill
(*Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Solicitor General*)
c. *Seizure of Explosives—Legislation*, Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Sclater-Booth; Answers, Sir William Harcourt *April* 5, 1505
Legislation, Notice of Bill, Observations, Sir William Harcourt *April* 6, 1642
Motion for Leave (*Sir William Harcourt*) *April* 9, 1841; after short debate, Motion agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1° *; read 2°; Committee; Report; read 3°
l. Brought from the Commons *April* 9, 1802
Moved, "That Standing Order No. XLIX., that no motion for making or dispensing with a Standing Order be made without notice, be now read;" The same was read accordingly
Then it was moved, "That Standing Order No. XXXV., that no two stages of a Bill be taken on one day, be now read;" The same was read accordingly
Then it was moved to resolve, "That it is the opinion of this House that it is essentially necessary for the public safety that the Bill this day brought from the House of Commons, intituled 'An Act to amend the law relating to explosive substances,' should forthwith be proceeded in with all possible despatch, and that notwithstanding Standing Orders Nos. XLIX. and XXXV. the Lord Chancellor ought forthwith to put the question upon every stage of the said Bill in which this House shall think it necessary for the public safety to proceed therein" (*The Earl of Kimberley*); after short debate, on question, agreed to, and resolved accordingly; Bill read 1ª (No. 24); read 2ª; Committee; read 3ª
Royal Assent *April* 10 [46 *Vict.* c. 3]

Explosives Act, 1875—*Storage of Gunpowder in Ireland*
Questions, Colonel King-Harman; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *April* 10, 1969

Factories Acts—Salaries of Inspectors
Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *April* 2, 1166

FARQUHARSON, Dr. R., *Aberdeenshire, W.*
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FAWCETT, Right Hon. H. (Postmaster General), *Hackney*
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Postal Orders to the Colonies, 1818
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Fiji—The Land Question
Question, Sir Henry Holland; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *April* 2, 1154

FIRTH, Mr. J. F. B., *Chelsea*
Great Eastern Railway (High Beech Extension), 2R. 175
North Metropolitan Tramways, 2R. 354
Supply—Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, 1080

Fisheries (East Coast)—Loss of Fishing Smacks
Question, Mr. Norwood; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *April* 5, 1501; Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, Mr. J. Holms *April* 6, 1631

FITZGERALD, Lord
Contempts of Court, 2R. 1611
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Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland), Comm. *cl.* 2, 773

FITZMAURICE, Lord E. G. P. (Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs), *Calne*
Africa (West Coast) (River Congo)—Proceedings of Portugal, 814
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Asia (Central)—Russian Advance, 1153, 1154
China—Chefoo Convention, 1633
Danubian Conference, 1827
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Egypt—Questions
Arabi Pasha, 1501;—Conditions of Detention at Ceylon, 1640
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  - Arrival of a French Squadron, 204, 370
  - French Claims respecting the North-West Coast, 936 ;—Yellow Book, 1155, 1490
  - Reported Blockade by France, 1167
  - Rumoured Application of the Queen for Mediation and Protection against French Aggression, 800, 801
  - Security of British Residents, 1832
- Morocco—Ill-treatment of Jewesses, 559
- Opium Duties (China), Motion for an Address, 1351
- Russia—Coronation of the Czar, 992 ;—Expenses of the Special Embassy, 1479
- Spain—Questions
  - Cortes—Presenting of Correspondence with England, 793
  - Expulsion of certain Cuban Refugees from Gibraltar, 189, 363 ; Motion for Adjournment, 946 ;—The Papers, 994, 1107, 1828
  - Steamships "Leon XIII." and "Tangier"—Papers, 1497
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- Treaty of Washington—"Alabama" Claims, 541, 1275
- Turkey—Asiatic Provinces—Governorship of the Lebanon, 1827
  - Disorders in Upper Macedonia, 550
- United States—Revised Tariff, 363

FLETCHER, Sir H., *Horsham*
- Army (Annual), 3R. 1717, 1720
- Army Estimates, 1883-4—Land Forces, 289
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FOLKESTONE, Viscount, *Wilts, S.*
- Africa (South)—Transvaal—Native Hostilities—Use of Dynamite, 1635
- Army (India)—Musketry Returns, 696
- Public Offices—Explosions at the Local Government Board and at the "Times" Office, 653
- Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 651

Foreign Affairs—Policy of Her Majesty's Government—Treaty of 1879 *between Germany and Austria*
- Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Copy of the Treaty formed between Germany and Austria in 1879" (*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*) *Mar* 19, 756; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

FORSTER, Right Hon. W. E., *Bradford*
- Africa (River Congo), Res. 1330
- Africa (South)—Transvaal—Policy of H.M. Government, Res. Motion for Adjournment, 445, 703, 715, 716, 719, 727
- Parliament—Business of the House, 374
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FOWLER, Mr. H. H., *Wolverhampton*
- Army Estimates, 1883-4—Land Forces, 303
- Bankruptcy, 2R. 862
- Inland Postal Telegrams, Res. 1021
- Law and Justice—Secretary of the Master of the Rolls, 1638
- National Expenditure, Res. 1654
- Parliament—Business of the House—Debate on the Transvaal, 941
- Supply—Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, Amendt. 1077, 1094

FOWLER, Mr. R. N., *London*
- Africa (South)—Transvaal—Policy of H.M. Government, Res. 421, 442
- Ballot Act Continuance and Amendment, 2R. 1731, 1733
- Bankruptcy, 2R. 899
- Great Eastern Railway (High Beech Extension), 2R. 168
- Opium Duties (China), Motion for an Address, 1360
- Payment of Wages in Public Houses Prohibition, 2R. 1104
- Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 646
  - Royal Palaces, 1048, 1053
- Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 1584, 1585, 1904

FOWLER, Mr. W., *Cambridge*
- Bankruptcy, 2R. 900
- Inland Postal Telegrams, Res. 1018
- National Expenditure, Res. 1698

France — Commercial Negotiations with France—Bounties on Shipping
- Question, Mr. Charles Palmer ; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *Mar* 19, 801

Free Libraries Bill

(*Mr. Hopwood, Mr. Birley, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Slagg, Mr. Summers*)

c. 2R., debate adjourned *Mar* 14, 515 [Bill 85]

FRESHFIELD, Mr. C. K., *Dover*
- Mercantile Marine—Harbour Accommodation on the East Coast, Motion for a Select Committee, 409

Friendly and Industrial Societies Law Amendment Bill

(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Burt, Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Northcote*)

c. Ordered ; read 1°* *Mar* 12 [Bill 117]

Friendly Societies Act, 1875—*The Chief Registrar's Return*
- Question, Mr. Acland ; Answer, Mr. Herbert Gladstone *Mar* 16, 698

GALLOWAY, Earl of
Army (Auxiliary Forces)—The Militia, Motion for an Address, 527, 539
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The Anchorage Ground, Questions, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *Mar* 15, 544
[See title *Spain—Expulsion of certain Cuban Refugees*]

GIBSON, Right Hon. E., *Dublin University*
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Law and Justice—Law Advisers of the Crown, 1153
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GIFFARD, Sir H. S., *Launceston*
Bankruptcy, 2R. 883
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GLADSTONE, Right Hon. W. E. (First Lord of the Treasury), *Edinburghshire*
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GLADSTONE, Mr. H. J. (Commissioner of the Treasury), *Leeds*
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Glebe Loans (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill (*Mr. Errington, Mr. Corry, Viscount Lymington*)
c. Ordered; read 1º* *April* 6 [Bill 136]

Glebe Loans (Ireland) Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill
(*Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Herbert Gladstone*)
c. Ordered; read 1º* *April* 9 [Bill 138]

Goldney, Sir G., *Chippenham*
Public Expenditure — Redemption of the National Debt, Res. 1867

Gordon, General Hon. Sir A. H. *Aberdeenshire, E.*
Mercantile Marine—Harbour Accommodation on the East Coast, Motion for a Select Committee, 410
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Gorst, Mr. J. E., *Chatham*
Africa (South)—Transvaal—Questions
  Affairs in, 218
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Gourley, Mr. E. T., *Sunderland*
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Government Annuities and Assurance Act, 1882—*The Tables*
Question, Viscount Lymington; Answer, Mr. Courtney *April* 10, 1965

Grant, Mr. A., *Leith, &c.*
Scotland—Destitution in the Highlands and Islands, 1633

Grant, Mr. D., *Marylebone*
Licensing Acts—Off-Licensing—Beer Licences, 1277

Grantham, Mr. W., *Surrey, E.*
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Granville, Earl (Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs)
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Gray, Mr. E. D., *Carlow Co.*
Ireland—Prisons—Compensation to Prison Officials, 937

Great Eastern Railway (High Beech Extension) Bill (by Order)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Lord Claud Hamilton*) *Mar* 12, 159
Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "this House, while expressing no opinion as to the propriety of making a Railway to High Beech, disapproves of any scheme which involves the taking for the purposes of a Railway of any part of the surface of Epping Forest, which, by 'The Epping Forest Act, 1878,' was directed to be 'kept at all times unenclosed and unbuilt on as an open space for the enjoyment of the public" (*Mr. Bryce*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 82, N. 230; M. 148 (D. L. 31); Question proposed, "That those words be there added"
Words added; main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to

Greenwich Hospital School
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Moved, "That the chronic distress prevailing in certain congested parts of Ireland can be most safely and efficaciously relieved by a judicious and economic system of migration and optional emigration, together with a consolidation of the holdings from which tenants are removed; that, in the present condition of Ireland, such a scheme can be successfully carried out only by a Government Commission, with certain statutory powers, including those of purchase and sale; and, in the opinion of this House, this is a subject which demands the serious attention of Her Majesty's Government, with a view to early legislation" (*Mr. O'Connor Power*) *April* 10, 1984

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l. Read 1ª * (*Lord Rosebery*) *April* 10 (No. 26)

Land Law (*Ireland*) *Act*, 1881—*Sec.* 31
Loans, Questions, Mr. O'Connor Power, Mr. Parnell; Answers, Mr. Courtney *Mar* 12, 209
Erection of Labourers' Cottages, Questions, Lord John Manners; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 15, 554
Applications for Loans, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 20, 935
Practice of the Board of Works, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Courtney *April* 2, 1159

Land Law (*Ireland*) *Act*, 1881—*The Irish Land Commission*
Question, Lord Oranmore and Browne; Answer, Lord Carlingford *April* 5, 1449
Appeals, Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *April* 2, 1168
County Down Sub-Commission, Question, Mr. O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 15, 563
Judicial Rents—Returns, Question, Mr. Parnell; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 12, 207
Loans for Labourers' Cottages, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Courtney *April* 2, 1160
Return of Voluntary Agreements, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *April* 9, 1831
Sales to Tenants, Questions, Colonel King-Harman, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland *Mar* 15, 554
The Irish Land Court—Appeals from Donegal, Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 19, 799
The Land Commission Court, Merrion Square, Question, Mr. Gibson; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 20, 927
The Sub-Commissioners — Mr. Peter Fitzpatrick, Questions, Mr. Tottenham, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *April* 2, 1164

Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment Bill (*Mr. Parnell, Mr. Healy, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Lalor*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 14, 450
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Chaplin*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after long debate, Question put: A. 63, N. 250; M. 187
Div. List, A. and N. 507
Words added; main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to; 2R. put off [Bill 14]

Land Registry, Office of—Registration of Estates, 1882
Question, Mr. Arthur Arnold; Answer, Mr. Herbert Gladstone *Mar* 29, 992

Lansdowne, Marquess of
Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland), Comm. *cl.* 2, 773

Law and Justice (*England and Wales*) (*Questions*)
County Courts—Assistant Bailiffs, Question, Mr. Stewart Macliver; Answer, Mr. Herbert Gladstone *Mar* 15, 546
High Court of Justice—The Mastership of the Rolls, Questions, Mr. Gregory, Mr. M'Coan; Answers, The Attorney General *Mar* 30, 1108
The Secretary of the Master of the Rolls, Question, Mr. H. H. Fowler; Answer, Mr. Courtney *April* 6, 1638
Judicature Amendment Act, 1875—*The Judges' Rules—Jurisdiction of English High Courts over Domiciled Scotchmen*, Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, The Lord Advocate *Mar* 15, 541

[*cont.*

Law and Justice (England and Wales)—cont.
- *Judicial Inquiry into Crime, or Alleged Crime, where no Person apprehended*, Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *April* 3, 1278
- *Police Inquiries into Indictable Offences*, Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *April* 6, 1634
- *Prisons (England)—Flogging Escaped Prisoners*, Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 19, 782
- *Protection of Juvenile Morals—Legislation*, Question, Mr. Tomlinson; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 19, 782

Law and Police (Questions)
- *Interrogation of Prisoners*, Observations, Lord Denman; Reply, The Marquess of Salisbury *April* 3, 1272
- *Pembroke College, Oxford—Assault by Students*, Questions, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 12, 194
- *Protection of Public Buildings*, Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *April* 2, 1166
- *Reported Attack on Lady Florence Dixie*, Question, Mr. J. R. Yorke; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 19, 814; Questions, Mr. O'Shea, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 20, 939; Question, Mr. O'Shea; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 29, 993
- *Seizure of Explosives—Legislation*, Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Sclater-Booth; Answers, Sir William Harcourt *April* 5, 1505
- *Seizure of Infernal Machines at Liverpool*, Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 29, 994
- *The Metropolitan Courts—The Chief Clerks*, Question, Sir Henry Holland; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 19, 792
- *The Wandsworth Police Court*, Question, Mr. Bulwer; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 12, 195

LAWRENCE, Mr. Alderman W., *London*
- Great Eastern Railway (High Beech Extension), 2R. 176
- Inland Postal Telegrams, Res. 1009
- Parliament—Business of the House—" Counts out," Res. 1979
- Ways and Means—Financial Statement, 1553

LAWSON, Sir W., *Carlisle*
- Arabi Pasha—Conditions of Detention at Ceylon, 1640
- Channel Tunnel—Joint Committee, Res. 1380
- Egypt—Arabi Pasha, 1501
- Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Ireland) Act, 1878—Increase of Drunkenness, 562, 794
- Speech of Mr. Chamberlain at Birmingham, 1500

LEA, Mr. T., *Donegal*
- Lighthouses and Beacons—Tory Island Lighthouse, 556
- Navy—Coastguard Station at Kincaslagh, 556

LEAMY, Mr. E., *Waterford*
- Parliamentary Elections (Closing of Public Houses), 919
- Supply—Supplementary Estimates, 1882-3—Commissioners of Police, &c. of Dublin, 102
  - Irish Land Commission, 74

Leaseholders (Facilities for Purchase of Fee Simple) Bill
(*Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Mr. Reid, Mr. Passmore Edwards*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *April* 5 [Bill 134]

LEATHAM, Mr. W. H., *York, W. R., S. Div.*
- Public Expenditure — Redemption of the National Debt, Res. 1868

LEFEVRE, Right Hon. G. J. Shaw (Chief Commissioner of Works), *Reading*
- Distress Law Amendment, 2R. 313
- Ordnance Maps—East Staffordshire and East Worcestershire, 361
- Parks (Metropolis)—The " Achilles " in Hyde Park, 991
- Parliament—New Rules of Procedure—Standing Committees, 1838;—Accommodation for Reporters, 1117
  - Palace of Westminster — Central Hall, 1036;—Westminster Hall—The Old Law Courts, 540
- Public Offices Site Act, 1882—New Buildings for the Admiralty and War Office, 1481
- Scotland — Industrial Museum, Edinburgh, 1819
- Supply — Marlborough House, 1072, 1075, 1076, 1077
  - Royal Palaces, 1044, 1046, 1051, 1054, 1055, 1056, 1061, 1068
  - Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, 1081, 1084, 1086, 1087, 1089, 1090, 1098, 1100, 1101
  - Supplementary Estimates, 1882-3 — Post Office Services, &c., 135, 136
- Ways and Means, Report, 310

LEIGHTON, Sir B., *Shropshire, S.*
- Distress (Ireland), Res. 1998, 2027
- Inland Postal Telegrams, Res. 1008

LEIGHTON, Mr. S., *Shropshire, N.*
- Criminal Code (Indictable Offences Procedure) and Court of Criminal Appeal Bills, 813
- Law and Police—Protection of Public Buildings, 1166

LEITRIM, Earl of
- Explosive Substances, 1R. 1810

LENNOX, Right Hon. Lord H. G. C. G., *Chichester*
- Navy—Dockyard Charges—Report of Departmental Committee, 1274
- Navy Estimates, 1883-4—Departmental Statement, 608
  - Sea and Coastguard Services, &c. 630, 631
- Royal Marines, Res. 582

Lewis, Mr. C. E., *Londonderry*
Bankruptcy, 2R. 857, 861, 985
Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act, 1881—Extra Allowances to Prison Warders for Extra Duties, 1812
Post Office (Contracts)—Irish Mail Service, 787, 788

Lewisham, Viscount, *Kent, W.*
Royal Marines, Res. 576

Licensing Acts — Off-Licensing — Beer Licences
Question, Mr. D. Grant; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *April* 3, 1277

Lighthouse Illuminants
Illuminating Powers of Gas, Oil, and Electricity, Question, Mr. Dawson; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *Mar* 19, 792
The Northumberland Coast, Question, Sir Walter Burrell; Answer, Mr. J. Holms *Mar* 15, 542
Tory Island Lighthouse, Question, Mr. Lea; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *Mar* 15, 556

Limerick, Earl of
Army (Auxiliary Forces)—The Militia, Motion for an Address, 538
Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland), 2R. 526

Liquor Traffic Veto (Scotland) Bill
(*Mr. M'Lagan, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Waddy, Mr. James Stewart, Mr. Dick Peddie, Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. Ernest Noel*)
c. Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered * *Mar* 29
Read 1° * *Mar* 30 [Bill 129]

Literature, Science, and Art—The Ashburnham MSS.—Proposed Purchase by the British Museum
Question, Mr. Carbutt; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 12, 194
The Irish MSS., Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 20, 936; Question, Mr. Gibson; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 2, 1170

Lloyd, Mr. M., *Beaumaris*
Church of England—Training Colleges—Admission of Dissenters, 1275

Local and County Administration—Legislation
Questions, Mr. Pell, Mr. Albert Grey; Answers, Mr. Hibbert *Mar* 15, 563

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord President*)
l. Presented; read 1ª*, and referred to the Examiners *April* 10 (No. 27)

London Brokers' Relief Act (1870) Repeal Bill (*Mr. Richard B. Martin, Mr. Magniac, Mr. Buxton*) [Bill 19]
c. Ordered, That the Order [16th February] that the London Brokers' Relief Act (1870) Repeal Bill be read 2° upon Wednesday 9th May be read, and discharged *Mar* 20, 989
Ordered, That the Bill be withdrawn; Leave given to present another Bill instead thereof

London Municipal Government Bill—The Fellowship of Free Porters
Question, Sir Joseph Bailey; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 15, 558

Long, Mr. W. H., *Wilts, N.*
Police (Metropolis) — Removal of Injured Horses, 212

Lopes, Sir M., *Devonshire, S.*
Greenwich Hospital Schools, 1814, 1815

Lothian, Marquess of
Army (Auxiliary Forces)—The Militia, Motion for an Address, 537
Representative Peers (Scotland), 2R. 1953
Representative Peers (Scotland) Election Procedure, 2R. 1962

Lowther, Right Hon. J., *Lincolnshire, N.*
Registration of Voters (Ireland), 2R. 512
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 644, 649
Supplementary Estimates, 1882-3—Commissioners of Police, &c. of Dublin, 86, 94;—Irish Land Commission, 7

Lubbock, Sir J., *London University*
Bankruptcy, 2R. 877
Bankruptcy (No. 2), 2R. 922; Comm. Motion for Adjournment, 988, 989
Ministerial Arrangements—Department of the Lord President, 933
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 650
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, 1092
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 1575, 1906

Lunatic Asylum (Worcester)
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for copies of a correspondence between the Clerk to the Visitors of the Lunatic Asylum for the County and City of Worcester and the War Office" (*The Earl Beauchamp*) *Mar* 12, 143; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Lusk, Sir A., *Finsbury*
Great Eastern Railway (High Beech Extension), 2R. 186
Supply—Royal Palaces, 1057

Lymington, Viscount, *Barnstaple*
  Distress (Ireland), Res. Amendt. 2002
  Government Annuities and Assurance Act, 1882—The Tables, 1965

Lytton, Earl of
  East India—Code of Criminal Procedure (Native Jurisdiction over British Subjects), 1735, 1787, 1791, 1794

McArthur, Mr. A., *Leicester*
  Army—Deserters in South Africa, 1482
  Post Office — Mails between England and Madagascar, 784

Macartney, Mr. J. W. E., *Tyrone*
  Diplomatic Service — British Resident at the Vatican—Mr. Errington, 791
  Post Office (Contracts)—Irish Mail Service, 787
  Registration of Voters (Ireland), 2R. 512
  Supply—Supplementary Estimates, 1882-3—Irish Land Commission, 62

M'Carthy, Mr. Justin, *Longford*
  Army (Annual), Comm. 1603
  India—Mysore Gold Mines—Grants of Land to British Officials and others, 1833
  Ireland—Questions
    Irish Land Court—Appeals from Donegal, 799
    Landlord and Tenant Act, 1870—Interpretation by the Court of Appeal, 215
    Magistracy—Colonel Hepenstall, 1822
    Prevention of Crime Act, 1882 — John Harte, Case of, 990
  Supply—Civil Contingencies Fund, 128
    Supplementary Estimates, 1882-3—Commissioners of Police, &c. of Dublin, 97

M'Coan, Mr. J. C., *Wicklow*
  Egypt (Army Re-organization)—British Officers, 208
  High Court of Justice—The Master of the Rolls, 1109
  Turkey and Russia—Armenia, 1278

Macfarlane, Mr. D. H., *Carlow Co.*
  Criminal Law—Case of Thomas Perryman, 1155, 1156
  Ireland—Law and Justice—Stoppage of Sale of Newspapers on Sunday in Londonderry, 572
  Opium Duties (China), Motion for an Address, 1359
  Royal Yacht Club—Exclusive Right of Flying the White Ensign, 1818
  Scotland—Crofters—Destitution in the Highlands and Islands, 957, 959
    Law and Justice—Glendale Crofters, 796, 797

McGarel-Hogg, Sir J. M., *Truro*
  Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Acts—New Schemes of Metropolitan Board of Works, 1813
  Metropolitan Improvements—Re-building of Angler's Gardens, Islington, 939
  Metropolitan Railways—Ventilators, 548, 549, 802

McKenna, Sir J. N., *Youghal*
  Parliament—Business of the House—"Counts out," Res. Amendt. 1976
  Supply—Supplementary Estimates, 1882-3—Irish Land Commission, 69
  Vivisection Abolition, 2R. 1447

Mackintosh, Mr. C. Fraser-, *Inverness, &c.*
  General Register House, Edinburgh—Recent Frauds, 776

McLaren, Mr. C. B. B., *Stafford*
  Supply—Supplementary Estimates, 1882-3—Prisons, &c. in Ireland, 125

Macliver, Mr. P. S., *Plymouth*
  Law and Justice—County Courts—Assistant Bailiffs, 546

Madagascar (*Questions*)
  Arrival of a French Squadron, Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *Mar* 12, 204
  Reported Blockade by France, Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *Mar* 13, 370; Question, Mr. Montagu Scott; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *April* 2, 1167
  Rumoured Application of the Queen for Mediation and Protection against French Aggression, Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *Mar* 19, 800
  French Protectorate on the North-West Coast—Alleged Treaty Concessions, Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *Mar* 20, 936; Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *Mar* 30, 1105;—*Claims of France on the North-West Coast—The Yellow Book*, Questions, Sir Harry Verney; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *April* 2, 1154; *April* 5, 1490
  Security of British Residents, Question, Mr. Cropper; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *April* 9, 1832

Maintenance of Children Bill
(*Mr. Hopwood, Mr. Thomasson, Mr. Summers*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 19 [Bill 124]

Makins, Colonel W. T., *Essex, S.*
  Royal Marines, Res. 590
  Supply—Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, 1095

Manchester Ship Canal Bill (*by Order*)
c. Read 2°, after short debate *Mar* 16, 685

Manners, Right Hon. Lord J. J. R., *Leicestershire, N.*
  Africa (South)—Distribution of the Force, 203
    Transvaal and Bechuanaland, 927
  Africa (South)—Transvaal—Questions
    Agent for the Government, 1636
    Policy of H.M. Government, 1504
    Supplies of Ammunition, 1638

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Manners, Right Hon. Lord J. J. R.—*cont.*
Inland Postal Telegrams, Res. 1009
Irish Land Commission—Erection of Labourers' Cottages, 554
Kilmainham Prison (Release of Mr. Parnell, &c.), 1175
National Expenditure, Res. 1714
Parliament—Business of the House—Transvaal Debate, 1840
Post Office (Contracts)—Irish Mail Service, 929
Supply—Supplementary Estimates, 1882-3—Irish Land Commission, 74

Marjoribanks, Hon. E., *Berwickshire*
Mercantile Marine—Harbour Accommodation on the East Coast, Motion for a Select Committee, 377

Marriott, Mr. W. T., *Brighton*
Army—Auxiliary Forces—Brighton Volunteer Review, 1968
Burnley Borough Improvement Bill—Section 135, 1156

Martin, Mr. P., *Kilkenny Co.*
Ireland—Drainage, &c.—Action of the Board of Works, 361
Supply—Supplementary Estimates, 1882-3—Irish Land Commission, 11, 32

Martin, Mr. R. Biddulph, *Tewkesbury*
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, 1583

Marum, Mr. E. P. M., *Kilkenny Co.*
Ireland — Royal Irish Constabulary — Interference with Ladies attending Public Meetings, 571

Maxwell, Sir H. E., *Wigtonshire*
Dominion of Canada—Mission of the Red Indian Chief, 552
Explosive Substances, Comm. *cl.* 4, 1858

Medical Act Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Carlingford*)
l. Read 2ª, after short debate *April* 5, 1449
(No. 16)

Meldon, Mr. C. H., *Kildare*
Bankruptcy, 2R. 986

Mercantile Marine—Increase of Scurvy—Mr. Gray's Report
Question, Mr. Dillwyn; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *Mar* 19, 795

Mercantile Marine—Harbour Accommodation on the East Coast
Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the Harbour accommodation on the Coasts of the United Kingdom, having regard to the laws and arrangements under which the construction and improvement of Harbours may now be effected" (*Mr. Marjoribanks*) *Mar* 13, 377; after debate, Motion agreed to
[See title *Lighthouse Illuminants*]

Merchant Shipping Acts
Collisions at Sea, Questions, General Owen Williams; Answers, Mr. Chamberlain *Mar* 12, 199; *Mar* 15, 555
The Emigrant Ship "Oxford," Questions, Sir Henry Peek, Mr. Puleston, Mr. Maclver; Answers, Mr. Chamberlain *Mar* 12, 198

Metropolis (*Questions*)
Coal Duties, Question, Mr. Charles Palmer; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 9, 1836

Police
Case of William Loakes, a Cab-driver, Question, Lord Algernon Percy; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 12, 202
Removal of Injured Horses, Question, Mr. Long; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 12, 212

Metropolitan Improvements—The Rebuilding of Angler's Gardens, Islington, Question, Mr. W. M. Torrens; Answer, Sir James M'Garel-Hogg *Mar* 20, 939
The Parks—The "Achilles" in Hyde Park, Question, Mr. Schreiber; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Mar* 29, 991

Metropolitan Board of Works—The Coal and Wine Dues
Question, Mr. Ritchie; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 3, 1279

Metropolitan Railways—The Ventilating Shafts on the Thames Embankment
Questions, Mr. W. H. James; Answers, Sir James M'Garel-Hogg *Mar* 15, 548; Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Sir James M'Garel-Hogg *Mar* 19, 802; Questions, Mr. A. J. Balfour; Answers, Mr. Courtney, Mr. Gladstone *April* 2, 1178; Question, Mr. W. H. James; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *April* 9, 1828

Metropolitan District Railway Companies—Ventilation
Moved, "That the shorthand-writer's notes of the proceedings of the Select Committee on the Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railway Companies Bill, 1879, and on the Metropolitan District Railway Bill, 1881, and of the evidence taken before the said Committees, be laid on the Table, and that such portions of the said proceedings and evidence as relate to the ventilation of the railways be printed" (*The Earl of Milltown*) *Mar* 12, 144; after debate, Motion withdrawn

Milltown, Earl of
Contempts of Court, 2R. 1617
Law and Justice (Ireland)—"Regina *v.* Matthew Smyth," 670, 671
Medical Act Amendment, 2R. 1456
Metropolitan District Railway, Res. 144, 155
Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland), 2R. 523; Comm. *cl.* 2, Amendt. 770, 772, 774; 3R. 924

MINTO, Earl of
Government—Secretary of State for Scotland, 1617
Parliament—Scotch Business, 1964

MOLLOY, Mr. B. C., *King's Co.*
Ireland—Maintenance of Harmless Lunatics and Idiots, 940
Poor Law—Elections of Boards of Guardians—Powers of Returning Officers, 552
Supply—Supplementary Estimates, 1882-3—Irish Land Commission, 64

MONCREIFF, Lord
Representative Peers (Scotland), 2R. 1951
Representative Peers (Scotland) Election Procedure, 2R. 1962

MONK, Mr. C. J., *Gloucester City*
Bills of Sale (Ireland) Act (1879) Amendment, 2R. 651
Minister of Agriculture and Commerce, 216
Parliament — Rules of Debate — Blocking, 1171, 1172
Payment of Wages in Public Houses Prohibition, 2R. 1104
Post Office—Postal Orders to the Colonies, 1818
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, 1548

MONTROSE, Duke of
Army (Auxiliary Forces)—The Militia, Motion for an Address, 532

MORGAN, Right Hon. G. Osborne (Judge Advocate General), *Denbighshire*
Army—Drunkenness, 931
Army (Annual), 2R. 1255, 1257; Comm. 1600, 1601; *cl.* 5, 1607, 1608; 3R. 1717, 1719, 1720, 1721, 1722

MORLEY, Earl of (Under Secretary of State for War)
Army—Line Battalions—Training of Men as Mounted Infantry, 1368
Army (Auxiliary Forces)—The Militia, Motion for an Address, 533
Lunatic Asylum (Worcester), Motion for an Address, 144

MORLEY, Mr. J., *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*
Africa (South)—Transvaal—Policy of H.M. Government, Res. 423

MORLEY, Mr. S., *Bristol*
Payment of Wages in Public Houses Prohibition, 2R, 1102, 1103, 1104

Morocco—Ill-treatment of Jewesses
Question, Colonel Alexander; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *Mar* 15, 558

MOWBRAY, Right Hon. Sir J. R., *Oxford University*
Bankruptcy, 2R. 972
Manchester Ship Canal, 2R. 688

[*cont.*

MOWBRAY, Right Hon. Sir J. R.—*cont.*
Parliament—Committee of Selection (Special Report), 567, 568, 1283, 1613
Universities Committee of Privy Council, 2R. Amendt. 1389

MUNDELLA, Right Hon. A. J. (Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education), *Sheffield*
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Foot-and-Mouth Disease, 696

Municipal Corporations (Unreformed) Bill (*Sir Charles Dilke, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Mundella, Mr. Hibbert*)
c. Order for Committee read; Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" *April* 2, 1248
Amendt. to leave out "That," add "the Bill be referred to a Select Committee" (*Mr. Sidney Herbert*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn
Main Question again proposed, "That Mr. Speaker, &c.;" after further short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Committee—R.P. [Bill 6]

Municipal Corporations (Unreformed) [*Expenses*]
c. Considered in Committee *Mar* 29, 1101
Moved, "That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the Expenses of any injuries which may become payable under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to make provision respecting certain Municipal Corporations, and other Local Authorities not subject to the Municipal Corporation Act" (*Sir Charles W. Dilke*); after short debate, Resolution agreed to
Resolution reported *Mar* 30

National Expenditure
Mr. Rylands' Motion, Question, Mr. Rylands; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 2, 1170
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *April* 6, To leave out from "That," add "in the opinion of this House, the present amount of the National Expenditure demands the earnest and immediate attention of Her Majesty's Government, with the view of effecting such reductions as may be consistent with the efficiency of the public service" (*Mr. Rylands*) *v.*, 1644; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Question put, and negatived
Words added; main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to

National Gallery (Loan) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl Granville*)
l. Presented; read 1^a * *Mar* 12 (No. 18)
Read 2^a, after short debate *Mar* 15, 516
Committee *; Report *Mar* 16
Read 3^a * *Mar* 19

[*cont.*

National Gallery (*Loan*) *Bill*—cont.
c. Read 1° * *Mar* 29 [Bill 128]
Read 2° * *April* 2
Committee *; Report *April* 3
Read 3° * *April* 4
l. Royal Assent *April* 10 [46 *Vict*. c. 4]

NAVY (*Questions*)
Coastguard Station at Kincaslagh, Question, Mr. Lea; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 15, 556
Dockyard and Steam Branch — Compulsory Retirement—Gratuities to Hired Men, Question, Captain Price; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Mar* 19, 795
Dockyard Charges—Report of Departmental Committee, Question, Lord Henry Lennox; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *April* 3, 1274
Dockyards (*Portsmouth and Deptford*)—*Manufacture of Twine*, Questions, Mr. R. H. Paget; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Mar* 16, 698
H.M.S. "Valorous," Question, Mr. Tottenham; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Mar* 20, 941
Marine Pensioners — The Auxiliary Forces, Question, Mr. E. Collins; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *April* 3, 1273
Non-Commissioned Officers of Royal Marines, Question, Mr. Newzam-Nicholson; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *Mar* 13, 368
Naval Engineers, Question, Captain Price; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *April* 5, 1487
Naval Reserves and Coastguard, Observations, Mr. Gourley, Sir John Hay, Mr. Williamson; Reply, Sir Thomas Brassey *Mar* 15, 591
Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers, Question, Sir John Jenkins; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Mar* 12, 213
The Clyde Court Martial, Question, Mr. R. T. Reid; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *April* 10, 1968
The Royal Yachts—The "Victoria and Albert," Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *April* 6, 1631
The Royal Yacht Club—Exclusive Right of Flying the White Ensign, Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Macfarlane; Answers, Sir Thomas Brassey *April* 9, 1818
The Transport Service, Question, General Sir George Balfour; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *April* 3, 1282

Navy—Royal Marines
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Mar* 15, To leave out from "That," add "the Military and Naval value of the Corps of Royal Marines deserves to be adequately represented on the Board of Admiralty, so that the just claims of the Corps may be recognised, and defects in its administration remedied; and that it be referred to a Select Committee of this House to inquire into and report upon the best mode of effecting the above objects" (*Mr. Hopwood*) v., 574; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 60, N. 39; M. 21 (D. L. 36)

NEWDEGATE, Mr. C. N., *Warwickshire, N.*
Parliament—Business of the House, 993

New Forest (Highways) Bill
(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Cotes*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 6 [Bill 135]

New Zealand—Release of the Chiefs Te Whiti and Tohu
Question, Mr. Brogden; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *Mar* 19, 803

NICHOLSON, Mr. W. NEWZAM-, *Newark*
Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Royal Marines, 368

NOLAN, Colonel J. P., *Galway Co.*
Ireland—Commissioners of Towns—Account Audits, 692
Ireland, State of—Destitution at Loughrea, 543
Seed Potatoes, 556
Mercantile Marine—Harbour Accommodation on the East Coast, Motion for a Select Committee, 407
Parliament—Rules of Debate—Blocking, 1278
Scotland—Crofters—Destitution in the Highlands and Islands, 951

NORTH, Colonel J. S., *Oxfordshire*
Royal Marines, Res. 589

NORTHBROOK, Earl of (First Lord of the Admiralty)
East India — Code of Criminal Procedure (Native Jurisdiction over British Subjects), 1787, 1788, 1790, 1791, 1793, 1794
Egypt (Military Expedition)—The late Professor Palmer, Motion for Papers, 672, 673, 681

NORTHCOTE, Right Hon. Sir S. H., *Devon, N.*
Africa (River Congo), Res. 1328
Africa (South)—Transvaal—Policy of H.M. Government, Res. 755
Bankruptcy, 2R. 969, 979
Channel Tunnel Committee, 994
Channel Tunnel — Joint Committee, Res. Amendt. 1368, 1373
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Foot-and-Mouth Disease—Disinfection of Hides and Offal of Animals Slaughtered under the Act, 1819
Law and Police—Seizure of Explosives, 1505
Seizure of Infernal Machines at Liverpool, 994
Mercantile Marine—Harbour Accommodation on the East Coast, Motion for a Select Committee, 411
Minister of Agriculture and Commerce, 216
National Expenditure—Mr. Rylands' Motion, 1171; Res. 1699, 1710
Parliament—Business of the House, 218, 371, 812, 1177, 1281, 1972
Easter Recess, 565
Public Expenditure—Redemption of the National Debt, Res. 1867
Public Offices—Explosion at the Local Government Board, 701
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 944, 1536, 1914, 1926

Northcote, Mr. H. S., *Exeter*
Army—Appointment of Quartermasters, 567

North Metropolitan Tramways Bill (by Order)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Sir Charles Forster*) *Mar* 13, 351
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. J. R. Yorke*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after short debate, Question put; A. 100, N. 139; M. 39 (D. L. 33)
Words added; main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to; 2R. put off

Norton, Lord
Education—Higher Board Schools, Motion for a Select Committee, 654, 669

Norwood, Mr. C. M., *Kingston-upon-Hull*
Bankruptcy, 2R. 981
Fisheries (East Coast) — Loss of Fishing Smacks, 1501

O'Beirne, Colonel F., *Leitrim*
Supply—Supplementary Estimates, 1882-3—Irish Land Commission, 6

O'Brien, Sir P., *King's Co.*
Irish Land Commission Court—Co. Down Sub-Commission, 563

O'Brien, Mr. W., *Mallow*
Distress (Ireland), Res. 2015
Ireland—Questions
Constabulary and the Irish National League, 1499
Law and Justice—The Rota of Judges, 1821
Poor Law—Election of Guardians, 1498; —Election of Guardians for Shillelagh Union, Co. Wicklow, and Bantry—Alleged Intimidation, 1823, 1824
Public Health — Epidemics in Donegal, 1176
Poor Law—Glenties Guardians, 1156;—Workhouse Test, 369
State of—Distress in Donegal, 1824, 1825
Supply—Supplementary Estimates, 1882-3—Commissioners of Police, &c. of Dublin, 93
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, 1570, 1572

O'Connor, Mr. A., *Queen's Co.*
Bankruptcy, 2R. 850, 851
Egypt—Case of Colonel Dulier, 778
Harbour Accounts, 213
India—Gold Mining Companies—Government Officials, 210
Ireland—Questions
Drainage of the River Barrow, 1506
National School Teachers—Pension Fund —Annual Statement, 1820
Prevention of Crime Act, 1882 — Proclaimed Districts, 1179
Prisons—Queen's Co. Prison, 553
Parliament—Public Business, 220, 1820
Post Office—Alleged Overcrowding, 547

O'Connor, Mr. A.—*cont.*
Registration of Voters (Ireland), 2R. 514
Scotland—Crofters—Destitution in the Highlands and Islands, 961
Supply—Civil Contingencies Fund, Amendt. 127
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, 1086
Supply—Supplementary Estimates, 1882-3—Commissioners of Police, &c. of Dublin, 103
Post Office Services, &c. 133, 135
Report—Embassies and Missions Abroad, 138
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, 1586

O'Connor, Mr. T. P., *Galway*
Army (Annual), 2R. 1259
Court of Criminal Appeal, 2R. 1244
Egypt (Finance, &c.), 1490
Ireland—Law and Justice—The Phœnix Park Murders, 1497
Ireland—Distress, Res. 2048
Municipal Corporations (Unreformed), Comm. 1254
Supply—Royal Palaces, 1065
Supplementary Estimates, 1882-3—Prisons, &c. in Ireland, Amendt. 120, 125
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, 1576

O'Donnell, Mr. F. H., *Dungarvan*
Court of Criminal Appeal, 2R. 1208
Egypt (Military Expedition)—Mission of the late Professor Palmer, 210, 212
India—Questions
Indore—Salvationists, 202
Law and Justice—Courts of Law—Mr. Justice Norris, 192
Madras Legislative Council—Non-Official European Members, 210
Mysore—Gold Mines—Grants of Lands to British Officials and others, 1835;—Cession of Land, 561
Native States—Junaghur—The Maiyas, 1492
Procedure as to giving Publicity to Official Returns and Papers, 193
Salem Riots, 192
Ireland—Questions
Extra Police Tax at Lattera, Co. Tipperary, 193
Magistracy, Co. Fermanagh, 190
Nationalization of the Land, 550
Post Office—Telegraph Department—Clerks at Dublin, 1819
Prevention of Crime Act, 1882—Seizure of Documents—Case of Matthew Harris, 1831
State of—Distress in Donegal, 1826
Ireland—Distress, Res. 2011
Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment, 2R. 499
Law and Police—Pembroke College, Oxford—Assault by Students, 194
Supply—Supplementary Estimates, 1882-3—Commissioners of Police, &c. of Dublin, 104
Trade and Commerce—Customs Dues in Cork, 1491

O'Donoghue, The, *Tralee*
Kilmainham Prison—Release of Mr. Parnell, &c., 1172, 1175

[*cont.*

O'HAGAN, Lord
  Sale of Liquors on Sunday (Ireland), 2R. 525

O'KELLY, Mr. J., *Roscommon*
  Africa (South)—Transvaal—Native Hostilities —Use of Dynamite, 1635
  Ireland—Questions
    Evictions, Co. Roscommon, 1634
    Kilmainham Prison (Release of Mr. Parnell, &c.), 1173
    Law and Justice—Phœnix Park Murders, 1498
    Prevention of Crime Act, 1882—Sec. 14—Searches, 1494;—Seizure of Documents —Case of Matthew Harris, 1830
    Poor Law—Distribution of Outdoor Relief at Stokestown, 1816, 1817
    State of—Alleged Distress at Lough Glynn, 1817
  Spain—Expulsion of certain Cuban Refugees from Gibraltar, 1107

ONSLOW, Mr. D. R., *Guildford*
  Africa (River Congo), Res. 1328
  Africa (South)—Transvaal—Policy of H.M. Government, 1502, 1503, 1504, 1971
  Army (Annual), 3R. Motion for Adjournment, 1722
  Ballot Act Continuance and Amendment, 944; 2R. 1728; Motion for Adjournment, 1731, 1733
  East India—Code of Criminal Procedure (Native Jurisdiction over British Subjects), 214, 215
  National Expenditure—Mr. Rylands' Motion, 1171
  Navy Estimates—Sea and Coastguard Services, 636
  Parliament—Business of the House, 220, 807, 812, 994
  Payment of Wages in Public Houses Prohibition, 2R. 1102, 1104
  Supply—Marlborough House, 1074

Opium Duties (China)
  Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that in all negotiations which take place between the Governments of Her Majesty and China, having reference to the Duties levied on Opium under the Treaty of Tientsin, the Government of Her Majesty will be pleased to intimate to the Government of China that in any revision of that Treaty, or in any other negotiations on the subject of Opium, the Government of China will be met as that of an independent State, having the full right to arrange its own Import Duties" (*Sir Joseph Pease*) *April* 3, 1333; Previous Question proposed, "That the Original Question be now put" (*Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice*); after debate, Question put; A. 66, N. 126; M. 60 (D. L. 48)

ORANMORE AND BROWNE, Lord
  Irish Land Commission, 1449

Ordnance Maps—East Staffordshire and East Worcestershire
  Question, Mr. Wiggin; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Mar* 13, 361

O'SHAUGHNESSY, Mr. R., *Limerick*
  Distress (Ireland), Res. 2006, 2009, 2010
  Ireland—Inland Navigation—Upper Shannon Navigation, 361

O'SHEA, Mr. W. H., *Clare*
  Law and Police—Reported Attack on Lady Florence Dixie, 939, 993
  Supply—Royal Palaces, 1069
    Supplementary Estimates, 1882-3—Irish Land Commission, 22

OTWAY, Sir A. J. (Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker), *Rochester*
  Army Estimates, 1883-4—Land Forces, 252, 267
  Explosive Substances, Comm. *cl.* 4, 1858
  Manchester Ship Canal, 2R. 689, 690
  Navy Estimates—Sea and Coastguard Services, &c. 630, 632, 636
  Supply—Civil Contingencies Fund, 131
  Ways and Means—Financial Statement, 1572

Oxford, Aylesbury, and Metropolitan Junction Railway Bill (by Order)
c. Read 2° *Mar* 13, 350

PAGET, Mr. R. H., *Somersetshire, Mid*
  Dockyards (Portsmouth and Deptford)—Manufacture of Twine, 698
  Minister of Agriculture and Commerce, 216
  Parliament—Board of Trade and Railway Bills, 700
    Palace of Westminster—Westminster Hall —The Old Law Courts, 540

PALMER, Mr. C. M., *Durham, N.*
  Coal Duties (Metropolis), 1836
  France, Commercial Negotiations with—Bounties on Shipping, 801

Papal See—Diplomatic Communications—Mr. Errington
  Question, Mr. Macartney; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *Mar* 19, 791

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 LORDS—
  Scotch Business, Question, The Earl of Minto: Answer, The Earl of Kimberley *April* 10, 1964
  The Ministry—The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Question, The Marquess of Salisbury; Answer, Earl Granville *Mar* 20, 925
  Secretary of State for Scotland, Question, Observations, The Earl of Minto, The Earl of Fife; Reply, The Earl of Kimberley *April* 6, 1617
  Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills
   Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92. and 93. be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess *Mar* 19

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—LORDS—*cont.*

House of Lords (*Construction and Accommodation*)

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the construction and accommodation of the House, including the galleries, more especially in reference to seating, hearing, and reporting; and whether any and what improvement therein can be made" (*The Earl Cairns*) *Mar* 12, 140; after short debate, Motion amended, and agreed to

COMMONS—

PRIVATE BILLS

New Standing Order, Moved to insert the following new Standing Order, to follow Standing Order 145:—"In the case of any Bill relating to a Railway, Tramway, Canal, Dock, Harbour, Navigation, Pier, or Port, seeking powers to levy tolls, rates, or duties in excess of those already authorised for that undertaking, or usually authorised in previous years for like undertakings, the Bill shall not be reported by the Committee until a Report from the Board of Trade on the powers so sought has been laid before the Committee; and the Committee shall report specially to the House in what manner the recommendations or observations in the Report of the Board of Trade, and also in what manner the Clauses of the Bill relating to the powers so sought, have been dealt with by the Committee" (*Mr. Sclater-Booth*) *Mar* 12, 188; after short debate, Motion agreed to; Resolution to be a Standing Order of the House

Ordered, That Standing Orders 129 and 39 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Thursday the 29th instant (*The Chairman of Ways and Means*) *Mar* 20

The Standing Committees

Committee of Selection (*Special Report*), Nomination of Members to serve on the Standing Committees of Law and Trade *Mar* 15, 567; Special Report brought up, and read

Some Members discharged, others substituted *April* 3, 1283; *April* 6, 1643

Chairmen's Panel—Mr. Goschen to be Chairman of Standing Committee on Trade, &c.; Mr. Sclater-Booth to be Chairman of Committee on Law, &c. *Mar* 19, 775

Accommodation for Reporters, Question, Mr. Warton; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Mar* 30, 1117

Reports of Proceedings, Question, Lord Claud Hamilton; Answer, Mr. Speaker; Question, Mr. J. Cowen; [No answer] *April* 6, 1642; Questions, Mr. Sheil, Mr. Ritchie; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 9, 1837

Debates in Whole House on Report, Question, Mr. Caine; Observations, Mr. Speaker *April* 3, 1281

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*cont.*

Assistant Chairmen of Committees of the Whole House, Question, Mr. Raikes; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 19, 808

Committee of the Whole House (*Temporary Chairmen*), Question, Mr. Raikes; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 5, 1502

RULES OF DEBATE

Motions on going into Supply, Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Sclater-Booth; Answers, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 19, 814

Blocking, Questions, Mr. Monk, Captain Aylmer; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *April* 2, 1171; Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, Mr. Warton *April* 3, 1278

Supply — Army Estimates — Irrelevance of Amendments, Observations, Mr. Speaker; Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 12, 221

ORDER

Prints of Bills, Question, Viscount Emlyn; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 19, 805

PRIVILEGE

Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Question, Mr. J. R. Yorke; Answer, Mr. Herbert Gladstone; Observations, Mr. J. R. Yorke, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 15, 568

Reflections upon a Member, Observations, Mr. Warton, Mr. Caine *April* 9, 1838

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Orders of the Day, Ordered, That the Orders of the Day be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Law relating to Explosive Substances (*Mr. Gladstone*) *April* 9

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE AND PUBLIC BUSINESS

Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Waddy, Mr. Onslow, Mr. Ritchie; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Chamberlain *Mar* 12, 218; Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 14, 515; Questions, Baron De Ferrières, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 16, 700; Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Onslow, Mr. Dillwyn; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 19, 812; Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Chamberlain *April* 2, 1177; Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 3, 1281; Questions, Sir R. Assheton Cross, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *April* 10, 1972;—*Votes on Account — The New Rules of Procedure*, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 12, 220;—*Order—Ballot for Precedence*, Questions, Mr. Dick-Peddie, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Hopwood; Answers, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 13, 375;—*The Easter Recess*, Questions, Mr. Joseph Cowen, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 15, 564;—*Parliamentary Oaths Act* (1866) *Amendment Bill*, Questions, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Gorst; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington *Mar* 15, 566;

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*Business of the House and Public Business—cont.*

Questions, Mr. Newdegate; Answers, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 29, 993;—*Government Legislation,* Question, Mr. Jesse Collings; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 19, 807; —*The Count-out on Friday, March* 16, Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 19, 810; Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 2, 1177;—"*Counts-out,*" Question, Mr. Callan; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 3, 1282;—*The Tenants' Compensation Bill,* Question, Mr. Arthur Arnold; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 20, 932;—*Ballot Act Continuance and Amendment Bill,* Question, Mr. Onslow; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 29, 994;—*The Police Bill,* Question, Colonel Alexander; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *April* 3, 1280;—*Public Business (Ireland) — The Returns,* Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *April* 9, 1820;—*The Universities (Scotland) Bill,* Question, Mr. Dalrymple; Answer, The Lord Advocate *April* 9, 1832;—*Spain —Expulsion of certain Cuban Refugees from Gibraltar—The Debate,* Observations, Sir R. Assheton Cross *April* 9, 1833;—*The Criminal Code (Indictable Offences Procedure) Bill,* Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 9, 1841

SITTING AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

Sittings of the House, Resolved, That whenever the House shall meet at Two of the Clock, the Sittings of the House shall be held subject to the Resolutions of the House of the 30th day of April 1869 (*Mr. Gladstone*) *Mar* 16

The Easter Recess, Moved, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Thursday, the 29th of March" (*Mr. Gladstone*) *Mar* 20, 944; after debate, Question put, and agreed to

QUESTIONS

Corrupt Practices at Elections—The Scheduled Boroughs, Question, Captain Aylmer; Answer, The Attorney General *Mar* 30, 1113

Inland Revenue Department — Grievances of Officers—Right of Petition, Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 15, 560; Questions, Mr. Gorst, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 19, 783; Questions, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, Mr. Speaker, 810; Questions, Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 30, 1110

Parliamentary Elections — The Borough of Southampton, Questions, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Gorst; Answers, Lord Richard Grosvenor *Mar* 30, 1117

Speech of Mr. Chamberlain at Birmingham, Notice, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Question, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answer, Mr. Speaker *April* 5, 1499

The Board of Trade and Railway Bills, Question, Mr. R. H. Paget; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *Mar* 16, 700

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*Questions—cont.*

The Ministry—Earl Spencer, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 13, 375

Ministerial Arrangements—The Department of the Lord President, Question, Sir John Lubbock; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 20, 933

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER

The Central Hall, Observations, Mr. Schreiber, Mr. Cavendish Bentinck; Reply, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Mar* 29, 1032

The old Law Courts, Question, Mr. R. H. Paget; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Mar* 15, 540; Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 19, 805

Parliament — Business of the House — Counts out

Moved, "That if it shall appear, on notice being taken, during any Debate, that forty Members are not present, the question under discussion shall be treated as a dropped order, and the House will proceed to the consideration of the next Order of the Day or Motion on the Paper" (*Sir Hussey Vivian*) *April* 10, 1973

Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "it is inexpedient to institute any rule or practice whereby discussion of Motions in order, and before the House can be evaded by the withdrawal from the House of Members favourable to some Motion later in the Orders of the same day" (*Sir Joseph M'Kenna*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn; Motion withdrawn

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF LORDS

Took the Oath for the First Time

Mar 12—The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury

Sat First

Mar 13—The Lord Greville, after the death of his father

April 5—The Lord Egerton, after the death of his father

The Lord Vaux of Harrowden, after the death of his grandfather

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF COMMONS

New Writ Issued

April 2—*For* Southampton, *v.* Charles Parker Butt, esquire, one of the Justices of Her Majesty's High Court of Justice

New Members Sworn

Mar 12—Lieutenant Colonel Gerard Smith, *Borough of Chipping Wycombe*

Mar 19—The hon. Alan de Tatton Egerton *Mid Division of the County of Chester*

Mar 29—Thomas Mayne, esquire, *Tipperary*

April 9—Alfred Giles, esquire, *Southampton*

[*cont.*

Parliamentary Elections (Closing of Public Houses) Bill [Bill 102]
(*Mr. Carbutt, Mr. Arthur Pease, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Burt, Mr. O'Connor Power*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 19, 917; after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Callan*); Question put; A. 17, N. 55; M. 38 (D. L. 40)
  Original Question again proposed, 919; after short debate, Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Whitley*); Question put; A. 19, N. 43; M. 24 (D. L. 41)
  Original Question again proposed; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Colonel Alexander*); Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned

Parliamentary Reform
  Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Mar* 30, To leave out from "That," add "in the opinion of this House, it would be desirable, so soon as the state of public business shall permit, to establish Uniformity of Franchise throughout the whole of the United Kingdom by a Franchise similar in principle to that established in the English Boroughs" (*Mr. Arthur Arnold*) *v.*, 1118; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, [House counted out]

PARNELL, Mr. C. S., *Cork City*
  Court of Criminal Appeal, 2R. 1239, 1246
  Ireland—Questions
    Irish Land Commission—Judicial Rents—Returns, 207, 208
    Kilmainham Prison—Release of Mr. Parnell, &c. 1174, 1175
    Land Law Act—Sec. 31—Loans, 209
    Poor Law—Election of a Guardian for the Clonakilty Union, Co. Cork—Mr. H. Hungerford, J.P., 1114, 1115
  Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment, 2R. 450, 460
  Registration of Voters (Ireland), 2R. 511
  Supply—Prisons, &c. in Ireland, 104, 114, 122, 124
    Supplementary Estimates, 1882-3—Commissioners of Police, &c. of Dublin, 100, 101;—County Court Officers, &c. Ireland, 81, 84

Patents for Inventions (No. 3) Bill
(*Mr. Anderson, Mr. Brown, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Hinde Palmer*)
c. Committee—R.P. *April* 10, 2052 [Bill 99]

Patents—The Commissioners—The Law of Copyright
  Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, The Attorney General *Mar* 12, 201

Payment of Wages in Public Houses Prohibition Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl Stanhope*)
l. Committee *Mar* 13, 314 (No. 1)
  Report *Mar* 15, 517 (No. 21)
  Read 3ª, after short debate *Mar* 16, 684

Payment of Wages in Public Houses Prohibition Bill—cont.
c. Read 1° * (*Mr. Samuel Morley*) *Mar* 19
  Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 29, 1102; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Callan*); after short debate, Question put, and negatived
  Original Question again proposed; original Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 126]

PEASE, Sir J. W., *Durham, S.*
  Army Estimates, 1883-4—Land Forces, 277
  Mercantile Marine—Harbour Accommodation on the East Coast, Motion for a Select Committee, 397
  Opium Duties (China), Motion for an Address, 1333
  Ways and Means—Financial Statement, 1543

PEASE, Mr. A., *Whitby*
  Western Pacific—Orders in Council, 691

PEDDIE, Mr. J. DICK-, *Kilmarnock, &c.*
  Parliament—Business of the House—Order—Ballot for Preference, 375

PEEK, Sir H. W., *Surrey, Mid*
  Inland Postal Telegrams, Res. 1007
  Merchant Shipping Acts — Emigrant Ship "Oxford," 198
  Public Health—Typhoid Fever at Plymouth, 1491
  Ways and Means—Financial Statement, 1545

PELL, Mr. A., *Leicestershire, S.*
  Agricultural Holdings (No. 2), 2R. 447
  Local and County Administration, 563
  National Expenditure, Res. 1697

PERCY, Right Hon. Earl, *Northumberland, N.*
  Mercantile Marine—Harbour Accommodation on the East Coast, Motion for a Select Committee, 404

PERCY, Lord A., *Westminster*
  Law and Police (Metropolis)—William Loakes, a Cabdriver, Case of, 202

PLAYFAIR, Right Hon. Lyon, *Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities*
  Bankruptcy, 2R. 967, 969
  Parliament—Standing Committees (Chairmen's Panel), 775
  Vivisection Abolition, 2R. 1426, 1444

PLUNKET, Right Hon. D. R., *Dublin University*
  Ireland—Royal Irish Constabulary—Commission on Grievances, 191
  Manchester Ship Canal, 2R. 689
  Registration of Voters (Ireland), 2R. 514

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Poor Law (England)—Toys for Workhouse Children
Question, Mr. Hicks; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *Mar* 13, 365

Porter, Right Hon. A. M. (Attorney General for Ireland), *Londonderry Co.*
Ireland—Irish Land Commission—Sales to Tenants, 554, 555
Law and Justice—Trial of Patrick Conolly, 1485
Settled Land Act, 1882—The Rules, 203
Supply—Supplementary Estimates, 1882-3—Commissioners of Police, &c. of Dublin, 101, 102, 103
Irish Land Commission, 57

Post Office (*Questions*)
Alleged Overcrowding, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 15, 547
Mails between England and Madagascar, Question, Mr. A. M'Arthur; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Mar* 19, 784
Communication from Aden to Madagascar, Question, Sir Harry Verney; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 29, 990
Postal Orders to the Colonies, Question, Mr. Monk; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *April* 9, 1818
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c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 14, 510; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Ion Hamilton*); after short debate, Question put; A. 219, N. 39; M. 180 (D. L. 35); Debate adjourned
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Registration of Voters (Ireland) (No. 3) Bill (*Mr. Dawson, Mr. Leamy, Mr. Kenny*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 19 [Bill 125]

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(*Mr. Stanley Leighton, Mr. Cropper, Mr. Pell, Mr. Bulwer*)
c. Ordered; read 1º * *Mar* 13 [Bill 119]

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(*The Lord President*)
l. Presented; read 1ª *, and referred to the Examiners *April* 10 (No. 28)

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Turkey and Russia—Armenia
- Questions, Mr. M'Coan, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *April* 3, 1278

Turnpike Acts Continuance Act, 1882
- Select Committee appointed, to inquire into the Fifth and Sixth Schedules of "The Annual Turnpike Acts Continuance Act, 1882;" List of the Committee *April* 9, 1936

Underground Railways Bill
(*Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. Alderman Fowler, Mr. Coddington*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 13 [Bill 120]

Union Officers' Superannuation (Ireland) Bill (*Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Attorney General for Ireland*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 5 [Bill 132]

United States—The Revised Tariff
- Question, Mr. Ecroyd; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *Mar* 13, 362; Questions, Mr. H. T. Davenport, Mr. Broadhurst; Answers, Mr. Chamberlain *Mar* 13, 374

Universities Committee of Privy Council Bill (*Mr. Charles Roundell, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Shield, Mr. Thorold Rogers*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 4, 1386
- Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Sir John R. Mowbray*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn; Motion withdrawn; Bill withdrawn [Bill 15]

Universities (Scotland) Bill
(*The Lord Advocate, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *April* 3 [Bill 131]

Vaccination Acts
Compulsory Vaccination, Question, Mr. P. A. Taylor; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *Mar* 13, 365
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Madagascar—Claims of France on the North-West Coast—The Yellow Book, 1154, 1490
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VIVIAN, Sir H. Hussey, *Glamorganshire*
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Vivisection Abolition Bill [Bill 46]
(*Mr. Reid, Sir Eardley Wilmot, Mr. Samuel Morley, Mr. Firth*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 4, 1399
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Cartwright*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after debate, Debate adjourned

WADDY, Mr. S. D., *Edinburgh*
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Payment of Wages in Public Houses Prohibition, Comm. *cl.* 3, Amendt. 315

Warrington Tramways Bill (by Order)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Mr. Rylands*) *April* 5, 1469
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Chamberlain*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after short debate, Question put; A. 68, N. 123; M. 55 (D. L. 51)
Words added; main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to; 2R. put off

WARTON, Mr. C. N., *Bridport*
Agricultural Holdings (No. 2), 2R. 448
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The Financial Statement
Questions, Lord George Hamilton, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 20, 944
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The Railway Passenger Duty, Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *April* 9, 1832

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Considered in Committee *Mar* 10
Resolved, That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the years ending on the 31st days of March 1882 and 1883, the sum of £2,233,958 9*s.* 8*d.*, be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom
Resolution reported *Mar* 12
[See title *Consolidated Fund* (*No.* 1) *Bill*]
Considered in Committee *Mar* 12
Resolved, That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, the sum of £4,121,300, be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom
Resolution reported *Mar* 13
[See title *Consolidated Fund* (*No.* 1) *Bill*]
Considered in Committee *Mar* 15
Resolved, That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1884, the sum of £6,240,100, be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom
Resolution reported *Mar* 16
[See title *Consolidated Fund* (*No.* 2) *Bill*]
Considered in Committee *April* 5, 1507—FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (*Mr. Childers*)
Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now charged
[*cont.*

WAYS AND MEANS—*cont.*
on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-three, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four, on importation into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say): on £ *s.* *d.*
Tea . . . the lb. 0 0 6
After long debate, Motion withdrawn
Another Resolution moved, and agreed to
Resolution reported *April* 6
Considered in Committee *April* 9, 1869
Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now charged on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-three, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four, on importation into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say): on £ *s.* *d.*
Tea . . . the lb. 0 0 6
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Other Resolutions moved, and agreed to
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Question, Mr. Arthur Pease; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *Mar* 16, 691

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